

# Neurology Mini-series

## Introduction

Patients with symptoms that may indicate neurological disease account for approximately one in ten visits to GPs and hospital emergency departments<sup>1</sup>. Symptoms can range widely from memory difficulties to muscular, movement and balance problems. The variability, and overlap, in presentations of neurological conditions can make diagnosis difficult. A survey by The Neurological Alliance showed an overwhelming majority of GPs felt they would benefit from further training on identifying and managing people presenting with neurological conditions<sup>2</sup>.

In addition, it has been widely recognised that there is a lack of support to help non-specialists identify when a referral should be made for specialist investigation of neurological symptoms<sup>2</sup>, and high levels of concern by GPs regarding the waiting times for Neurology outpatient appointments<sup>2</sup>. The cases in this module have been chosen to highlight the early signs and symptoms of three common neurological conditions. There is also guidance on differential diagnoses of these conditions, investigation in Primary Care and indications for specialist referral. Because of the overlap in how neurological conditions present, the underlying diagnoses in each of the three cases has not been included in this introduction, in order to mimic more closely the experience of clinical practice.

### Module Aims:

- Increased confidence in focussed and pragmatic neurological history and examination
- Improved recognition of the presentation of three common neurological diseases
- Awareness of differential diagnoses of these presentations and the investigations appropriate to Primary Care
- Knowledge of when specialist referral is indicated and what the patient can expect from this.