

Boring stuff we need to know - ANSWERS

SAQ 1

An 83 year old female is BIBA from her home. She was found on the floor and was awake but very confused initially when found by her cleaner. During your assessment you realise she has broken her left neck of femur and needs an operation.

- a. What are the elements of a valid consent? (5 marks)

Legally capable/competent to give consent, ie able to use and understand info to make a decision
Freely given
Informed
Must be specific
Must cover what is actually done

- b. What features do you need to assess to ascertain she has capacity to decide which treatment she wants? (5 marks)

Communication – can patient communicate their decisions
Retention – remember long enough to consider it
Comprehension – understand what is told
Credibility – do they believe the info and the staff
Conclusion – can they synthesise the info to reach a logical decision?

- c. Which patient categories are unable to consent? (5 marks)

Children under 14 (14-16 can if emancipated (only to certain procedures). Implies that parents cannot be provided information
Intellectually impaired – from guardian or board
Mentally ill – treat if urgent
Disabled by intoxication – use implied consent, get second opinion
Impaired by physical illness – implied consent unless advanced directive

SAQ 2

You are asked by the medical student why a patient has been given a triage category 2. With respect to the Australasian Triage System:

- a. List the criteria for giving an ATS category 2 to a patient. (3 marks)

Emergency Ax and Rx <10 mins
Potential risk to life/organ systems if not seen in timely manner
Potential for time critical treatment that would significantly affect outcome depends on treatment commencing within a few minutes of the patients arrival in ED.

- b. List examples of symptoms or possible diagnoses which would elicit an ATS category 2 to a patient. (3 marks)

Chest pain of probable cardiac origin
GCS <13
Fever with lethargy
Significant toxic ingestion or exposure

- c. Which features in a mental health presentation would result in giving an ATS category 1 to a patient? (3 marks)

Severe behavioural disturbance with immediate threat of violence/extreme agitation
Possession of weapons
Self-destruction in ED

SAQ 3

You have been asked by the ED director to write a business case for a new ultrasound machine.

- a. What are the elements to include in your proposal for the purchase? (7 marks)

Assess need – for ED and hospital, numbers, new or replacement
Which model and why – consult other departments, staff, best cost for use
Compatibility with other equipment/departments
Funding – annual budget, special funding, maintenance, running cost
Purchase – and delivery time
Implementation – physical location, power supply
Education – staff, ongoing training
Trial – set time, staff feedback
Assess benefit – audit, cost-benefit analysis

- b. Which features would you consider important in choosing the model to purchase? (5 marks)

Consult other departments
Functions, size
Upgrades available?
Fulfil standards?
User friendly
Support – services, spare parts
Best cost for use
Compatible with other equipment/departments

SAQ 4

You are the consultant on duty when one of the female nurses approaches you and complains about the registrar who has just left after the night shift.

She was rude and condescending towards the nurse, who has decided to tell you because it has happened on other shifts as well. Furthermore, the nurse has got the impression that other members of the nursing staff feel intimidated by the doctor.

- a. How would you proceed with respect to the complainant? (4 marks)

Ask about details, document
Ask to put into writing
Assure her it will be investigated and she will be updated
Ask what they want – apology, police
Appropriate referral, follow up date, leave required for stress?

- b. How would you investigate the incident? (3 marks)

Policies in place? Bullying, harassment.
Collateral evidence – interview other staff
Details feasible – was MO at work at the time of incident, etc
Involve assistants – harassment officer

- c. How would you approach the meeting with the doctor involved? (2 marks)

*Suggest support person present – eg legal rep
Non-judgmental/non-threatening approach
Supportive but firm*

SAQ 5

It is Friday evening at handover. It is 2300. A 14 year old girl is BIBA after being found running in and out between cars and was very agitated. On arrival, she is screaming and yelling at the ambulance entry and trying to run back out. Her parents are on their way.

- a. What are the main issues in this situation? (10 marks)

*Handover – interrupted
Night time – fewer staff
Minor – consent, parents
Injuries sustained?
Reasons for agitation – mental health vs organic cause
De-escalation methods
Issues regarding restraining a child/teenager
Legal issues regarding restraint
Safety – patient, staff, other patients
Confidentiality – get to a separate area
Pregnancy?
NAI?*

SAQ 6

The mother of a child makes a complaint. She states that three days previously, her 5 year old son had presented to the ED with elbow pain after a FOOSH. Following X-rays, the treating doctor had “pulled on the elbow several times causing him to cry”. The doctor stated that he had suffered a “sprained elbow” and to return if the pain did not settle.

The mother is distressed that her son had received no analgesia for the sprain and that he continued to not move the elbow because of pain. She also complained that the doctor spoke in a rude and insulting manner, and was very rough in his examination.

During your investigation, you find that the official report of the X-ray showed a supracondylar fracture.

- a. In dealing with the complaint, describe the features of your immediate response. (6 marks)

*Early contact with the complainant
Immediate review and treatment in ED – if not already managed in another hospital
Senior staff to handle
Neutral, empathetic, non-judgemental
Treat it seriously
Express regret without liability
Get complainants side of story – ie MAIN complaint*

- b. Your further approach to the complaint includes? (6 marks)

*Interview staff – recollections, medical defence needed, case not review
Counsel staff – acknowledge feeling of guilt, counsel regarding errors
Teaching/training/protocols – may need modification, staff education*

Complaints department – notify, provide documentation
Feedback to complainant – aim to give definitive reply in 3 days
Documentation

SAQ 7

Your CEO is reviewing the clinical governance framework of the hospital and asks you to send him the ACEM recommended clinical indicators for ED performance within each of the domains.

- a. What are the domains? (6 marks)

Access
Safety
Acceptability
Effectiveness
Efficiency
Continuity

- b. List an indicator for each domain. (6 marks)

Access – waiting time, access block
Safety - work related injury, patient falls, body fluid exposures
Acceptability – patient satisfaction survey ratings, written complaint rate
Effectiveness – admission rate by triage category, time to thrombolysis, unplanned readmit rate
Efficiency – waiting time by Australasian Triage Scale
Continuity – provision of written health information for sentinel conditions (eg asthma, dc summaries)

SAQ 8

Your director asks you to write a protocol for assessment of PV bleeding in early pregnancy. With respect to designing a protocol, write the headlines which need to be included in ANY clinical protocol. (8 marks)

Rationale for needing a protocol
Background information (evidence base for protocol)
Target – inclusions, exclusions
Recommendations – flow diagram good
Special considerations – subgroups, eg paed
References/evidence base
Authorising person/body and date
Review date and history