
COLLEGE EXAMINATION

The MRCGP examination

The following questions were set as part of the examination for Membership, 15 May 1984.

Practice Topic Question Paper

Time allowed two hours

All questions to be answered

Question 1

You need to employ a new receptionist. Describe how you might go about this and the qualities you would look for.

Question 2

A 17-year-old boy has recently been diagnosed as having idiopathic epilepsy following hospital investigation. What factors would you consider in discussing the problem with him and what specific areas would you want to cover?

Question 3

- What factors should one consider when deciding to treat a patient with a suspected myocardial infarction at home?
- Write short notes on the use of computers in General Practice.

Modified Essay Question (MEQ)

Time allowed one hour and thirty minutes

Instructions

- There are 8 questions in this MEQ paper.
- Answers should be brief, legible and concise. Total time allowed is one hour and thirty minutes.
- Answers should be written in the space provided. If more room is required use the reverse side of the question sheet.
- In those questions where a definite number of answers are asked for do not give more answers than are requested (the extra answers will not be marked).
- You are advised not to alter your answers after completing the whole MEQ and not to look through the book before you start. This may distort your natural assessment of the case and cause you to lose marks.
- The MEQ is a test of your practical approach to a developing general practice problem and as such you gain more marks for your management of the problem than for your pure factual knowledge.
- The available marks vary between one question and another; you are advised to work steadily through and not delay too long on any one question.
- Each page of the MEQ is marked independently. You should therefore answer each question specifically, even if this answer involves repetition of part of an earlier answer.
- As a rough guide, it is indicated when you are approximately halfway through this paper.

● Sarah Goldberg a Jewish girl aged 19 years, lives in a large old house used as a commune and leased by an inner city local authority. Always erratic in taking her oral contraceptive, she

gave up the Pill three months ago, and has had unprotected intercourse on several occasions, most recently during the previous evening. She is extremely worried that she may have become pregnant, and asks you to prescribe the 'morning after' pill.

- List the possible explanations of this general pattern of behaviour.
- What are the possible responses to her request? Outline the disadvantages of each of these.

● After discussing the 'morning after' pill with you Sarah decides that she does not want to take it. She returns four weeks later with her 20-year-old unemployed West Indian boyfriend Sylvester Lawrence. They are both delighted that her pregnancy is positive.

What might you discuss with them at this first interview and why?

● In the fifth month of her pregnancy, Sarah comes to see you and says that she and her friends in the commune have found a radical, qualified midwife who is prepared to deliver the baby in the squatting position at home. She asks you to provide emergency cover for this.

In what different ways might a General Practitioner respond to her request? What are the advantages and disadvantages of each?

● A few weeks later Sylvester comes to see you on his own, and says that he is fed-up and depressed. He appears thin, unshaven and dishevelled, and asks you to prescribe something to give him more energy. You suspect that he may be abusing drugs.

- How would you confirm or exclude this suspicion?
- What other reasons could explain this presentation?

● Sarah delivers at term satisfactorily a baby girl, Poppy, weighing 5lbs (2.3 kg). Four weeks later, you meet the family's Health Visitor to discuss their future.

What points would you wish to consider with her and why?

● During an ensuing consultation, you discover that Sarah and Poppy have been evicted from the commune and have found temporary accommodation in a bedsitter just outside your practice area. She asks if they are to stay on your practice list.

What factors would you consider in reaching a decision?

● When Sarah attends for Poppy's first immunization she tells you that Sylvester has left her and that life is not worth living without him. Sometimes she feels like "ending it all".

What are your options for managing this situation? Which one would you favour and why?

● At a practice meeting Sarah's problems and that of other young families in a similar predicament are discussed by the partners.

What initiatives could the practice team devise to help them. How could they be implemented?