

Introduction

For the RCGP Student Competition we have designed a station that lasts for 30 minutes and caters for up to 8 students, with 2 facilitators. There are three key learning outcomes which we hope to achieve through the station, they are:

- Understand the importance of communication skills for GPs, in particular the use of open and closed questions, having practiced this too.
- Being able to demonstrate a clinical skill and appreciating the need for appropriate clinical tests to form a diagnosis.
- Appreciate the wide scope of what a GP's role entails, taking away key learning points that maybe used for medicine applications.

The station is formed out of three main activities, history taking, clinical skill and a quiz. This leaves a great scope of adaptability that different case studies can be used within this structure, so that it can be repeated annually but remain engaging and also adapt to the aims wanting to be achieved. For example, we used a scenario of a patient with asthma, which we thought was appropriate for the target age group and the school setting, but can be changed to other conditions/cases.

A little background about our team, is that we are medical students at Barts and The London and also involved in an initiative called ROCK Projects (Reconnecting Our Community through Kindness). As part of this initiative we deliver various community based projects, one of which is outreach to secondary school students. Related to the name of the project we are part of, we branded our activity "GP's Rock". We were privileged enough in this instance to actually design the station and trial it at a local secondary school alongside our regular activities, gathering some information on the effectiveness of the station as well improvements that we have built into the final proposed station.

We conducted the station in groups of 8 with a total of 40 students, aged 14-15 who were deemed "gifted and talented" by the school, but didn't necessarily all want to study medicine. They were all handed pre and post questionnaires, repeating the same questions in order to gather information on our activity. Through this we established 42% of them wanted to study medicine after completing the station, up from an initial 32%. We also gathered information on some of the aims that we were trying to portray through the station about GPs- 100% of the students felt communication skills were very important for GPs by the end of the station, from an initial mixed response. 74% also felt GPs are able to diagnose a wide range of conditions, compared with 50% at the start of the session.

Overall we felt the station met the aims, and was successful in engaging the students. The following documents provide information on how the station is to be carried out and the resources required for it.

Station Summary:

Number of individuals required: 1 –2 individuals (One group facilitator and one person acting as patient) per group.

Total Students: 3- 8 (Aged 11-16)

1. Introduction (3 minutes)

- What this session is about?
- Importance of communication including the role of open/closed questions
- Introduction to the task at hand
- Opportunity to introduce the role of GP's

2. History taking (10 minutes)

- Group collectively come up with questions to ask the patient
- Each student acts as a GP and asks the “patient” relevant questions in order to reach a diagnosis as a group

Equipment needed: Patient Profile Sheet, Question cards



3. Clinical Skills (7 minutes)

- Students decide on which equipment to use (Peak flow meter/ Sphygmomanometer/Stethoscope)
- Demonstrate how to use a peak flow meter
- Students check each other's peak flow and plot on the graph

Equipment needed: Stethoscope, Peak flow meter, Sphygmomanometer, Peak flow mouth pieces, Peak flow graphs



4. Quiz (8 minutes)

- Each student reads a question from the quiz cards
- Discuss questions as a group

Equipment needed: Quiz cards



5. Conclusion (2 minutes)



Detailed Lesson Plan

Introduction:

Establishing the concept of the station, broadness of conditions seen by GPs and the importance of a careful history, with the right balance of open and closed questions.

Use questions and phrases below as a guideline.

- This station is about how it is to be a GP. Does anyone know what GP stands for?
- There are many other types of doctors. If you went to see a cardiologist, what might you have a problem with?
- If you went to see a respiratory physician, what might you have a problem with?
- If you go to see a GP what might you have a problem with? (Allude to the fact that this could be anything)
- Being a GP, you could see a patient with any sort of problem, and this is why it's really important the first part of meeting the patient and finding out why they're here (called the history) is done well.

Then explain that the students will be acting as the GP today, but before they start, establish if they know about open and closed question.

- **Open questions**

These are questions that leave the patient able to answer with their story or opinion. It's a question that cannot be answered with a yes or no but requires a developed answer.

- **Closed questions**

Closed-ended questions are those which can be answered with one word.

(Top tip: giving a clinically relevant example will bring context to the application)

Use their answers to explain why in consultations, GPs need to balance the use of open and closed questions to make sure the patient has plenty of opportunity to explain their problem whilst the doctor also finds out specific pieces of information, and then introduce the next activity.

Activity - History Taking

For this activity the students will ultimately need to ask the patient questions, to establish a good understanding of the presenting complaint and gather some background information too. The students being equipped with the knowledge of open and closed questions, need to now come up with their own questions.

For more able students allow them 1-2 minutes to work out what questions they may need to ask, and split the questions between themselves. You can also hand out the prompt card (prompts shown below) to assist them, in what areas they may need to ask about.

(Top tip: giving each student an aspect to focus on from the prompt card may guide their attention)

- Reason for attending the GP today
- History of why they are here
- Things that make it worse and better
- Associated problems
- Effect on daily living

(Work out questions to find out the above pieces of information, making sure to use open and closed questions at the right time.)

For younger students you can provide the actual questions to them using the question cards (questions shown below), but allow for them to put them in the right order and take one/two questions each to ask the patient.

- What has brought you in today?
- Can you explain to me what happens?
- How long does it last for?
- Does anything make it worse?
- Does anything make it better?
- Do you experience any pain?
- Can you describe the pain for me?
- How is it affecting your life?

(Choose the right order of questions, starting with opening questions where needed)

Whilst the students carry out the history, they may also use the “clerking sheets” so they can note down their findings.

Once the students have taken the history, recap some of the symptoms and information they have extracted, and ask if they know what a potential diagnosis could be or atleast what organs could be affected here. You can also highlight the importance of open and closed questions, if you feel they demonstrated this well.

Activity - Clinical Skills

This is an opportunity for the students to see why certain tests are carried out and for them to practice one too.

The lead in for this section can be: “The next step that the GP would do is measure how severe the breathing difficulties are. There are many pieces of equipment that you can use. Which one here would be best to measure the patient’s breathing?”

Facilitate the discussion, and encourage the students to justify their reasoning. Once they have agreed to use the peak flow meter, proceed with the demonstration.

(Top tip: You can get the students to take a mouthpiece each at this point and write their name on the side.)

1. Attach disposable mouthpiece to peak flow meter
2. Make sure dial is at zero every time
3. Both hands on the side, ensuring the meter isn't obstructed
4. Take a deep breath in
5. Form a tight seal around mouthpiece
6. Blow out as hard and fast as you can. Like your blowing a candle out on the other side of the room
7. *Demonstrate*
8. Make sure device is not tilted (i.e. flat)
9. Throw mouthpiece away or they can take it home

Once the demonstration is complete split the group up depending on the number of peak flow meters available and watch them practice. (Be aware and sensitive of any students who do have any respiratory problems, and may have difficulty or do not want to partake) They may also mark down their readings on the wipeable peak flow charts.

Once everyone has had a practice, refer back to the patient in the scenario and explain how the patient may show reduced values, which are typically seen in asthma. And that the patient may be trialled on an inhaler and seen by other members of the team as their care progresses.

Activity - Quiz

This will consolidate the after care for this patient, as well as key topics surrounding being a GP.

For the quiz, hand out the quiz cards and get the students to read a question, one at a time and facilitate the discussion. Refer back to the answer sheet where needed. This is a great opportunity to address any questions that may have arisen during the history taking or clinical skills part of the activity. The questions cover important topic areas, such as holistic care, the role of the multidisciplinary team, patient confidentiality and the pathway to becoming a GP. We would encourage all to utilise this segment of the activity in order to answer any queries that the students may have.

Close

To wrap up, congratulate the students on successfully managing the patient, highlight the importance of communication (open and closed questions), the need for GPs to perform tests to guide diagnosis and the variety of cases that GP may see and the other advantages highlighted in the quiz.

GPs ROCK – Patient Profile

Name: Adam

Age: 13 years old

Occupation: Student

Presenting Complaint (PC): Struggling to sleep because coughing a lot at night

History of PC:

- Coughing wakes you up
- Shortness of breath (SOB)
 - As if you're gasping for air, want to breathe in normally, but can't as you normally would
- Wheezing
 - Can be quite loud
- Ongoing for the last month and getting more frequent now
- Coughing and SOB lasts for around 5-10mins
- Sometimes also experience pain, when SOB is really bad
 - Located in centre of the chest
 - Does not radiate
 - Feels dull; like a lot of pressure on your chest, as if there's something heavy placed on top
- Nothing makes it worse
- You try to relax and take long deep breaths, and it goes away

Past Medical History:

- Hay fever
- Eczema (Itchy, dry skin)
- No other Medical Problems

Drug History:

- Hay fever tablets in the summer
- Cream for skin
- No known drug allergies

Social:

- Like playing football a lot, but you sometimes, very suddenly get an episode of struggling to breathe
- Quite embarrassing, as everyone stops playing, and you're also quite scared when it might happen



GPs ROCK



Work out questions to find out the information below making sure to use open and closed questions at the right time

- Reason for attending the GP today
 - History of why they're here
- Things that make it worse & better
 - Associated problems
 - Effect on daily living



GPs ROCK



GPs ROCK



Question

What has brought
you in today?



GPs ROCK



GPs ROCK



Question

Can you explain to
me what happens?



GPs ROCK



GPs ROCK



Question

How long does it
last for?



GPs ROCK



GPs ROCK



Question

**Does anything
make it worse?**



GP_s ROCK



GPs ROCK



Question

Does anything
make it better?



GPs ROCK



GPs ROCK



Question

**Do you experience
any pain?**



GP_s ROCK



GPs ROCK



Question

Can you describe
the pain for me?



GPs ROCK



GPs ROCK



Question

How is it affecting
your life?



GPs ROCK



GPs ROCK



GPs ROCK – Patient History

Name:

Age:

Occupation:

What is the patient's main complaint?

What are the details of the patient's main complaint?

What effects does this all have on his social life?

What other conditions does the patient suffer from?

What drugs does the patient take currently?



GPs ROCK



Question 1

Adam has an appointment
with the asthma nurse.

What is the role of an asthma
nurse?



GPs ROCK



Question

1



GPs ROCK





Question 2

TRUE or FALSE?

As a GP, you can discuss the case of Adam with his friends from school, who are worried about him.



GPs ROCK



Question

2



GPs ROCK





Question 3

TRUE or FALSE?

When Adam turns 18, he will have a different GP who manages adults with asthma.



GPs ROCK



Question

3



GPs ROCK



Question 4

GP's use a "patient centred"
approach to care for patients like
Adam.

What do you think this means?



GPs ROCK



Question

4



GP's ROCK



Question 5

TRUE or FALSE?

Adam has appointments about his asthma with a lung doctor in the hospital, however it is important that he goes to see his GP on a regular basis as GP's manage the overall care of patients.



GPs ROCK



Question

5



GPs ROCK





Question 6

There is a multi-disciplinary team (MDT) meeting that is being held for Adam. Adam is very worried about this, and asks you who will be at this meeting and what they will discuss.

What advice will you give him?



GPs ROCK



Question

6



GPs ROCK





Question 7

Adam comes to see the GP as he doesn't like using his asthma inhaler at school, where other children might see him and make negative comments.

How do you think the GP should communicate with Adam to encourage him to use his inhaler?



GPs ROCK



Question

7



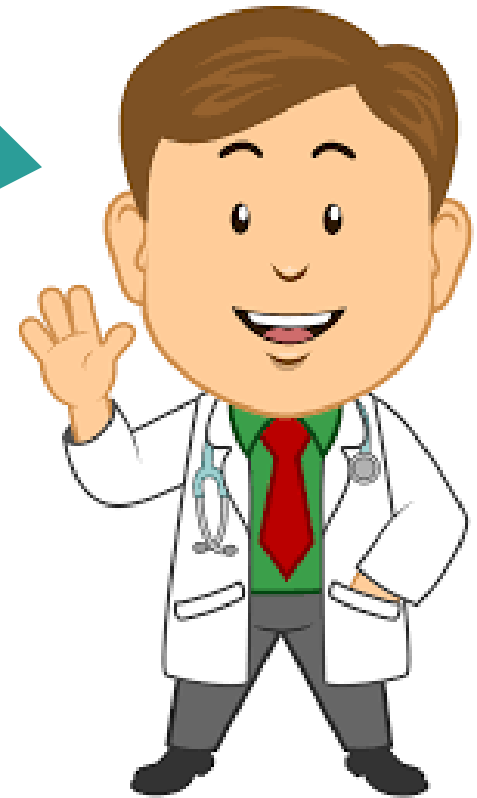
GPs ROCK



Question 8

Adam feels much happier now that his asthma is well controlled, and he can go back to his usual activities. At his school, they hold a careers fair, and Adam tells his teacher that he wants to become a GP.

What is the pathway to becoming a GP?



GPs ROCK



Question

8



GPs ROCK



Quiz Answer Sheet

Topic: MDT

Adam has an appointment with the asthma nurse. What is the role of an asthma nurse?

- They provide regular checkups for his asthma
- Involved in teaching Adam about his asthma
- Provide effective management plans for good control of his asthma
- Ensuring Adam uses his medication properly
- Help Adam identify any triggers e.g. exercise and cold weather
- This is all to prevent asthma attacks from happening

Topic: Confidentiality - True/False

As a GP, you can discuss the case of Adam with his friends from school, who are worried about him.

- False
- Doctors are bound by strict confidentiality rules even if it is a friend who wants to help him
- Doctors can only tell other people with Adam's permission
- One exemption would be if there is risk of harm to self/others then relevant authorities/parties need to be informed

Topic: GP - True/False

When Adam turns 18, he will have a different GP who manages adults with asthma.

- False
- Adam's GP will follow him from birth onwards
- There is no change in GP when Adam becomes an adult
- This is unique as Adam can build a relationship with his GP
- And this will make him feel more comfortable in receiving help in the future

Topic: Communication skills

GP's use a "patient centred" approach to care for patients like Adam. What do you think this means?

- This means that Adam is involved in the decisions that the doctor is making to manage his asthma
- Adam's concerns are reflected in his care (his want to play football)

Topic: GP

Adam has appointments about his asthma with a lung doctor in the hospital, however it is important that he goes to see his GP on a regular basis. This is because GP's manage the overall care of patients.

- True
- GP would look into any other issues and address them
- GP is also responsible for coordinating Adam's care

Topic: MDT

There is a multi-disciplinary team (MDT) meeting that is being held for Adam. Adam is very worried about this, and asks you who will be at this meeting and what they will discuss. What advice will you give him?

- An MDT meeting is when a group of doctors, nurses, and others involved in Adam's health care meet to discuss how they can best manage him and ensure all his needs are met

Topic: Communication Skills

Adam comes to see the GP as he doesn't like using his asthma inhaler at school, where other children might see him and make negative comments. How do you think the GP should communicate with Adam to encourage him to use his inhaler?

- The GP should listen attentively
- Be understanding
- Listen to his concerns and address them

Topic: Medicine Applications

Adam feels much happier now that his asthma is well controlled, and he can go back to his usual activities. At his school, they hold a careers fair, and Adam tells his teacher that he wants to become a GP. What is the pathway to becoming a GP?

- Need to study Medicine at university
- Then specialise in general practice
- To get into Medicine, you need to do certain A-Levels and get high grades