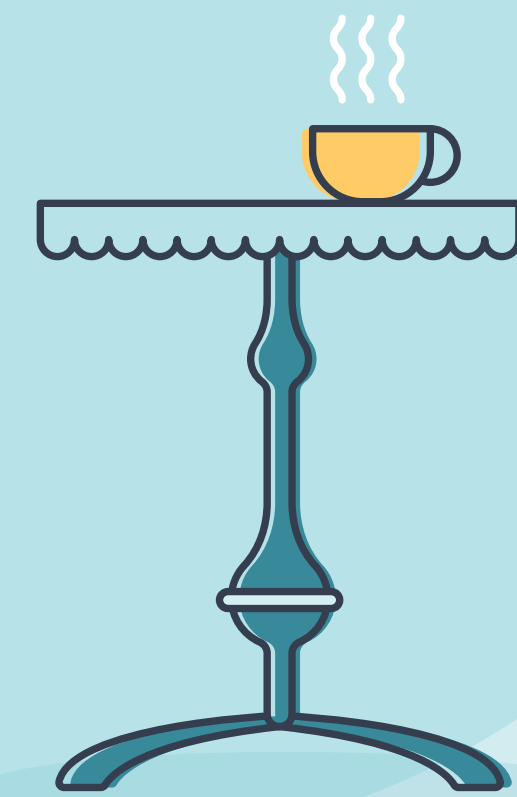





Ellie helps Great Aunt Betsi





Ellie was super excited today because she was travelling on a train. Ellie enjoyed train rides because she loved looking at the countryside outside, especially when she was travelling to South Wales. Ellie also enjoyed train rides because it gave her a chance to read. Ellie was currently enjoying a book about astronauts.



Welcome to Wales
Croeso i Gymru



A trip to Rudry in the school holidays was also always very exciting because it meant visiting Great Aunt Betsi.

Staying with Great Aunt Betsi usually meant walks in the village and nearby woods, hot chocolate, cosy nights

by the fire and exploring a fairy tale castle.

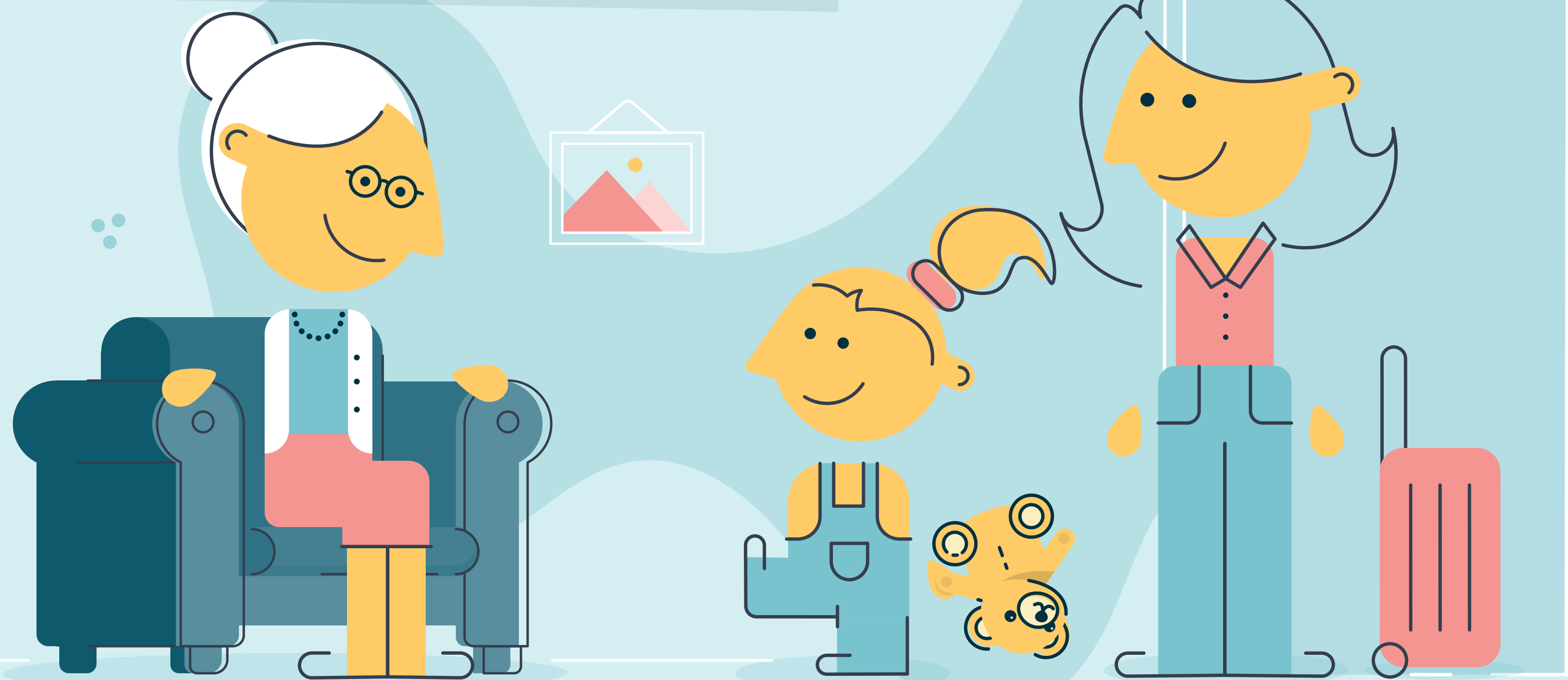
Ellie knew she and her mum, Susan, had not seen Great Aunt Betsi for a few months. Ellie also knew her great aunt had been poorly recently.





It was mid-afternoon when Ellie and mum finally arrived at Betsi's house. Susan had a key so they let themselves in and called out a loud and jolly, "Hello Auntie." Ellie and her mum found Betsi in the front room.

Betsi looked tired but was very pleased to see her relations and got up to give hugs and kisses to her niece, great niece and Mags, Ellie's favourite teddy bear who had also made the long journey to Rudry.





Susan made cups of tea for the grown-ups, and a glass of milk for Ellie. The milk was shared with Mags. Placing the tea down beside her aunt, Susan could see Betsi was not just tired but looking a little poorly too.



“Are you feeling OK Auntie?” asked Susan.

“Yes I’m OK” replied Betsi, “I’ve been tired lately and got some aches and pains but that’s probably to be expected.”

“I thought the doctor had given you some tablets. Aren’t they making you feel better Auntie?” asked Susan.

“Never mind me,” replied Great Aunt Betsi “tell me what you three are going to do on your visit this time.” Betsi was making sure she included Mags in the conversation.

After discussing a few exciting ideas of what to do over the next few days, Ellie went upstairs and unpacked her travel bag. Not only had Ellie brought Mags with her, but she had also brought some other cuddly toys, a few books, a jigsaw, colouring pencils and a compass. Ellie enjoyed unpacking her bag and soon started playing with her toys and Mags.





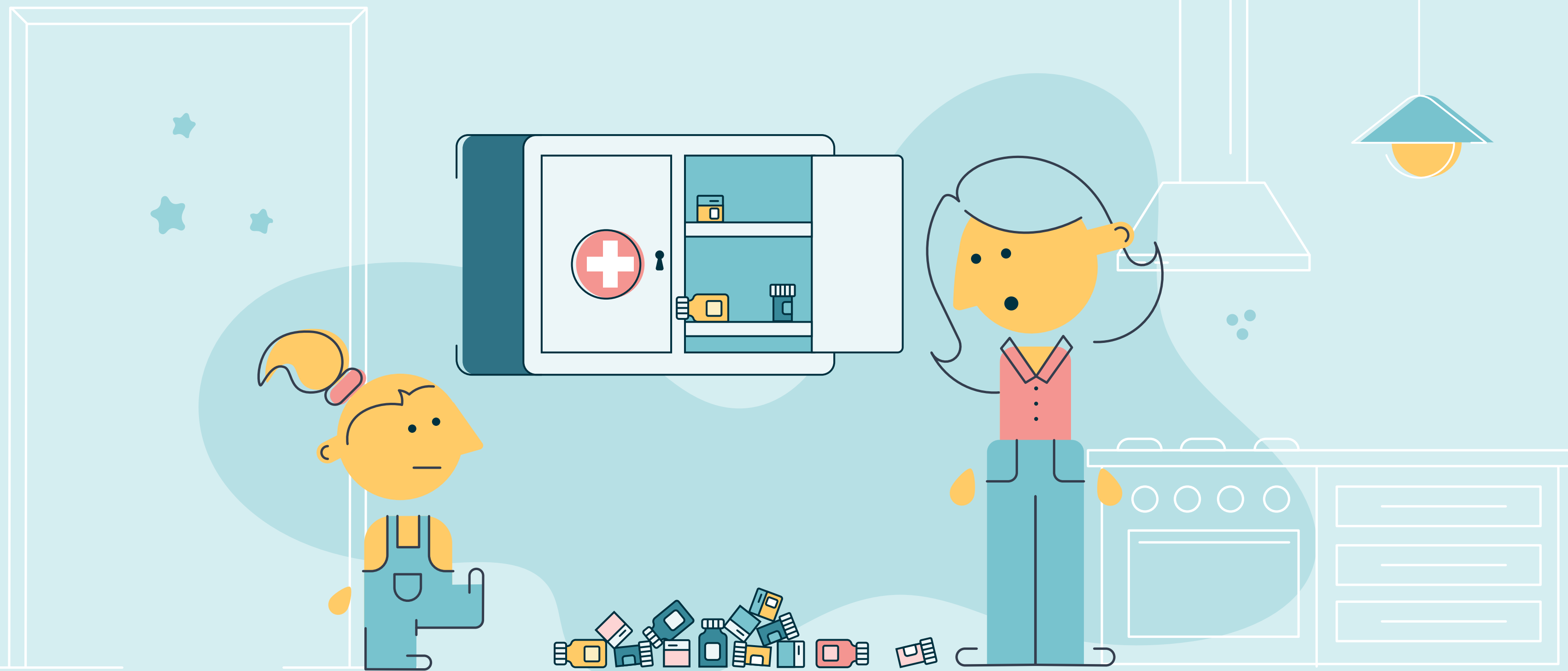
Downstairs, Susan offered to do some cleaning and tidying in the kitchen. Great Aunt Betsi was very grateful and let Susan make a start while she had a short nap.

Ellie and Mags were in the middle of a jigsaw when they heard a loud bang and Susan shouting “ouch” downstairs.

Ellie ran downstairs and found her mum in the kitchen standing next to an open cupboard and a sea of boxes and bottles on the floor around her feet. "Are you OK Mum?" Ellie asked.

"Oh yes dear" replied Ellie's mum "I just opened this cupboard door and was surprised by lots of boxes, bottles and packets falling out. A bottle landed on my foot - ouch!"

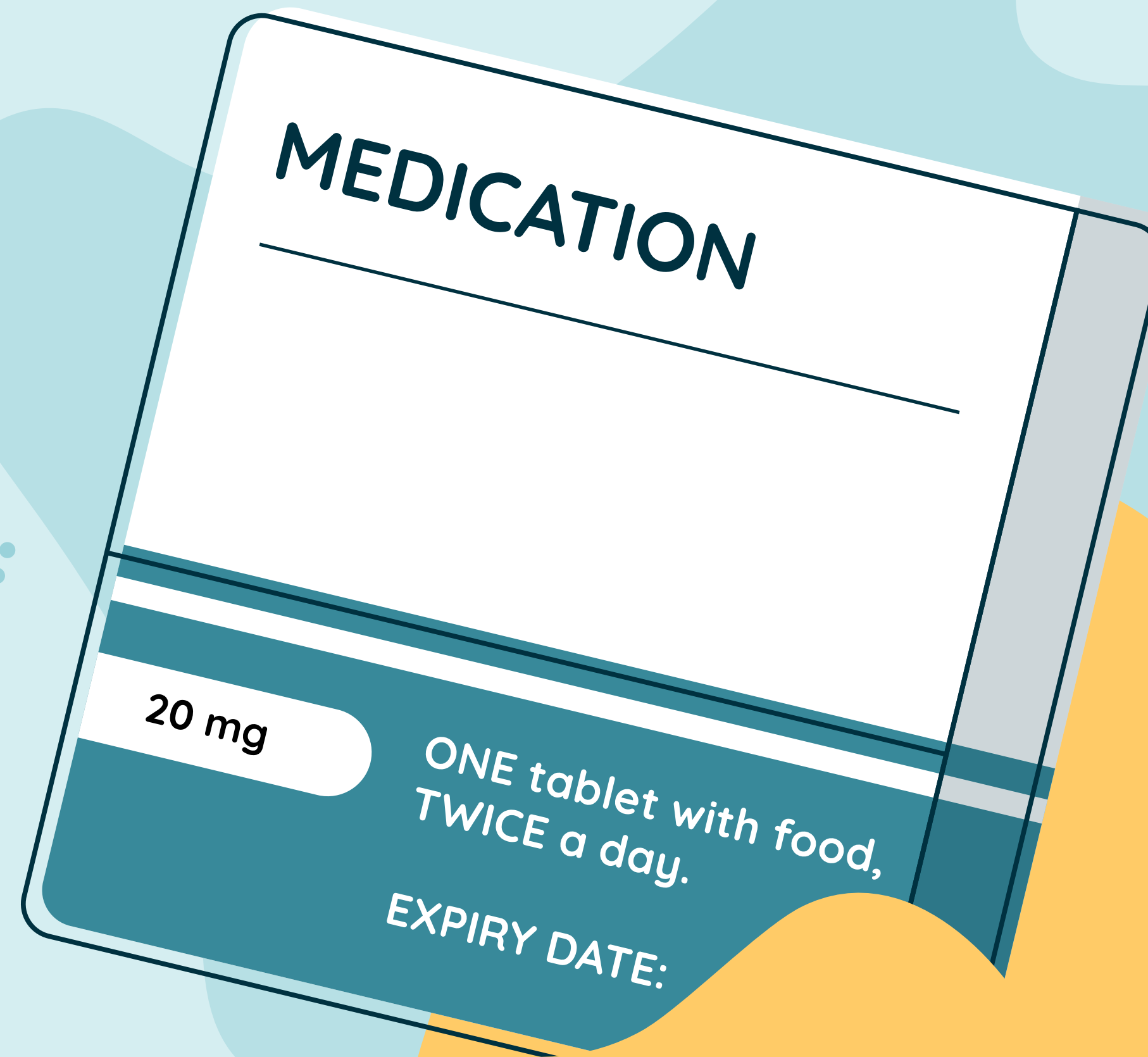
"Shall I help you pick them up?" Ellie was always keen to be helpful.





“No don’t worry dear, I’ll sort it for Auntie. You go back and play” and with that, Susan started picking up all the items on the floor and putting them on the kitchen table. When Susan looked more closely, she saw all the boxes and bottles contained medicines prescribed by the doctor to help Betsi feel better. As Susan was putting the last box on the table she noticed a date stamped on the box.

“Oh dear” Susan said to herself “these tablets should have been used six months ago.”





Susan went back into the front room to check on her great aunt and found that all the clattering in the kitchen had woken up Betsi from her nap.

“Was that a good nap?” Susan started by asking.

“Oh yes dear but something woke me up” Great Aunt Betsi replied.

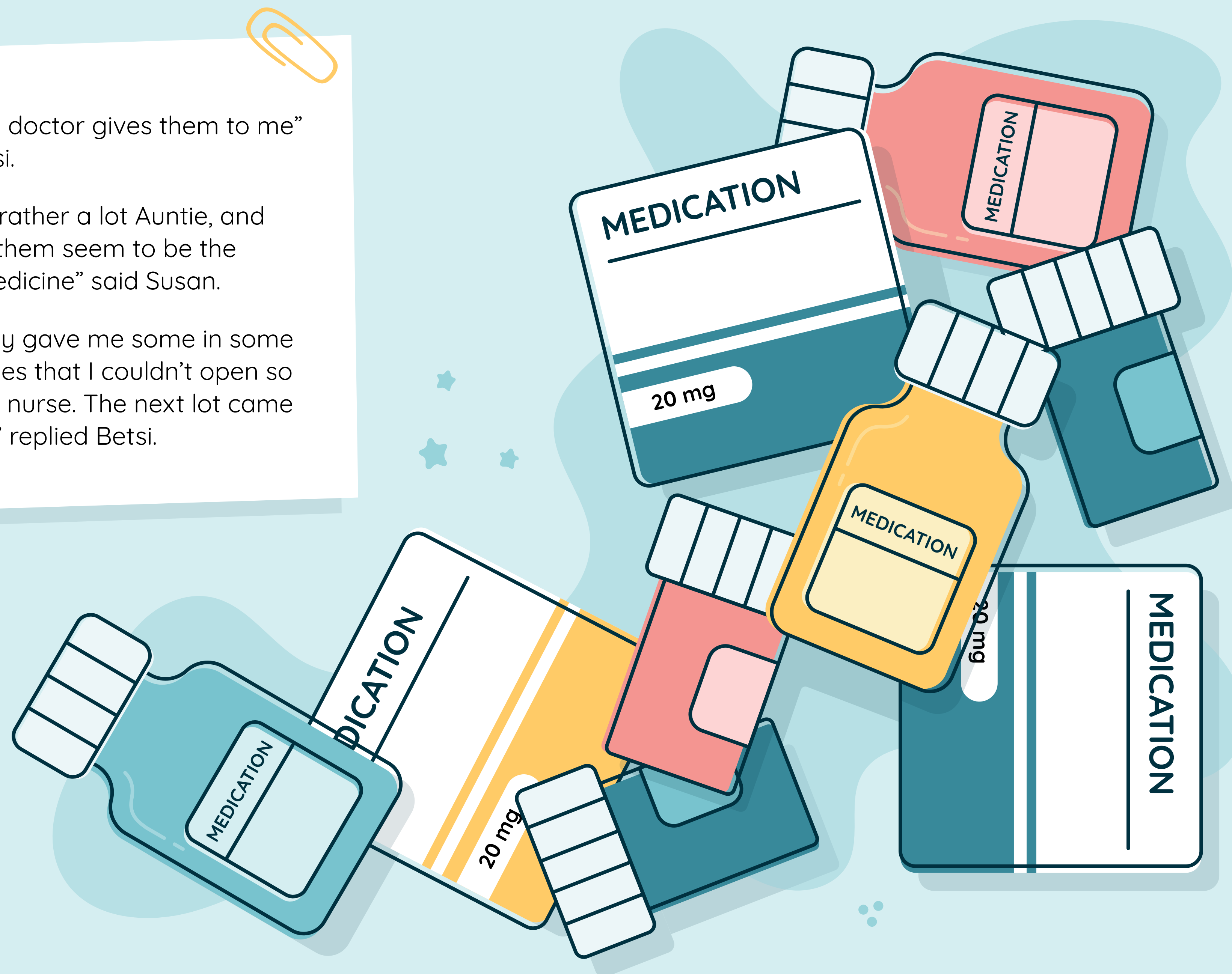
“Oh that was me Auntie. Sorry.” Susan replied.

“I found a lot of medicines in one of your cupboards in the kitchen. Some of them are out of date. Are you meant to have that many boxes and bottles of medicines?”

“Well the doctor gives them to me”
said Betsi.

“There’s rather a lot Auntie, and
most of them seem to be the
same medicine” said Susan.

“Well they gave me some in some
silly bottles that I couldn’t open so
I told the nurse. The next lot came
in boxes” replied Betsi.






“We should very carefully return all the unused bottles that you’re not using or are out of date” suggested Susan. “I can sort that for you if that would help. But Auntie, what about all the boxes too? Have you been taking all your medicines? Is that why you look tired and you mentioned aches and pains?” asked Susan.

“Well there might be the odd one I have forgotten. But when I do remember to take them I must say I don’t like the taste” said Betsi.





“Oh Auntie” sighed Susan. “These are your medicines, your health, we are talking about. I’m no expert but to get maximum benefit from your medication and to stay well and independent for as long as possible, I know you should be following your doctor’s instructions or you’ll continue to suffer with aches and pains.”

Susan then promised to find out what to do with all Great Aunt Betsi’s out of date medicines.





That evening, Susan found some information online and the next day, she, Ellie and Mags went to the local community pharmacy with two bags of out of date medicines.

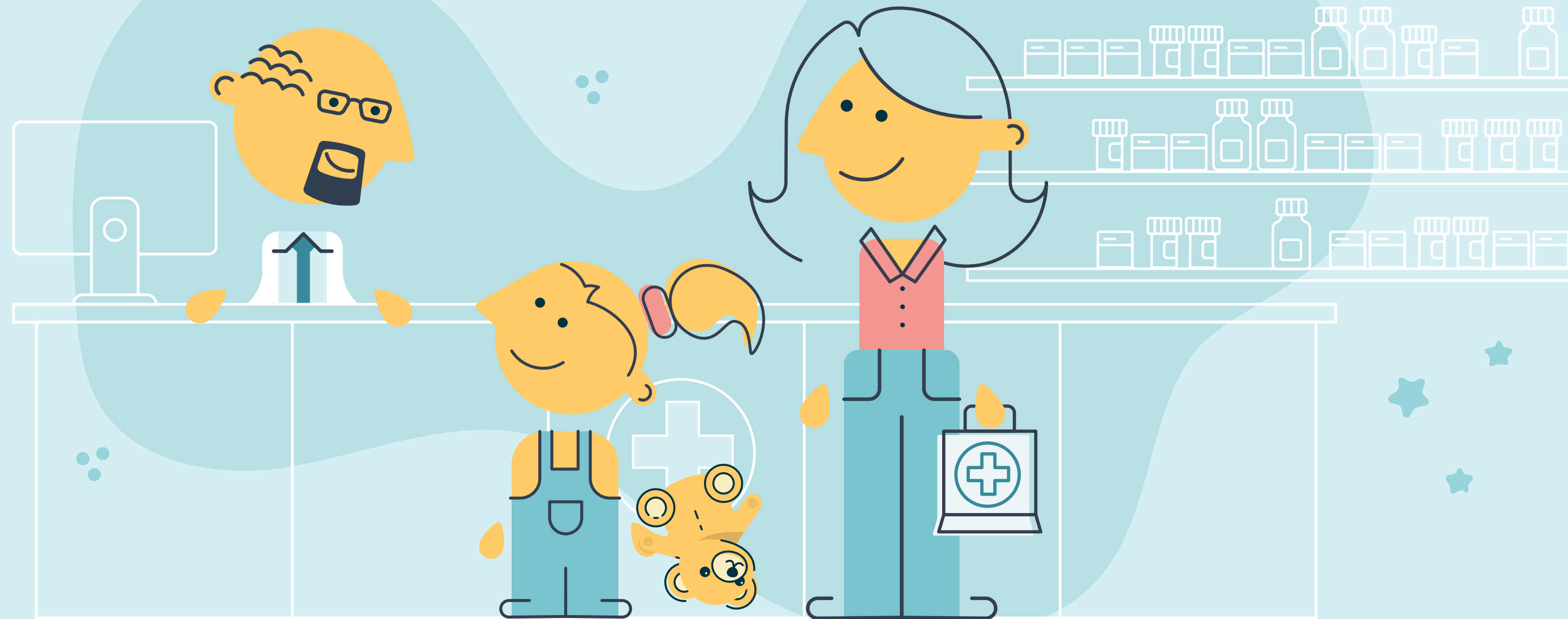
The pharmacist's name was Martin. Susan found him very helpful.

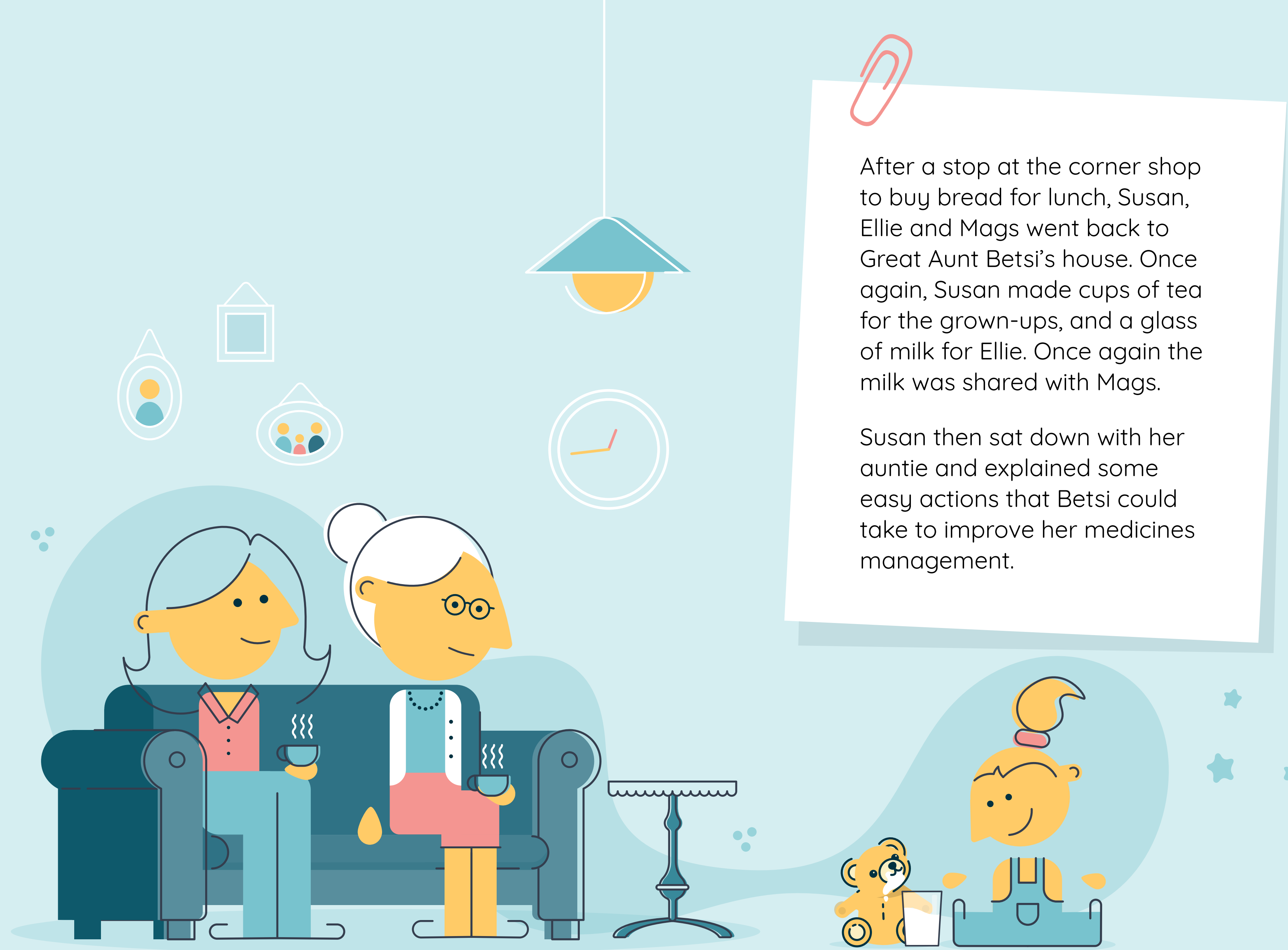
“I’m so glad you have brought these unused medicines into the pharmacy for safe disposal. We say to patients, **‘take them if you can, tell us if you can’t’**. There are a lot of prescription medicines which don’t get used by patients for different reasons, this often leads to people having to go to hospital.

That cannot be a good thing. Going online or to your local community pharmacy you will find support for safe and effective use, storage and disposal of medicines. Any help you can give your aunt to manage her long term condition better, would be fantastic” said Martin.

Martin also gave Susan a special pharmacy disposal bag for any other unused medicines.

Susan, Ellie and Mags had listened very carefully to what Martin told them.

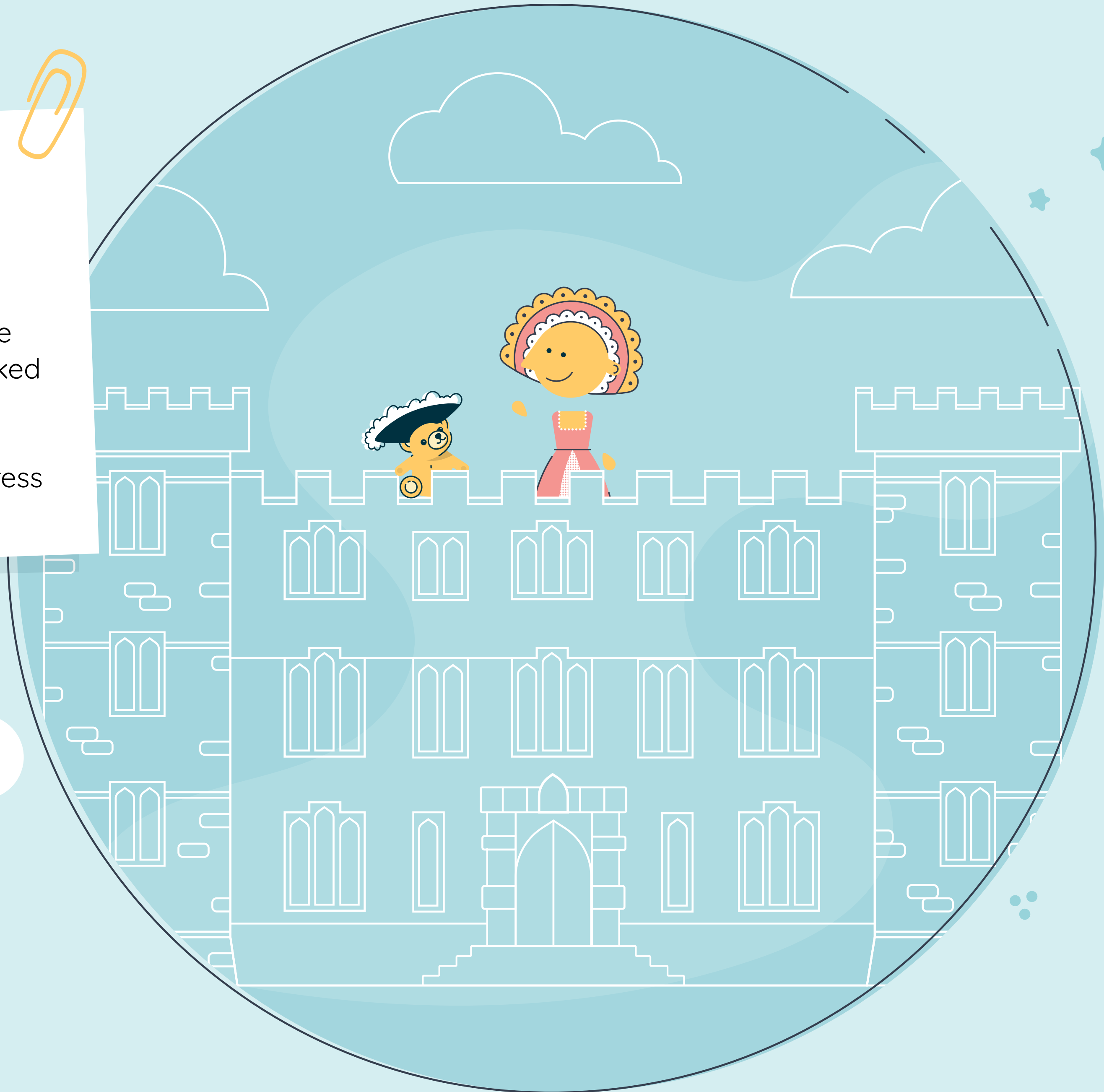
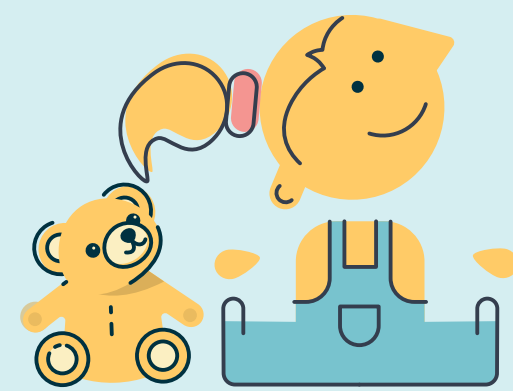




After a stop at the corner shop to buy bread for lunch, Susan, Ellie and Mags went back to Great Aunt Betsi's house. Once again, Susan made cups of tea for the grown-ups, and a glass of milk for Ellie. Once again the milk was shared with Mags.

Susan then sat down with her auntie and explained some easy actions that Betsi could take to improve her medicines management.

While the grown-ups were downstairs talking, Ellie was upstairs finishing her jigsaw and looking forward to exploring the fairy tale castle later that day. Ellie always liked exploring with Mags and, as it was school holidays, they might be lucky enough to dress up in Tudor costume.





For more stories featuring Ellie,
her family, friends and teddies,
as well as accompanying
teaching resources, visit:
www.abpischools.org.uk



BYE —



Designed by tothepoint

Story by Thomas Andrews
Scientist and educationalist

