Checklist for writing information about operations, treatments and investigations

* What is the leaflet about and who is it for?
* What is the procedure?
* Why are they having it? Give the risks, benefits and alternatives (even if there is no alternative).
* What preparation do they need or not need? – do they need to stop any medication beforehand?
* Do they need a general anaesthetic, sedation or local anaesthetic?
* What happens when they arrive at the hospital and who will they meet?
* Will they be asked to sign a consent form or is verbal consent needed?
* What does the procedure involve? How long does it last? What does it feel like?
* What happens after the procedure – pain control, nursing checks, stitches.
* How long will they stay in hospital?
* Do they need someone with them or any special equipment when they go home?
* What care do they need at home?
* What follow-up care is needed? Do they need to visit their doctor?
* What can go wrong, what signs to look out for and what to do if something goes wrong.
* When can they start their normal activities again, for example, driving, sport, sex or work?
* Who can they contact if they have any more questions?
* Tell people where they can find more information, for example, support groups and websites.