

Station Number

AFFIX CANDIDATE
LABEL HERE

CANDIDATE No:.....

Instructions for Candidates

Scenario

Jane Kenning is a 32-year-old woman. She was admitted with her baby boy to the mother-and-baby unit 5 weeks ago after developing a puerperal psychosis of the affective type.

She has responded well to antipsychotic medication is due for discharge. She has asked to see you to discuss her illness and what it means for the future.

Instructions

Discuss her recent illness with her, and answer any questions that she may have.

You are **not** expected to take a history of symptoms of puerperal psychosis or examine the current mental state.

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

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AFFIX CANDIDATE
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Communication Skills: Puerperal Psychosis

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 counsel a patient about a recent psychiatric illness.

You are Jane Kenning, a 32-year-old woman. You were admitted to hospital 5 weeks ago after developing a psychotic illness within days of giving birth to your son, Michael.

Key Attributes

You are currently well, and have no symptoms of mental illness.

You are, however, a little anxious to know more about your recent illness. You don't remember being told much about what was wrong with you, and you are a little annoyed at this. However, this is unlikely to result in hostility to the doctor who has come to speak to you.

Key Dialogue

There are a number of specific questions that you want to ask. You should proceed with as many as possible, unless the doctor appears to be addressing your concerns:

1. *What is the diagnosis?*
2. *Does it mean that I have schizophrenia?*
3. *Will I get it again if I have another baby?*
4. *Will I remain well, even if I don't have a baby?*
5. *Is there anything that can be done to prevent it happening again?*

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Communication Skills: Puerperal Psychosis

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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 station tests a number of skills:

1. The candidate's ability to counsel a patient about a recent psychiatric illness.
2. Their ability to respond sensibly, sensitively, and appropriately to specific questions from the patient.
3. Knowledge about risk factors for recurrence for puerperal psychosis.
4. Ability to present the patient with some hope in terms of potential prophylactic treatments.

Good candidates will have a working knowledge of the literature, and will demonstrate confidence when providing the patient about specific rates of recurrence. A candidate may still pass this station without giving accurate figures, but would have to excel in communication skills and not be cavalier in giving incorrect information.

Relevant figures include:

1. Risk of recurrence of puerperal psychosis = 30-60% ^{1 2}
2. Risk of recurrence of psychiatric illness (any type) = 75% ²
3. Prophylactic treatments include: lithium ³ and oestrogen ⁴. Oestrogen may reduce the risk to 10%.

1. Videbech P, Gouliaev G. First admission with puerperal psychosis: 7-14 years of follow-up. *Acta Psychiatrica Scandinavica* 1995;91(3):167-73.
2. Robling SA, Paykel ES, Dunn VJ, Abbott R, Katona C. Long-term outcome of severe puerperal psychiatric illness: a 23 year follow-up study. *Psychological Medicine* 2000;30(6):1263-71.
3. Stewart DE, Klompenhouwer JL, Kendell RE, van Hulst AM. Prophylactic lithium in puerperal psychosis. The experience of three centres. *British Journal of Psychiatry* 1991;158:393-7.
4. Sichel DA, Cohen LS, Robertson LM, Rutenberg A, Rosenbaum JF. Prophylactic estrogen in recurrent postpartum affective disorder. *Biological Psychiatry* 1995;38(12):814-8.

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Examiner's Name:

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Communication Skills: Puerperal Psychosis

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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	3	1 ½	0		
Discussion of diagnosis: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear and confident description of diagnosis 	3	1 ½	0		
Knowledge of likelihood of recurrence of puerperal psychosis: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balance struck between truth and hope 	3	1 ½	0		
Knowledge of likelihood of recurrence of psychiatric illness of any type: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accurate figures score full marks, whilst uncertainty scores less 	2	1	0		
Knowledge of prophylactic treatments which may be of use (one point for each, up to a maximum of 2): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lithium • Transdermal oestrogen 	1 1	½ ½	0 0		
Understanding of risk factors for readmission (one point for each, up to a maximum of 3): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of social support • Pre-existing psychiatric illness • Better prognosis of affective type 	1 1 1	½ ½ ½	0 0 0		
Overall Approach to Task	4	3	2	1	0

Score (Max 20)

Overall Grading of station

Clear Pass

Borderline

Clear Fail