

SOPHIEs made easy: Part 3



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This is the third part in a series taking users through a step-by-step approach to the Graphical SOPHIE Editor, so if you're not up to speed with the series it will make sense to get hold of the last two issues of Torus to bring yourself up-to-date.

The 'Medication' tab

In the last part we looked at ways of exiting a SOPHIE question by examining the 'Notes' tab. The second tab to be found on exiting a question is called 'Medication' (Fig.1)

At the top of the frame is the **Problem** field. You will already be familiar with this field because it behaves in exactly the same way as the Problem field in the Notes tab. Click on the down arrow to the right of the box, and a list of Problem titles appears, the same list you set up when configuring the Start box when you began to write this current guideline. Since you are about to generate Medication you will need to click on the particular Problem heading under which you want this Medication to be recorded in the notes.

Clicking on the **Default** button to the right of the Problem box uses the

default problem heading for that medication:-

- In System 6000, the default problem heading is the problem that was highlighted when SOPHIE was started.
- For a hooked SOPHIE in System 6000, it is the problem associated with the note that triggered the SOPHIE.
- In System 5, the default problem heading is the first problem in the problem list.

The **Code** field is used to enter the complete Read Code of the medication that you wish to add (without the leading comma). At this point you will realise why it makes such sense to list all the codes you want to use in your guideline, right at the start of your

At the end of any one question you can only add a Note or generate Medication—you can't have both!

development stage (as referred to in Part 1 of this series).

The **Supply** field is used to enter the quantity that you want to authorise. If no quantity is entered, then the default quantity for that medication will be used from the Multilex database. Do not use the Units scrollable list to select the supply quantity as this information is now directly derived from the Multilex database.

The Advice field is used to enter any

dosage advice. If no advice is entered, then the default dosage advice for that medication will be used from the Multilex database.

So that's the Medication Tab! Painless, or what? It simply means that a prescription will now be generated right at the end of the guideline, when you write the notes to the electronic record; and the prescription will be dealt with in the way that is used as the default for that workstation, which usually means 'Immediately'—i.e. sent to the local printer.

'Advice' and 'End' tabs

There are two more tabs at the end of guideline questions—'Advice' and 'End'—and we'll be coming to those in a moment, but first a word of warning. *At the end of any one question you can only add a Note or generate Medication—you can't have both!* If you do want both then you'll have to do something special (which we will tackle later in the series) but it will mean adding a duplicate question, so we'll save that for later. The good news is that you can use the Advice tab or the End tab without restriction, so it simply means that *of the four tabs you can use only a maximum of three at any one time.*

The Advice tab

Now click on the Advice tab and you will something like Fig. 2.

The first field is called '**Put under heading**' and is analogous to the Problem heading we use for Notes. The difference here is that codes are not used in the Advice section—it's all in plain English. The choice of headers is generated in the Start box (as described in Part 1 of this series) so it is simply a matter of picking the right one for the place where you want to tag your advice text. If no advice heading is selected, then the advice will be entered under the first advice heading.

Let's recap on how the Advice sheet

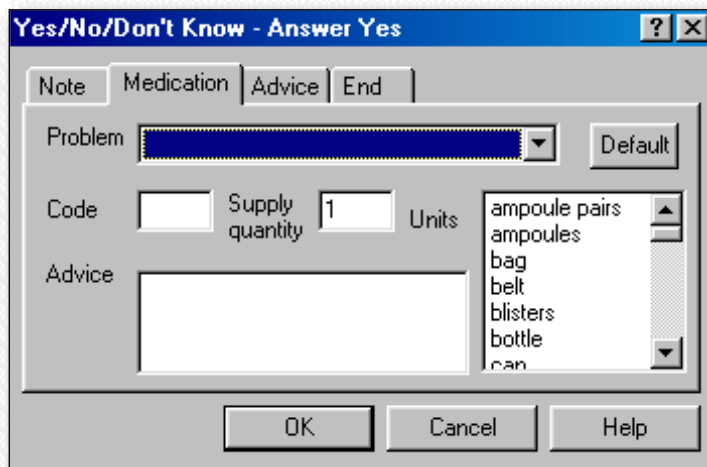


Fig.1 The Medication Tab

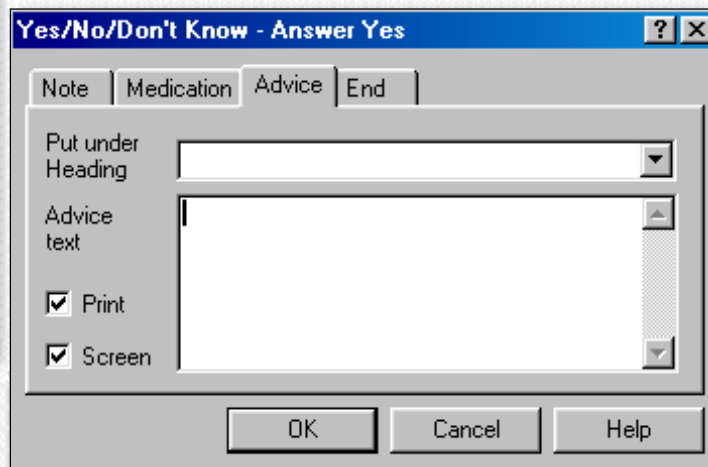


Fig.2 The Advice Tab

is supposed to work, because we are at risk of getting over-complicated here. Firstly the Advice sheet is entirely optional—there's no need to have one at all. If the sheet is optional then so too is the use of the tab at the end of each question—not every question needs to generate advice.

Commonly used Advice headers include things like:

- What we measured today
- Information we recorded today
- The following actions are recommended
- Further information which would be helpful

The Advice text box is used to enter the actual advice text that you want to provide to the patient. Amazing as it may seem the text does not need to have anything much to do with the question it is linked to! For example, suppose the question is being used to register the patient's most recent HbA1c as part of a diabetic management guideline. The advice text may relay information to the patient on the value of that HbA1c—many patients are keen to keep their own record of important measurements for their own reference purposes. On the other hand the advice text may generate a much more general message suggesting that 'Your diabetic control is good/poor/indifferent' on the basis of the value just entered, and suggesting further action to be taken.

There are two extra boxes to the left of this tab, called **Print** and **Screen**. Check the Print box if you want the advice to appear on the printed patient advice sheet in the usual way. Check the Screen box if you want the advice to appear on the screen when the SOPHIE guideline is being run. The text may therefore appear either on the screen, or in the patient's advice sheet, or both. By using only the Screen option the advice text can be used simply as an *aide memoire* to the user.

The eagle-eyed reader will have noticed something that doesn't quite hang together in the last two paragraphs. Hang on, I hear you say, I can simply tap out the words 'Your diabetic control is good' in the Advice text field, but how on earth do I get the Advice text to generate a value which equates to the value just entered in the guideline question?

The answer lies in the use of two characters on your keyboard called 'pipe' and 'pad'. An important fact to note here is that use of this facility is not mentioned in the Help files that come with the Graphical SOPHIE Editor. Pipe is that vertical line with a break in it which you will probably find somewhere in the bottom left hand corner of your keyboard, while 'pad' (also known as the 'at' sign) is the character so commonly used in the middle of email addresses. Together the two characters look like this → |@

All that |@ does is to take the numeric which has been entered into the guideline question and paste it into a text message.

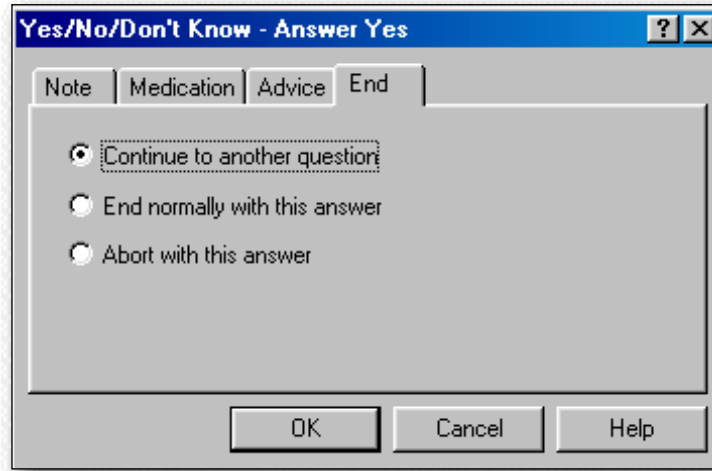


Fig.3 The End Tab

I know we're jumping the gun here because we've not yet covered the other guideline questions in detail, but a couple of examples may suffice. Let's take the \$DATE question as an example. As we will find out next time the \$DATE question asks the user to enter a date for an event, and tags the appropriate Read code with that date before writing it to the record. If you were to use the \$DATE question to ask 'When did your diabetes start?' then you can use the question not only to write a diabetic code to the record, tagged with that date, but also to

The Pad and Pipe facility takes the numeric which has been entered into a guideline question and pastes it into a text message

generate an advice text which includes the |@ character and results in 'We have recorded the fact that your diabetes originated on (that date)'.

Similarly, to use another example, the guideline might incorporate a \$VAL question. This type of question requires the user to enter a number, or value, which can then be tagged as a numeric to a Read code and saved to the record. A \$VAL question might be used to ask 'What was the most recent HbA1c?' and then the code will not only be written to the record but the advice sheet can include |@ to generate the message 'We found that your HbA1c today was x%'.

So much for the Advice tab—potentially powerful but entirely optional—and now it's time to move on to the End tab.

The End Tab

This is the tab that is used to determine exactly what happens at the end of

each question, because, as you can see, there are several available options (Fig. 3).

If you've already connected the guideline question to another question then this tab doesn't even appear. It assumes, quite rightly, that you simply want to proceed to another question! The options do come in handy, however, if you want to terminate the guideline at this point, or if you've unintentionally left a dead-end during your guideline development.

The three choices, which are all mutually exclusive, include 'Continue to another question' as the default. Simply leave the radio button¹ checked, exit the tabs, then use a line to join the question box to the next question box in your guideline.

The second option here is 'End normally with this answer' and will take the user to the question which confirms that you wish to write all the notes and medications to the patient record as well as printing any advice sheet as the final step in running the guideline.

The third option is 'Abort with this answer' which is selected if you wish to abort the guideline execution at this point without saving any notes or medications to the patient record or printing the patient advice sheet. This option is most commonly used when the user has started to run a guideline which is inappropriate for the patient concerned—for example a diabetic protocol on a patient who is not actually diabetic, or an antenatal protocol for a male patient. Because of this type of use it almost always forms part of the first question in a guideline which is used to check the validity of that guideline for that patient, and therefore the aborting procedure results in no loss of data.

¹ 'Radio button' is the jargon used to describe the selection mechanism using a black dot in the centre of a circle, because, like a radio push-button, only one of these can be selected at any one time; selecting a particular button automatically deselects the others.

That completes the exit tab options, which are common to all the SOPHIE question templates. Next time we'll be moving on to look at the other SOPHIE questions and their uses.