

Station Number

AFFIX CANDIDATE
LABEL HERE

CANDIDATE No:.....

Instructions for Candidates

Scenario

David Hastings is a 42-year-old man who has been admitted with suicidal ideation in the context of his first episode of depression. He meets criteria for ICD-10 moderate depressive disorder. He is reluctant to take tablets. Your consultant has asked you to start him on an antidepressant.

Instructions

Discuss antidepressant treatment with him.

**PLEASE REMEMBER TO HAND YOUR IDENTITY LABEL TO THE
EXAMINER**

Station Number

AFFIX CANDIDATE
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Communication Skills: Antidepressant Therapy

CANDIDATE No:.....

Instructions for Patients

Answer questions based on the following scenario.

Do not volunteer information unless asked.

This station tests the candidate's ability to discuss antidepressant therapy with a patient. It is important that the candidate should respect the patient's wishes, yet give balanced information about particular treatments.

You are David Hastings, a 42-year-old man, admitted with your first episode of depression.

Key Attributes

You are depressed, and anxious. You feel quite defensive about the interview.

You are anxious about starting medication for a variety of reasons, the main one being a sense of denial about being unwell. You are reluctant to accept depression as an illness and tend to view it as a personal weakness that you should be able to overcome.

You don't want to take PROZAC or SEROXAT as you have heard bad things about them causing suicide and panic attacks.

Key Dialogue

The questions that you want to ask are:

1. *Are antidepressants addictive?*
2. *How long do I have to take them?*
3. *Can I have any other kind of treatment?*
4. *If I take them, am I guaranteed to get better?*
5. *What happens if they don't work?*

History of presenting problem

- You have been depressed for about four months, with low mood, feelings of hopelessness, irritability and tearfulness
- Your sleep is disturbed, and your appetite is reduced, with some weight loss
- Concentration is poor; you have been unable to work for the last few weeks
- You have little energy; motivation is poor; and you are unable to enjoy anything

Mental State

- You have some ongoing suicidal thoughts and are uncertain if you would overdose on medication at home.

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Communication Skills: Antidepressant Therapy

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Instructions for Examiners

***REMEMBER TO ASK THE STUDENT FOR THEIR IDENTITY LABEL AND
AFFIX IT TO THE TOP OF THE MARK SHEET.***

This is a clinical case where the candidate must:

- a) Demonstrate their ability to put the patient at ease and allow the patient to guide discussion, whilst at the same time covering the important facts
- b) Be able to deliver important information clearly and succinctly
- c) Demonstrate a good knowledge of the pros and cons of specific therapies (in this case, antidepressant drugs)
- d) Provide the patient with enough information for them to be able to make an informed choice about treatment

It is important that the candidate doesn't stress the benefits of a specific drug, emphasise the benefits of antidepressants, or gloss over the possible side effects.

Station Number

Examiner's Name:

.....

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Communication Skills: Antidepressant Therapy

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Marking Sheet

Please circle the appropriate mark for each criterion. The standard expected is that of a psychiatric Senior House Officer.

Criterion	Performed competently	Performed, but not fully competent	Not performed		
Approach to the patient – Rapport, empathy, and style	2	1	0		
Discussion of principles of antidepressants • Response rates discussed	2	1	0		
Explains probable mechanism of action	2	1	0		
Outlines starting antidepressants: • Likelihood of side-effects in first few days • Latency of effect of 3-4 weeks	2	1	0		
Explains possible side-effects, with discussion of likelihoods	2	1	0		
Explains principles of continuation and prophylactic treatment	2	1	0		
Risks of suddenly stopping: • Explanation of discontinuation syndrome and its symptoms	2	1	0		
Outlines alternatives to antidepressants • Including psychological therapies	2	1	0		
Overall Approach to Task	4	3	2	1	0

Score (Max 20)

Overall Grading of station

Clear Pass

Borderline

Clear Fail