OET speaking role play for doctors

Two practice cards for OET Speaking in medicine, with a model opening

Card 1: a patient who does not want a scan (the role-play below)
Setting: general practice clinic. Patient: Mrs. Parker, 64. She has had headaches for about six weeks. Another doctor advised a head scan, and she is reluctant. Task: take a short history of the headaches. Task: explain why the scan is advised, without giving a diagnosis. Task: respond to her reluctance, and agree on a next step. Model opening: Good morning, Mrs. Parker. I'm Dr. Lee. I understand you've been having headaches. Can you tell me about them? Then: How long have you had them, and how often do they come? Then: I can't say yet what is causing them. A scan helps us find out. Then: I can see why you feel nervous. What worries you most about it?

Card 2: a patient who expects a scan he does not need yet
Setting: general practice clinic. Patient: Mr. Patel, 52. He has had back pain for three months and expects a scan. Task: ask how the pain affects his daily life. Task: explain in plain words why a scan is not needed at this stage, and what you suggest instead (staying active, a referral to a physiotherapist). Task: check he is satisfied with the plan, and agree on a follow-up visit. Model opening: Hello, Mr. Patel. Please sit down. How has your back been bothering you? Then: What can't you do now that you could do before? Then: I know you were hoping for a scan. Let me explain why I'd like to try something else first. Then: How does that plan sound to you? If things change, please come back and we'll look again.

1. Greet her and say who you are

Hello, doctor. I'll be honest, I'm only here because my husband made me come.	Good morning, Mrs. Parker. I'm Dr. Lee. I'm glad you came.

Good morning, Mrs. Parker. I'm Dr. Lee.	I understand you've been having headaches.	Please sit down. How can I help today?

2. Take a short history of the headaches

On and off for about six weeks. It's nothing, really.	Can you tell me more? Where do you feel it, and how often?
Mostly in the morning. A dull ache. Nothing makes it better.	Thank you. Have you noticed anything else, like changes in your sight?

Can you tell me more about the headaches?	How long have you had them, and how often?	Where do you feel the pain?
Does anything make it better or worse?	Have you noticed anything else, like changes in your sight?	

3. Explain in plain words why the scan is advised

Is it serious? Just tell me straight.	I can't say yet what is causing it. That is why I'd like to arrange a scan.
What does the scan show?	It takes pictures of the inside of your head, so we can find the cause.
I understand, but I don't want to have it.	Thank you for being honest. Can you tell me what worries you?

I'd like to explain why I'm suggesting a scan.	I can't say yet what is causing it. The scan helps us find out.	It's a test that takes pictures of the inside of your head.

4. Respond to her worry about the scan

I don't like those machines. And I'd rather not know.	I can see why you feel nervous. Many people feel the same.
Why can't we just wait and see?	We can talk about that. The risk is that we don't find the cause.

I can see why you feel nervous.	What worries you most about it?	It's your decision, and I'd like to help you make it.
Not knowing can feel worse than knowing.		

5. Agree on a next step and close

Hm, I hadn't thought of it that way.	Would it help to talk it over with your husband first?
All right. Let's book it for next week.	Good. You can change your mind. Please come back if you have questions.

Would it help to talk it over with your husband first?	Shall we book it for next week? You can change your mind.	Come back and see me if you have any questions.

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