

# The MRCGP examination

The following questions were set as part of the examination for membership, 7 May 1986.

## Practice topic question paper

*Time allowed two hours*

*All questions are to be answered*

### Question 1

Discuss 'minor illness' in general practice.

### Question 2

Discuss the management of allergic rhinitis in general practice.

### Question 3

Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of 'personalized lists' in general practice, as opposed to shared lists.

## Modified essay question (MEQ)

*Time allowed one hour and thirty minutes*

### Instructions

1. *There are eight questions in this MEQ paper.*
2. *Answers should be legible and concise. Total time allowed is one hour and thirty minutes.*
3. *Answers should be written in the space provided. If more room is required use the reverse side of the question sheet.*
4. *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.*
5. *The MEQ is a test of your practical approach to a developing general practice problem and as such you could gain more marks for your management of the problem than for your pure factual knowledge.*
6. *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.*
7. *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.*
8. *As a rough guide, it is indicated when you are approximately half-way through this paper.*

● Camilla Parsons, aged 28 years, attends your surgery for the first time having just moved to your practice area. You learn that she is a consultant surgeon's daughter married to a stockbroker with a child of 18 months, and that she wishes to discuss your practice with you before deciding whether to join your list.

In what different ways might a general practitioner respond? What are the advantages and disadvantages of each?

● Later she says she wishes to join your list, together with her husband and son. She produces from her handbag three containers of pills that she is currently taking. These are Dalmene (Roche) 30 mg ('one at night'), imipramine 25 mg ('one in the morning') and Microgynon 30 (Schering).

Speculate on the problems that you face.

● One week later her husband Henry Parsons, aged 32 years, comes to the surgery for the first time. He complains of reduced hearing in one ear due to wax which is cleared by syringing.

What opportunities does this visit present?

● After a further month Henry telephones the surgery. He says he has decided to have a full check-up at a private medical centre, and the doctor there has asked him to inform you of this.

What are the advantages and disadvantages to Henry of this check-up?

● The report on Henry is sent to you some time later. All the tests are normal apart from the electrocardiogram which is reported as showing Wolff Parkinson White abnormality. Henry comes to see you, as advised by the doctor at the private centre. He seems very anxious.

What problems do you face? How might you manage them?

● Some time later Henry and Camilla bring their son Tom, now two years old, to see you. They tell you that their previous doctor had been treating Tom's eczema with 1% hydrocortisone cream. They both seem very unhappy about Tom's condition although his eczema is restricted to the flexures and appears well controlled.

What reasons may there be for the parent's anxiety and how could you deal with it?

● Shortly afterwards, when you are reviewing Tom's eczema, the parents ask you to tell the health visitor not to call again to see Tom. She had recommended measles vaccination to them, but Camilla's father has told them this is contraindicated.

How might you resolve this conflict?

● Six months later Camilla comes to see you on her own. She happily tells you that she is eight weeks pregnant. From previous consultations you are aware that after Tom's birth she had severe puerperal depression requiring inpatient admission and electroconvulsive therapy. You had tailed off her drugs soon after she had joined your list.

Describe the conflicting thoughts and feelings that a general practitioner might have, and how they might influence him in advising her.