* **Red Flag:**  A patient with chronic migraines stated that he was not taking medication prescribed for his headaches.
* **No Probe:** The provider did not ask him why.
* **Contextual Factor spontaneously revealed by patient:** The patient went on to say that he’d lost his medications somewhere in his house. He also said that he struggled with keeping things organized at home. (Domains: Skills, Abilities and Knowledge)
* **No Contextual Plan of Care made:** The provider did not address the patient’s situation. This was a missed opportunity to explore options with the patient for keeping track of his medications (e.g. getting a pillbox, making a plan to leave medications somewhere reliable like a medicine cabinet).
* **Red Flag:**  The patient declined a flu vaccine.
* **No Probe:** The provider did not ask him why.
* **Contextual Factor spontaneously revealed by patient:** The patient went on to say that he always became sick with the flu right after getting the vaccine. (Domains: Skills, Abilities, and Knowledge)
* **No Contextual Plan of Care made:** The provider\* did not address the patient’s understanding of the flu vaccine by explaining that is does not contain a live virus and so while he might get some mild flu-like symptoms, he will not get the flu. The patient may not understand how severe the actually viral infection is.
* **Red Flag:** The patient, who had been instructed to wear an ankle brace, arrived at his appointment without the brace.
* **Probe:** The provider did not ask the patient why he wasn’t wearing it.
* **Contextual Factor:** The patient spontaneously revealed that he knew he was supposed to wear a brace but had trouble lacing it up on his own because of arthritis. (Domain: Skills, *Abilities*, and Knowledge)
* **No Contextual Plan of Care:** The provider did not comment, nor address the patient’s ability to use his ankle braces. The provider missed an opportunity to explore options to help the patient including seeing if he could get help with lacing or ordering a Velcro one.
* **Red Flag:** When a provider recommended a herpes zoster vaccine, the patient declined, saying “no thanks.”
* **No Probe:** The provider did not ask why.
* **Contextual Factor Revealed by Pt.:** The patient went on to say that he didn’t want a shingles shot because he had a bad reaction to a different vaccination last year. (Skills, Abilities, and Knowledge Domain)
* **No Plan of Care:** The provider did not address the patient’s understanding of the zoster vaccine, nor did they explain that one reaction to a medication does not mean every medication will give him the same reaction.
* **Red Flag:** A patient with diabetes stated that instead of using his home glucometer, he scratches his skin to check how his diabetes is doing.
* **No Probe:** The provider did not respond.
* **Contextual Factor:** However, the patient went on to say that he had friends who do this too: they scratch their skin and if the cut heals quickly, then they conclude their diabetes is under control. (Domain: Skills, Abilities, and Knowledge)
* **No Contextual Plan of Care:** Again, the provider did not respond and referred to the patient’s recent A1C. Missed opportunity to educate the patient on the correct methods to check at home to see if his diabetes is under control.
* **Red Flag:** A patient has missed 9 appointments in the past 4 months.
* **No Probe:** The provider did not respond.
* **Contextual Factor Revealed by Pt.:** The patient stated he often gets dates confused and “mixed-up.” (Domain: Skills, Abilities, and Knowledge)
* **No Plan of Care:** The provider did not explore options to help the patient remember his appointments. Missed opportunity to strategize options, for example, providing the patient with a printout of appointments, suggesting the patient put the appointments in a calendar, or seeing if he has a phone with an option of calendar reminders.
* **Red Flag:** When a provider recommended a flu shot, the patient declined, saying “no thanks.”
* **No Probe:** The provider did not ask why.
* **Contextual Factor Revealed by Pt.:** The patient went on to say that he didn’t want a flu shot because it always made him sick with the flu in the past. (Skills, Abilities, and Knowledge Domain)
* **No Plan of Care:** The provider did not address the patient’s understanding of the flu vaccine, that the vaccine does not contain a live virus and the patient would not get the flu from the shot.
* **Red Flag:** When a provider recommended a flu shot, the patient declined, saying “no thanks.”
* **No Probe:** The provider did not ask why.
* **Contextual Factor Revealed by Pt.:** The patient went on to say that he didn’t want a flu shot because it always made him sick with the flu in the past. (Skills, Abilities, and Knowledge Domain)
* **No Plan of Care:** The provider did not address the patient’s understanding of the flu vaccine, that the vaccine does not contain a live virus and the patient would not get the flu from the shot.
* **Red Flag:** A patient has missed 38% of his scheduled appointments in the last year.
* **No Probe:** The provider did not ask why he’s missed so many appointments.
* **Contextual Factor Revealed by Pt.:** The patient went on to say that he was having memory issues and was having difficulty remembering things. (Domain: Skills, Abilities and Knowledge)
* **No Plan of Care:** The provider did not incorporate the patient’s context into a plan of care. In addition to cognitive testing, possible strategies could be to suggest the patient put reminders in his phone for upcoming appointments or see if a family member or friend could help him keep track of his schedule.
* **Red Flag:**  A patient with diabetes mentioned that he was not taking his metformin as prescribed.
* **No Probe:** The provider did not ask if anything in the patient’s life was affecting his ability to take his medication as directed.
* **Contextual Factor spontaneously revealed by patient:** The patient went on to say that he had a difficult time remembering to take his medication. (Domain: Skills, Abilities, and Knowledge)
* **No Contextual Plan of Care made:** The provider did not ask follow up questions about the patient’s memory problem, nor discuss strategies to help the patient remember -- such as reminders on his phone, a calendar on the refrigerator, a pillbox etc.
* **Red Flag:** A patient with sleep issues declines to be tested for sleep apnea.
* **Probe:** The provider asked why.
* **Contextual Factor Discovered by Probing:** The patient explained that he had talked to a friend whose wife had sleep apnea and based on that conversation he didn’t believe he had it. (Domain: Skills, Abilities, and Knowledge)
* **No Contextual Plan of Care made:** The provider dropped the suggestion, rather than address the patient’s understanding of how sleep apnea is diagnosed. The provider missed an opportunity to explain to the patient that a diagnosis should be made by a clinician and not by comparing himself to his friend’s wife.
* **Red Flag:** The patient had missed three appointments in the past four months.
* **No Probe:** The provider did not ask the patient why.
* **Contextual Factor:** The patient mentioned that he was forgetful. (Domain: Skills, Abilities, and Knowledge)
* **No Contextual Plan of Care:** The provider did not evaluate memory loss nor consider whether it could be a factor in missing appointments. This was a missed opportunity to explore options, including whether he lived with someone who could remind him, or if he could set alarms/reminders for instance on on his phone.
* **Red Flag:** A patient with a history of heart attacks and chronic angina mentioned that he doesn’t always keep nitroglycerine tablets with him as recommended.
* **No Probe:** The provider did not ask the patient why.
* **Contextual Factor Revealed by Pt.:** The patient went on to say that he often travels and forgets to bring the tablets with him. (Domain: Skills, Abilities, and Knowledge)
* **No Contextual Plan of Care:** The provider did not address the patient’s situation. Missed opportunity to develop strategies to manage meds while traveling; one would be to suggest the patient put a note in his luggage reminding him to pack the meds, or keep extra doses already pre-packed in the luggage.
* **Red Flag:** A patient declined a flu vaccine.
* **No Probe:** The provider did not ask the patient why.
* **Contextual Factor Revealed by Pt.:** The patient went on to say that every time he got the flu shot in the past, he came down with the flu. (Domain: Skills, Abilities and Knowledge)
* **No Contextual Plan of Care:** The provider did not respond. Missed opportunity to explore what symptoms the patient actually experienced, explain to the patient that the vaccine contains an inactivated form of the virus and cannot transmit the infection, and review the benefits and true risks of vaccination.
* **Red Flag:** The patient ran out of a prescribed medication.
* **No Probe:** The provider did not ask the patient why.
* **Contextual Factor:** The patient went on to say that he’d lost the piece of paper that has his medication refill names and number on it and didn’t know how to refill his medication without it. (Domain: Skills, Abilities and Knowledge)
* **No Contextual Plan of Care:** The provider did not comment, nor address the patient’s ability to refill medications and simply placed an order in CPRS. The provider missed an opportunity to educate the patient on how to order his medications. Possible strategies include making sure the patient has the nurse’s number, or seeing if the patient knows about My HealtheVet.
* **Red Flag:** A patient declined a recommended mammogram.
* **Probe**: The provider didn’t ask why.
* **Contextual Factor:** The patient went on to say that she believes mammograms can actually cause cancer and are not effective. (Domain: Skills, Abilities, and Knowledge)
* **Contextual Plan of Care:** The provider did not address the patient’s deep misunderstanding of the risks of mammograms, nor did they discuss the evidence supporting early detection of breast cancer using mammograms. It’s possible if the patient had more information, they might have reconsidered and consented to a mammogram.
* **Red Flag:** A patient mentioned that he was not taking a prescribed medication.
* **Probe**: The provider asked the patient to explain.
* **Contextual Factor:** The patient replied that he was supposed to take ½ a pill, but was unable to cut the pills. (Domain: Skills, Abilities, and Knowledge)
* **No Contextual Plan of Care:** The provider did not respond. Missed opportunity to order a pill cutter for the patient.
* **Red Flag:** The patient was not taking a bedtime medication as prescribed.
* **Probe:** The provider did not ask why.
* **Contextual Factor:** The patient went on to say that he often forgets to take the medication or falls asleep before taking it. (Domain: Skills, Abilities and Knowledge)
* **No Contextual Plan of Care:** The provider did not comment, nor address the patient’s ability to take his medications as prescribed. The provider missed an opportunity to develop a strategy with the patient to remember his nightly medications such as setting a timer, or placing the medication next to his bed.
* **Red Flag:** A patient with diabetes mentioned that he was not checking his sugar readings at home as had been previously discussed.
* **No Probe:** The provider did not ask why.
* **Contextual Factor:** The patient went on to say that he had stopped checking his sugars at home after a surgery a few weeks ago. He said that instead he was dealing with “healing after surgery.” (Domain: Skills, Abilities and Knowledge)
* **No Contextual Plan of Care:** The provider did not explore how the patients surgical recovery process was getting in the way of monitoring his blood sugar. The provider missed an opportunity to develop a new routine that not only helped his post-surgery recovery, but ensured he was managing his diabetes.
* **Red Flag:** A patient declined the shingles vaccine.
* **No Probe:** The provider did not ask why.
* **Contextual Factor:** The patient went on to say that he didn’t need the vaccine because he never had measles as a child. (Domain: Skills, Abilities, and Knowledge)
* **No Contextual Plan of Care:** The provider did not respond. Missed an opportunity to inform the patient that shingles is the result of having chicken pox, not measles. It’s possible that if the provider had given the patient more information about the vaccine, he would have accepted it.