

MRCPC COMMUNICATION SKILLS STATION

CANDIDATE INFORMATION

This station assesses your ability to obtain consent for a medical procedure.

This is a 9-minute station consisting of spoken interaction. You will have up to 4 minutes before the start of this station to read this sheet and prepare yourself. You may make notes on the paper provided.

When the bell sounds you will be invited into the examination room. Please take this instruction sheet with you. The examiner will not ask questions during the 9 minutes but will warn you when you have approximately 2 minutes left.

You are not required to examine a patient.

The encounter should be focussed on the task. The good candidate will choose factually correct information, convey this in an appropriate way, and react well to the emotional context of the station. You will be penalised for asking irrelevant questions or providing superfluous information. You will be marked on your ability to communicate, not the speed with which you convey information. You may not have time to complete the communication.

You are: A specialty registrar (ST4) working in a District General Hospital

You will be talking to: Helen Jones, the mother of Tony, 5-years old.

Setting: The side room on a paediatric ward.

Background information: You have been asked by your SHO to review Tony, a 5-year old boy with signs of suspected meningitis. He has been miserable for a few days, is off colour, feverish and has a headache. You decide that he needs a lumbar puncture.

Task: To seek verbal consent for this procedure.

YOU ARE NOT EXPECTED TO GATHER THE REST OF THE MEDICAL HISTORY

ROLE PLAYER INFORMATION

This is a 9-minute station consisting of spoken interaction between you and the candidate. There is no discussion with the examiner.

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You are: Helen Jones, the parent of Tony, 5-years old.

Background information: Tony has been miserable for a few days, he is off colour, feverish and has a headache. You have never seen him quite so unwell.

Any other information: Tony is the eldest of 3 children.

Your general feelings:

- Anxiety about Tony's illness.
- You don't want him subjected to more painful tests and distress.

The following questions are for your guidance. They should not be asked as a list.

- What does it involve?
- Would it hurt, and could he have an anaesthetic?
- What can be done to reduce the pain?
- Is it dangerous, what side effects?
- When will I know the result?
- What if he doesn't have it done, can't you treat him anyway?

The main thing is to be CONSISTENT with your story and emotional response with each candidate.

EXAMINER INFORMATION

This station assesses the candidates' ability to obtain consent for a medical procedure

This is a 9-minute station consisting of spoken interaction between the candidate and role player. You should remind the candidate when 2 minutes remain; otherwise you should remain silent during the examination time.

Introduce yourself and the station and collect the marksheet. Then introduce the candidate to the role player and retire to observe the candidate's performance.

If the candidate finishes early, you should check that they have finished. If yes, they should remain in the room until the session has ended.

The candidates' task: To seek verbal consent for this procedure.

GUIDE NOTES TOWARDS EXPECTED STANDARD

Examiner marking criteria:

Candidates should:

- Reassure parent
- Clearly explain about LP - why is it necessary and what is involved
- Explain about analgesia
- Explain what to expect afterwards
- Explain risks - infection, leak, headache, technically unsuccessful
- Explain benefits - confirm diagnosis and management, selection of treatment, length of treatment, follow-up arrangements