

MRCPC COMMUNICATION SKILLS STATION

CANDIDATE INFORMATION

This station assesses your ability to deal with a clinical problem.

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) in Paediatrics

You will be talking to: Sally Jones, the mother of David Jones, a 5-week old baby who was born at term, birthweight 3.5 kg.

Setting: Side room of paediatric ward.

Background information:

David is being investigated for prolonged conjugated jaundice. During the night David has become drowsy and is not feeding and has been having brief periods of apnoea and is requiring supplemental oxygen to maintain his saturations at more than 90%.

You have noted that David was meant to have been prescribed Phenobarbital (phenobarbitone) 15 mg once a day, two days previously but instead has been given 75mg once daily as the writing on the prescription was misinterpreted..

His jaundice started on the second day of life. He was given phototherapy for jaundice in hospital for days 2-5 but has been jaundiced ever since. He was initially breast fed but his mother's milk dried up.

You have not previously been involved in this baby's care.

Task: To talk to Mrs Jones about the prescribing error and its effects on her son

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

MRCPCH COMMUNICATION SKILLS STATION

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: Sally Jones. Mother of David, 5 weeks.

Background information: You are the mother of David Jones a 5-week old baby being investigated for prolonged jaundice. This started on the second day of life. He was given phototherapy (fluorescent lights) for jaundice in hospital for days 2-5 but has been jaundiced ever since. You took him home one week after birth.

He has been started on a drug as part of his investigations but unfortunately has been given 5 times the intended dose.

David is your first child. His current admission to hospital has been for 2 days. You have noticed that he is very sleepy.

David has not eaten today. He is jaundiced and has stopped breathing briefly. He is currently receiving oxygen via a tube under his nose and is on a saturation monitor.

Any other information: You breast fed him for two weeks but your milk dried up.

Your general feelings:

- You show controlled anger
- You want to know why this has happened

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

- Why is he now on oxygen?
- What are the potential problems / side effects?
- Will it delay the investigations for his jaundice?
- What will be done by the hospital to prevent it happening again?

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 deal with a clinical problem

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 talk to Mrs Jones about the prescribing error and its effects on her son

GUIDE NOTES TOWARDS EXPECTED STANDARD

Examiner marking criteria:

Candidates should:

- Conduct the interview in an appropriate manner
- Explain to the parents of how the error occurred
- Apologize for the reported mistake
- Recap the situation and to invite parents' questions about the possible toxic effects to David and how these will be monitored:
- Detail the actions necessary which will include:
 - notification of an adverse incident to the Hospital Trust
 - to document fully in the medical records of the patient the prescribing error and actions taken
- Reassure parent.