PRIMARY CARE BLOCK | YEAR 3 (PHASE 2)

PCB Programme — Simulated Patient Guidance

PCB

Simulated Patient Teaching. Training programme for third-year medical students on GP surgery or hospital placements within the Year 3 curriculum.

PURPOSE OF THE PCB SESSIONS

The purpose of PCB is to help students move their clinical, diagnostic and communication skills to the next stage of their education. Many of the educational supervisors working within the Primary Care Block are practising GPs. They can guide students through the clinical reasoning, consultation structure and communication processes needed to reach a logical diagnosis or appropriate action plan.

The simulated patient provides the realistic clinical scenario that allows the educational supervisor to illustrate the specific factors that matter in a consultation. By responding consistently with the patient brief, the simulated patient gives the student a safe opportunity to explore symptoms, ask relevant questions and develop a reasoned clinical approach.

SESSION FORMAT AND TIMES

The morning is split into two teaching sessions. Each session consists of mock consultations for Year 3 (Phase 2) students.

Session 1	9.30 – 11.00am
Session 2	11.30am – 1.00pm

Start time note: The standard start is 9.30am. Congleton sessions start at 9.45am.

WHAT HAPPENS IN A CONSULTATION

In each session you will be asked to recreate a mock consultation. The student will explore their clinical knowledge and consultation skills in order to establish a potential diagnosis and/or an appropriate action plan. Your role is not to lead the student to the answer, but to present the patient described in the brief accurately and consistently.

- Respond to the student's questions using the information contained in the patient brief.
- Allow the student to uncover the relevant information through appropriate questioning.
- Maintain the patient's stated attitude, demeanour and level of concern throughout the consultation.
- At the end of the consultation, give constructive and direct feedback on how the student approached you as a patient.

WHAT THE PATIENT BRIEFS DO

Each brief provides the information needed to recreate a specific patient and medical complaint. The details are designed to give the student the clinical clues required to work towards a logical diagnosis or action plan. Simulated patients should learn the key trigger points in each scenario, including:

- Age and relevant personal details.
- Specific symptoms, including how they began, how they have developed and any associated features.
- Social circumstances and status where these are relevant to the consultation.
- Medical history and any important previous conditions or treatment.
- Medication routines, including prescribed or regular medicines.
- Attitude, demeanour, concerns and the way the patient is expected to communicate.

> **Medication tip:** If a medication list is difficult to remember, write it down and bring the list into the consultation. Many real patients do exactly this when visiting their doctor.

PREPARING FOR THE SESSION

Please read your allocated briefs before attending and become familiar with the key facts rather than trying to memorise every sentence. Concentrate on the trigger points that affect the student's clinical reasoning. The aim is to reproduce the same patient reliably for each student while still allowing the consultation to feel natural.

- Know the main complaint and the symptoms the student needs to uncover.
- Know which information should be volunteered and which should only be given when the student asks.
- Be familiar with the patient's medical history, medication and social circumstances.
- Keep the patient's attitude and demeanour consistent between consultations.
- If you need further direction in understanding or applying a brief, please ask for guidance before the session.

TEACHING CENTRE ADDRESSES

Aylesbury	Berrycroft Community Health Centre, 2 Nimrod St, Aylesbury HP18 1BB, UK
Buckingham	Chandos Rd Building, University of Buckingham Medical School, Buckingham MK18 1EG
Congleton	Bridestones Suite, Congleton Town Hall, 7 High St, Congleton CW12 1BN

SITE NOTES

- **Buckingham:** please remember to sign in at the start of your session and sign out at the end.
- **Congleton:** the venue is Congleton Town Hall, CW12 1BN. The Bridestones Suite is on the First Floor. Please sign in at the Information Office.

FEEDBACK AND QUERIES

At the end of each consultation, please give the student feedback on how you felt they approached you as a patient. Feedback should be constructive, specific and direct. The educational supervisor will provide the clinical teaching and can use your patient perspective to reinforce effective consultation behaviour.

If you need further direction in understanding or applying any of the supplied briefs, please get in touch and I will guide you through the process.