



## Resources: Observations checklist

**If you are worried about your memory or that of a relative, keeping notes about daily life can be very helpful.**

You can use this checklist to keep track of the current situation and any changes you observe that may be useful for the GP or other health professional to know about. You can fill it out on the computer or print it out and fill it in by hand.

It will also be useful to provide a 'baseline' to check back to over time, or to see patterns.

*Please note - The questions in italics are examples of the kinds of things you may notice. They will not apply to everyone. Everyone is different and it is the **uncharacteristic changes** that will be most relevant.*

	Details	Date of note
<p><b>General health:</b></p> <p><i>Are there any other health conditions or 'background' issues.</i></p> <p><i>Does the person see the GP often or avoid going for check-ups?</i></p> <p><i>Is there any ongoing pain?</i></p>		

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	Details	Date of note
<b>Medication</b> <i>Eg. What has been prescribed for which condition (if known) and how long ago?</i>		
<b>Living situation,</b> <i>Eg. Is the person living independently alone, with a spouse/partner, in sheltered accommodation? Any recent moves or changes eg a bereavement?</i>		
<b>Daily routines</b> <i>Eg. Work, volunteering, hobbies and past-times. Are there regular visits from family members?</i>		

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Changes in thinking/cognition	Details ( <i>give examples and instances of changes</i> ):	Date of note
<p><b>Short term memory</b> <i>Eg. Are names of people and things harder to recall. Are birthdays, anniversaries or appointments being forgotten? Are objects misplaced?</i></p>		
<p><b>Other instances of forgetting or confusion</b> <i>Are the details of recent conversations and events being forgotten, or that they took place at all?</i></p>		
<p><b>Confusion over place and finding the way</b> <i>Eg. Instances of becoming lost in familiar surroundings, or an uncharacteristic reluctance to go to new places.</i></p>		
<p><b>Reasoning and the ability to 'think things through'</b> <i>Eg. Are there instances of illogical thinking or a reluctance to engage in routine problem solving or planning ahead?</i></p>		
<p><b>Reading</b> <i>Eg. If a once avid reader finds it hard to complete a chapter or follow the thread of a novel or newspaper article. Is correspondence neglected or post piling up unsorted?</i></p>		

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Changes in thinking/cognition (continued)	Details (give examples and instances of changes):	Date of note
<p><b>Writing</b>  <i>Eg. Writing greeting cards, letters, or signing a name</i></p>		
<p><b>Telling the time and being aware of the passage of time</b>  <i>Eg. Disorientation about the time of day, day of the week, or trouble reading a clock</i></p>		
<p><b>Reminiscing</b>  <i>Eg. Are conversations increasingly based in the distant past? Are stories from the past frequently repeated?</i>   <i>Is it harder to recall incidents and people from the recent past?</i></p>		
<p><b>Other</b></p>		



Changes in verbal communication	Details ( <i>give examples and instances of changes</i> ):	Date of note
<p><b>Repetitiveness</b>  <i>Are the same stories repeated, or the same questions being asked over and again?</i></p>		
<p><b>Use of words</b>  <i>Is vocabulary becoming more limited - or more colourful?</i></p>		
<p><b>Participation in conversations</b>  <i>Is prompting needed? Do stories become confabulated? (new endings to cover up a loss of memory) Is there less - or more - sensitivity or awareness of the contribution of others?</i></p>		
<p><b>Other</b></p>		



Changes in daily living	Current situation/or any changes observed	Date of note
<p><b>Driving</b></p> <p><i>Eg. A loss of confidence around manoeuvring, planning routes and going to unfamiliar places. Any recent bumps or near-misses?</i></p>		
<p><b>Legal matters</b></p> <p><i>Eg. Keeping on top of property, wills and other affairs. Is there a Power of Attorney in place?</i></p>		
<p><b>Interest in news and current events</b></p> <p><i>Eg. A loss of interest in the outside world or difficulty remembering the latest twists and turns of events</i></p>		
<p><b>Finance and banking</b></p> <p><i>Eg. Keeping up with household accounts, using cash machines and pin numbers</i></p>		
<p><b>Shopping</b></p> <p><i>Eg. Visiting a smaller range of shops, difficulties using money and cash cards, anxiety over what to buy, stockpiling items, difficulties making and using shopping lists, counting and checking change, using coins and notes.</i></p>		
<p><b>Cooking, washing up</b></p> <p><i>Eg. Relying on a narrower range of meals, forgetting well-known recipes, missing meals</i></p>		
<p><b>Laundry, ironing</b></p> <p><i>Eg. Reluctant to use appliances, perhaps preferring to wash by hand, or washing less than in the past</i></p>		

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Changes in daily living (continued)	Current situation/or any changes observed	Date of note
<b>Hoovering, cleaning etc</b> <i>Eg. Becoming less houseproud and less aware of dust etc</i>		
<b>Other household chores</b> <i>Eg. Becoming less aware of what needs doing , or more or less willing to ask for help</i>		
<b>Using public transport</b> <i>Eg. Being more anxious than before about public transport, difficulty reading maps, avoiding travel or using taxis instead of the bus</i>		
<b>Socialising and keeping up with friends and acquaintances</b> <i>Eg. Forgetting to keep up with friends, avoiding social situations, missing meetings or not participating as before in group activities, finding it harder to converse in a group</i>		
<b>Gardening</b> <i>Eg. Becoming less keen on going into the garden and keeping up with routine chores</i>		
<b>Personal grooming and dressing</b> <i>Eg. Forgetting to comb hair, putting clothes on back to front, not changing clothes as often</i>		
<b>Washing/Showering etc</b> <i>Eg. Washing less often or being reluctant to use the shower, forgetting to clean teeth</i>		
<b>Other</b>		



Sensory changes	Details	Date of note
<p><b>Vision</b>  <i>Eg. Finding it hard to distinguish between colours, or to notice stains. Confusion over what an object is, or what it may be used for. Seeing things which may not be there. Vivid or distressing nightmares</i></p>		
<p><b>Taste and appetite</b>  <i>Eg. Changing food preferences such as a marked increase in desire for sweet things. Perhaps there is a loss of interest in food, or a seemingly insatiable appetite</i></p>		
<p><b>Touch</b>  <i>Eg. Difficulties with fine motor movements such as sewing, turning pages.</i></p>		
<p><b>Hearing</b>  <i>Eg. Difficulties in distinguishing or interpreting sounds.                      Overreaction to sudden or loud noises.</i></p>		
<p><b>Other</b></p>		



Changes in mood	Any changes observed and possible 'triggers'	Date of note
<p><b>Irritable with oneself or others</b>  <i>Eg. When frustrated that something that used to come easily is more difficult</i></p>		
<p><b>Anxiety in certain situations</b>  <i>Eg. In social situations or when 'new' learning is required</i></p>		
<p><b>Other</b></p>		
<p><b>Awareness of issues</b>  <i>Eg. Appears to be unaware of issues and changes. Perhaps talking openly about their concerns.</i>  <i>Or covering up, 'confabulating' (making up plausible stories to cover up loss of memory) or making light of forgetfulness</i></p>		