

Please Tell Me

How to use this book ...?

The short answer is that *Please Tell Me* should be used exactly as the person to whom it is given wants to use it. They (or whoever is helping them) can write, draw, colour, stick in, dictate – or just enjoy watching someone else do the work.

There are two basic principles: one that working on the book or looking at it should be something that gives that person pleasure and secondly that its content helps them feel good about themselves and sure that they are valued.

Here are some points for a longer answer:

The gift page must be completed by hand and given from a named person – even if it's from "Sharon and the team".

Everyone needs to know the book exists and it needs to be accessible whether the recipient is living in residential care or at home with helpers coming in. Yes, this means that someone might spill something on it or it could get torn or lost. So don't put the only copy of anything irreplaceable inside. Use copies where you can. Take screen shots to record special pages and if you need to buy a replacement, it's not going to cost the earth, is it? And you can check the John's Campaign books page for free page downloads.

Because this book is going to be accessible and shareable there may be some details that you don't include. **Be sensitive to the recipient's likely choices.** Keep them for the medical records or the confidential care plan.

Apart from that, anything is okay to include. You can treat it like a scrapbook. Claudia (the artist) hopes that people might like to colour in her drawings as well as adding their own.

The structure of *Please Tell Me* is past, present, future **so it may be that family are best placed to help complete the earlier sections and current carers or visitors the later pages.** But whatever the recipient can do (or dictate) for themselves is best - even if it's not always 100% accurate.

The middle pages (pp 11 & 12) are a little different because they are there to help someone who has a caring responsibility but has only just arrived (an agency worker, for instance). **The regular carer or family member should complete these, selecting only the most essential information.** The questions are only prompts. Jot down whatever is most important. Does s/he hate being left in the dark? Refuse to eat without tomato ketchup? Retain urine like a camel if no-one prompts a toilet visit?

Please use the visitor page (p 20) at the back of the book to write affectionate messages that will make the recipient feel good when someone else reads them to him / her. Remember to say who you are — but whether you're relative, friend or carer a message of friendship is always worth having.

When the recipient moves on — or dies — this book should go with them or be given to whoever they have indicated they would like to read it (p 18).

Please Tell Me is for information and communication. *Please Tell Me More* is for anyone who needs more space to share their thoughts and souvenirs from life so far. Both are £3.99 retail but £1.50 (+p&p) for John's Campaign members, directly from Julia (at Golden Duck).