

Station Number

AFFIX CANDIDATE  
LABEL HERE

CANDIDATE No:.....

### Instructions for Candidates

#### Scenario

You have been looking after Jill Deacon, who is a 24-year-old young mother. She had a depressive episode two years ago, requiring antidepressant treatment, and she has recently been admitted with hypomania. She has been stabilised on Lithium.

She was told yesterday by your consultant that she has bipolar disorder.

#### Instructions

Discuss her diagnosis with her.

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

Station Number

AFFIX CANDIDATE  
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Communication Skills: Bipolar Disorder

CANDIDATE No:.....

### Instructions for Patients

**Answer questions based on the following scenario.**

**Do not volunteer information unless asked.**

This station tests the candidate's skills in explaining a diagnosis to a patient in a very short time.

You are Jill Deacon, a 24-year-old mother of one.

#### **Key Attributes**

You are a young mother who has very recently been given a diagnosis of bipolar disorder. You don't really know much about bipolar disorder or what it means – you thought that you had had depression, and that you had had a reaction to some sleeping tablets that your GP gave you a few weeks ago.

You are quite anxious and the discussion should be very much led by you and your wish for information.

#### **Key Dialogue**

You are quite worried because you have heard other people talking about having bipolar disorder, and many of them have been on the ward for months. Many of them are on a lot of medication, and seem sleepy and overweight.

The information you want, and the questions you want to ask (if the candidate does not give you this information) are:

1. *What is bipolar disorder?*
2. *Is it the same as manic depression?*
3. *How many times will I have an "attack"?*
4. *How long do I have to take medication for?*
5. *What happens if I stop my medication?*
6. *I want to have another child later in the year, is this okay?*
7. *Will pregnancy make the illness worse?*
8. *Will my children have this disorder?*
9. *Can I return to work?*
10. *Is there anything else I need to do?*

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Communication Skills: Bipolar Disorder

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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 OSCE station is about informing a patient about their illness. It tests the following skills:

1. Ability to establish rapport and use this rapport as the basis for discussing a diagnosis
2. Sensitivity when discussing difficult topics
3. Ability to give relevant information in an appropriate manner, adapting to a patient-led discussion
4. Knowledge of the implications and treatments of bipolar disorder

Station Number

Examiner's Name:

.....

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Communication Skills: Bipolar Disorder

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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		
<b>Approach to the patient – Rapport, empathy, and style</b>	2	1	0		
<b>Discussion of the diagnosis (one point for each, up to a maximum of 3):</b>					
• Meaning of the term, i.e. episodes of depression and (hypo)mania	1	½	0		
• Synonymous with manic depression	1	½	0		
• Epidemiology	1	½	0		
<b>Aetiology (one point for each, up to a maximum of 2):</b>					
• Genetic predisposition in some cases	1	½	0		
• Often no identifiable cause					
• Stress commonly a precipitant for a particular episode	1 1	½ ½	0 0		
<b>Treatment (one point for each, up to a maximum of 3):</b>					
• Role of medication in reducing risk of relapse	1	½	0		
• Duration of maintenance therapy	1	½	0		
• Risks of stopping medication suddenly	1	½	0		
<b>Pregnancy (one point for each, up to a maximum of 2):</b>					
• Importance of discussion with psychiatric team prior to conception	1	½	0		
• Risk of transmission of disorder	1	½	0		
<b>Future Episodes (one point for each, up to a maximum of 2):</b>					
• Risk of further episodes	1	½	0		
• Early warning signs/ relapse signatures & contingency plans	1	½	0		
<b>Other impacts on life (one point for each, up to a maximum of 2):</b>					
• Employment issues	1	½	0		
• Importance of stress as precipitant	1	½	0		
<b>Overall Approach to Task</b>	4	3	2	1	0

Score (Max 20)

Overall Grading of station

**Clear Pass**

**Borderline**

**Clear Fail**