

ORIENTATION INSTRUCTIONS FOR ANNUAL OSCE EXAMINATION

I. INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the PM&R OSCE/SP Examination. This is an education and evaluation OSCE.

- The OSCE is a joint project between the Department of PM&R (NJMS-UMDNJ) and the Kessler Foundation Research Center. Completing this OSCE helps to fulfill the ACGME requirements with respect to the six (6) competencies.
- You are being assessed on an everyday skill like communication in an artificial environment. There are several generic communication skills that you are required to demonstrate in every station. But these are the ones that you use on a daily basis, so do not panic.
- We are using standardized patients (SP's) to assess resident clinical skills. Standardized patients are individuals who have been taught to present history and physical examination findings of a patient in an accurate and reproducible manner. The standardized patients in different stations vary in authenticity. They are professional actors who specialize in communication skills. They are experienced and are usually very good. They have been given highly structured scripts and behave accordingly. If a patient is angry during the station, it is because it is part of the script. I am sure you have sampled SP's during your medical school training.

Format of the OSCE/SP Exam

1. The testing area of the OSCE consists of an area modified to simulate a series of examination suites, equipped with examination tables, commonly used diagnostic instruments (goniometers, reflex hammers, and ophthalmoscopes), latex gloves, sinks, and paper towels.
2. Today you will progress through nine (9) OSCE stations and see seven (7) standardized patients. Different stations will assess different competencies.
3. You have been provided with your own personal schedule and room set-up for this OSCE examination. At the bottom of all materials, you will find your name and a number. This number indicates which OSCE you are assigned to, as well as the time. The schedule indicates times and stations. Keep in mind that the time for completion of forms (differential diagnosis, evaluations, etc.) is

included in the overall time allotment for a particular OSCE Station. Total approximate testing time is about four (4) hours.

4. The standardized patients may have real findings or they may be simulating findings. All of the cases are based on real patient encounters.
5. **You are to treat the standardized patients as you would treat any patient found in your health care setting.**
6. **Introduce yourself to the standardized patient as you would introduce yourself to any patient. End the encounter as you would end any encounter, summarizing your findings and indicating treatment plans e.g., "I would like to arrange for you to have x-rays now...." etc.**
7. Generic communication skills required in each station include:
 - Checking the patient's prior knowledge or understanding
 - Avoiding the use of medical jargon
 - Listening to the patient
 - Dealing with the patient's issues/agenda
 - Pacing the consultation at a rate that is comfortable for the patient
 - Summarizing and finishing with a plan

Skills being assessed today are communication skills, history-taking, physical examination and procedural skills.

History-taking stations are usually straight forward. You need to be able to elicit a focused history, be aware of the specific issues and have enough medical knowledge to develop a differential diagnosis. You need good listening skills and should avoid using jargon.

Physical examination stations will require you to explain what you are going to do to the patient before or during the examination. Be organized and be aware of maintaining patient comfort. Perform physical examination maneuvers correctly and expect that there will be some positive physical findings. Some may be simulated, but you should accept them as real, and factor them into your evolving differential diagnosis.

Some stations may require you to perform a procedure. You may need to obtain a valid consent from the patient. You should be able to explain the nature and the purpose of the procedure including any risks or any possible complications.

8. **On the door of each examination room you will find doorway instructions.** Each door has a number and that number corresponds to the number on the OSCE schedules. The doorway information will present a brief overview of the patient and what type of task or examination you need to perform on the patient. **READ THE INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY.** For your convenience, there will be an

identical copy of the doorway information in the examination room. Please do not write on the doorway information. If necessary, you may take notes on the blank sheets provided in the rooms. Please do not remove the doorway information from the examination room.

9. Equipment for the required tasks will be available for you. **If you feel it necessary to check sensation, please use cotton swabs provided instead of the usual pin**
10. You do not need to perform rectal/genital or breast examinations or check the gag reflex on your patients. If you feel that a rectal/genital or breast examination or gag reflex check would be included as part of the focused physical examination, you may tell the patient this. If the results are available for the case, the patient will provide them to you upon request
11. Fifteen (15) minutes are allowed for each encounter, including time to read the doorway information sheets (**time allotment are written on the students instructions; the time you have with each patient will vary depending upon the task**). **You are responsible for pacing your visit with the patient.** An announcement will be made by the PA system when to begin the encounter. **Do not enter the examination room until your designated time. Please knock before entering a patient's room and proceed to wash your hands before beginning any examination.**
12. Immediately after closing your encounter with the patient, **complete the post encounter** tasks (i.e., differential diagnosis or prescription writing) on the blank papers provided, and give them to the faculty observer during your feedback.
13. All station visits will be fifteen (15) minutes with an additional five (5) minutes for feedback from the faculty observer and standardized patients. The following announcement will be made:

- **Begin Encounter**
 - **Two (2) minutes remaining**
 - **Allotted time over, begin feedback**
 - **Encounter Over—Change Stations**
- YOU WILL THEN HAVE THREE (3) MINUTES TO CHANGE STATIONS**

In some cases you may complete the encounter in less than the allotted time. If so, you may leave the examination room early, but you are not permitted to re-enter. Be certain that you have gotten all the necessary information before leaving the examination room.

14. You are being evaluated on the basis of checklists and rating scales completed by the patients and the observers. Standardized patients will be

providing general information about their time with you such as listening skills, speaking clearly, tact and privacy during examination, and organization of history taking interview, if applicable.

15. **PLEASE REVIEW IMPORTANT POINTS ON “PREPARING FOR AN OSCE (ATTACHED) WITH WHICH YOU SHOULD ALREADY BE FAMILIAR FROM THE OSCE RESIDENT ORIENTATION MANUAL.**

II. WRAP-UP (OR FINAL INSTRUCTIONS)

- ❖ This is an on-going exam. As you are joining a profession that has always valued professional responsibility, confidentiality and intellectual honesty, we would ask that you not disclose any information about this exam to anyone else.
- ❖ Please do not consult any medical references during the exam. You may take notes on the pads provided and the notes will be collected at the end of the examination.
- ❖ **Observers will observe only during the exam. You are not to direct any questions to the observers during the encounter.**
- ❖ Residents participating in the AM OSCE sessions are expected to be back at their clinical sites when the test is completed.
- ❖ Coffee will be provided for the morning OSCE sessions on Thursday and Friday. Lunch will not be provided.

III OTHER:

We will be videotaping you in two (2) specific stations. The videotapes will be given to you along with a checklist activity that is designed to facilitate self-reflection. You will receive further instructions about this after the OSCE.