

## SETTING

Occupational Therapy Rehabilitation Centre

## PATIENT

You are a 45-year-old pharmacist who has been on sick leave for a month due to stress, caused by looking after your 78-year-old father with dementia and working full-time. Your doctor has recommended seeing an occupational therapist to help you manage the stress before you go back to work.

## TASK

- When asked, say that you have been on sick leave for a month because of stress. Your doctor recommended OT to help you deal with it before you return to work.
- Say that you have been looking after your father, who has dementia, for about six months. You were finding it really hard to cope with work and care for him. Say that your relationships with colleagues have added to the stress because you feel guilty that they have had to cover for you.
- Tell the OT that you do want to return to work, but your father still requires constant supervision, so you don't think you can.
- Admit that you haven't asked family members for help yet. Say you don't think your father will want a carer so will ask family members first.
- Agree to try some of the stress management strategies the OT has suggested.

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## THERAPIST

You see a 45-year-old pharmacist who has been on sick leave for a month due to stress, caused by looking after his/her 78-year-old father with dementia and working full-time. His/her doctor has recommended seeing an occupational therapist to help manage the stress before he/she goes back to work.

## TASK

- Find out the reason for the patient's visit.
- Explain common causes of stress (e.g., work, family, relationships, etc.). Find out if any of these are relevant to the patient.
- Reassure the patient about his/her feelings (common, colleagues probably don't mind, etc.). Ask if the patient feels ready to return to work.
- Explore options for support in caring for his/her father (e.g., family members, full-time carer, etc.).
- Strongly recommend talking to family members (extra support, share the responsibility, etc.). Advise on stress management strategies (e.g., maintain a regular routine, eat/drink properly, exercise, sufficient rest, etc.).