

The MRCGP examination

The following questions were set as part of the examination for membership, 25 October 1988.

Practice topic question paper

Time allowed two hours

All questions to be answered

Question 1

Present arguments for and against the treatment of hypertension in elderly people and discuss your personal approach.

Question 2

Discuss the role of the general practitioner in the recognition and management of sexual abuse in children.

Question 3

Discuss the planned national mammography programme in the light of accepted criteria for screening.

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. 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.
5. 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.
6. 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.
7. As a rough guide, it is indicated when you have reached the mid-point of this paper.

● You are a partner in a group practice of four doctors working from one purpose built surgery. The partnership operates a personal list system whenever possible and has an appointment system allowing an average of seven and a half minutes per consultation. Your second patient at morning surgery is Mrs Partridge, aged 58. She is married to a sales representative, has grown up children and has previously attended with minor illness only.

She sits down and without a word bursts into tears.

What would you hope to achieve by the end of this consultation?

● The next patient, Candy, is aged 30 and unmarried. She produces a written sheet of paper from her handbag and rapidly says she requires:

- (a) Your opinion of a 'wart' on her neck.
- (b) Some cream for her eczema.
- (c) A repeat prescription for her oral contraceptive.
- (d) A weight reducing diet sheet.
- (e) Some sleeping pills for her mother.

What issues are raised by this form of presentation?

● By now your surgery is running late. The practice nurse asks if you will come to the treatment room to see a man aged 76, a patient of one of your partners who is away on holiday. She has been treating his varicose ulcer at weekly intervals and without improvement for two months. A swab taken last week has grown *Bacteroides* sp.

In what ways might you respond and what are the implications of each?

● Later in this surgery you see Mrs Henderson, aged 27. She informs you that six weeks hence she will be joining her husband, an engineer, working in West Africa. She requests travelling advice.

What areas would you like to cover?

● The next patient is a four and a half year old boy brought in by both parents. He has been feverish, lethargic and has complained of a sore throat for a few days. When you try to examine his throat he refuses to open his mouth.

What reasons might there be for this refusal and how might you continue the consultation?

● Later by special appointment, you see a 47 year old general practitioner colleague, who is a patient and who works in a neighbouring town. He says 'I think I am suffering from occupational burnout. I am just not enjoying my job anymore'.

In what ways might the dynamics of this consultation be affected by the fact that the patient is a professional colleague?

● At 8.00 pm Mrs Jones telephones you at home. She tells you that her two year old son, Adam, who has been vomiting all day, has become pale and floppy. On arrival at the house you find him to be moderately dehydrated. Mrs Jones informs you that earlier in the day she had telephoned the surgery and your receptionist had advised her to 'give fluids only as there is a lot of it about'.

What are your objectives during this visit and how might they be achieved?

● The following day you discuss the incident involving Adam with your partners. They share your feeling that your receptionists sometimes give inappropriate clinical advice.

How might this situation have arisen and what actions would you consider taking?