



General  
Osteopathic  
Council

Continuing  
Professional  
Development

# Case-based discussion example



Luke Armstrong is an osteopath who has been treating 64 year old Christine Taylor for a knee problem. The knee has responded well, and at the last session they agreed that she would return for a check up in a month's time. At that appointment, Christine said that her knee was feeling ok, but that she had developed quite severe low back pain. This came on for no obvious reason about a week after she last saw Luke. It's not getting any better. She reports that her GP prescribed diazepam and ibuprofen, and advised her to lose some weight and take more exercise.

Christine admits she has piled the weight on in the last year or two, but finds it difficult to lose it now she's 'of a certain age'. She retired from her job as a teaching assistant in the local primary school 3 years ago, but hadn't appreciated how much her job was providing her with exercise and keeping her from the temptation of snacking during the day. It is since she stopped work that her weight has increased she is unhappy about her 16 stone weight, so she has just stopped getting on the scales. Christine didn't like the idea of taking diazepam and the ibuprofen hadn't made much difference.

Luke and Christine knew each other before she became his patient as Luke's children had attended the school where Christine had worked. In the course of the consultations about her knee they had often chatted about the children's progress and other family matters.

Because her knee isn't a problem for her now, she asks Luke about her back and whether he thinks he can help. Luke asks about the problem, what might have caused it and when it hurts her most. He asks if there are any other health changes or concerns, but Christine can't think of anything. Luke asks her to slip her clothes off down to her underwear so that he can examine her to see if he can find what's wrong. While she does that he says he'll go and wash his hands. Previously, Luke had not asked Christine to undress to her underwear.

Christine complies, undergoes the examination and agrees to the treatment that's suggested. Luke notices that she's very quiet compared to when he's seen her before so asks if she's alright and if the treatment is hurting her. She says she's fine, and afterwards, makes an appointment for the following week.

Later that day, Christine calls the practice and speaks to the principal. She says that the more she thinks about her experience today, the more she feels humiliated. She wasn't expecting to have to get undressed to her underwear, and is now feeling a bit sore. She cancels her appointment for the following week.

- What has happened?
- How could we help Luke to better understand Mrs Taylor's concerns?
- How would you help Luke to learn from this situation for the future?