

Handling Uncertainty

- ◆ Acknowledge the patients predicament.
 - “Yes, I can see that must be difficult for you.”
- ◆ Empathise with the patient.
- ◆ Invite the patient to talk about how this uncertainty leaves them feeling.
- ◆ Ask the patient to think what might help him or her to manage the uncertainty
- ◆ Avoid giving the patient unrealistic reassurance, or time limits.

If appropriate:

- ◆ Ask the patient if he or she would like an indication of the kind of symptoms that would herald re-occurrence or deterioration, should it happen.

If answer is yes:

- ◆ Discuss markers (symptoms to look out for which would indicate a change in condition).

NB : When markers are requested there should be rapid access to the clinician so that if any symptoms develop that constitute potential indications or re-occurrence or deterioration they can be seen and assessed quickly.

- ◆ Offer continued support and availability.