

Sample knowledge test question

Jacob, aged 4 years, presents with his mother who is now concerned that over the last 2 days he has suddenly complained of soreness in his right knee and is limping when he walks. He is normally very active and energetic, but now doesn't want to play outdoors with his friends.

He has had a temperature but his mother thinks he may have an upper respiratory tract infection. There is no history of any injury or trauma to the knee.

On examination, his temperature is 38.5° Celsius, there is a slight joint effusion around the right knee, it is warm to touch and it is painful when you move it.

What is the MOST appropriate provisional diagnosis?

- A. Fracture
- B. Meniscal tear
- C. Osteomyelitis
- D. Septic arthritis
- E. Transient synovitis

Correct answer

- D. Septic Arthritis

Notes and explanation

This question is important because septic arthritis in children is an orthopaedic emergency and requires prompt diagnosis and treatment.

Any child presenting with symptoms and signs consistent with septic arthritis should be urgently referred to the emergency department (ED) of a hospital with an orthopaedic service. In rural and remote settings urgent telephone advice should be obtained from the nearest orthopaedic service.

- A. Fracture is unlikely as there is no history of injury or trauma to the knee, and would not cause a fever.
- B. Meniscal tear is unlikely as there is no history of injury or trauma to the knee and it would not cause a fever.
- C. Osteomyelitis may mimic septic arthritis in its presentation, however given the rapid onset of symptoms with initial joint involvement a diagnosis of septic arthritis is more likely.
- D. Septic Arthritis is the most likely diagnosis.
- E. Transient synovitis is less likely given the presence of fever. Although transient synovitis is more common than septic arthritis, given the serious nature of the latter condition, any child presenting with joint irritability and fever should be considered to have septic arthritis until proven otherwise.

Sample situational judgment test question – Ranking response format

Sandra is 25 years old, she attended recently for her cervical screening test and a repeat prescription for her combined oral contraceptive pill, Triphasil.

Two weeks later you are reviewing and entering the cervical screening test result into her medical records and you notice that instead of Triphasil you actually prescribed her Trisequens (hormone replacement therapy).

Rank in order the actions you would take in this situation (1-5)

- A. Contact the patient, explain the error and apologise.
- B. Discuss the incident with the other doctors in your practice.
- C. Identify and implement changes to reduce the risk of recurrence.
- D. Organise a follow-up appointment for a pregnancy test.
- E. Review your prescribing processes to determine how the error occurred.

Correct answer

A, D, E, B, C

Notes and explanation

This sequence of steps conforms with the most appropriate response to a medical error:

- Respond through open disclosure and apology. (answer A)
- Consider patient safety and any adverse impact on patient. (answer D)
- Review factors in self. (answer E)
- Review, discuss and debrief with colleagues to identify possible practice, system or environmental issues. (answer B)
- Implement system change based on identified issues. (answer C)

This error and errors like it typically occur because the doctor inadvertently clicks on the incorrect medication in the prescribing software and then does not check the printed script before providing it to the patient.

Sample situational judgment test question – Multiple choice response format

During the orientation to your new training practice, where you will be working for the next six months, your supervisor encourages you to ensure that all patient data is entered accurately and that clinical notes are well maintained in the medical software.

After several weeks you have noted that one of the senior doctors does not routinely update his patients' notes. Key information is often missing or still present when it should have been removed from the health summary and medication lists. You also notice that the progress notes are often very brief and hard to follow.

This is affecting your ability to manage your time efficiently and deliver quality continuity of care.

Choose the **THREE** most appropriate actions to take in this situation

- A. Approach the senior doctor and offer to help him improve his computer skills.
- B. Ask your peers in other practices how they would manage this situation.
- C. Discuss the issue with the practice manager and express your concerns.
- D. Offer to help clean up the data in your own time to make things easier.
- E. Prioritise the information that needs to be updated in the notes at each consult.
- F. Raise your concerns with your supervisor at your next meeting.
- G. Seek permission from your supervisor to allocate longer appointment times.
- H. Try to cope as best you can, as you will be leaving in a few months.

Correct answer

C, E, F

Notes and explanation

C, E and F are all acceptable answers.

- A. Approaching the senior doctor would, no matter how well-meaning, possibly be demeaning, and should not be done without the supervisor or practice manager negotiating it.
- B. Asking your peers would risk letting other doctors and practices know there is a problem with this practice and the doctor, and is not professionally acceptable.
- D. Offering to help in your own time is not showing self-care.
- G. Seeking longer appointment times limits the junior doctor's exposure to a variety of cases and does not address the problem that should be fixed at the practice level.
- H. Trying to cope as best you can is not addressing the issue at all.