



General Certificate of Education

Health and Social Care 8621/8623

HC06 Common Diseases and Disorders

Report on the Examination

2007 examination - June series

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HC06

General Comments

As for previous papers, a good range of marks was evident on this paper. All four questions proved accessible to the vast majority of candidates. Scripts on high marks tended to be detailed, with little repetition or irrelevant material and with good use of technical terminology. There was no evidence that candidates had insufficient time to complete the paper.

Question 1

(a) The majority of candidates understood that scabies is caused by a mite and were able to give at least two symptoms which are caused by the parasite. Weaker candidates found the third part of the first section of the question more challenging, tending to ignore the fact that Dora was already infected and concentrating their answers on her avoiding others carrying the mite.

(b) This part was answered very well. Candidates had sound understanding of reduced immunity in old age and of different groups of people other than the elderly, who are vulnerable to disease.

As on other papers, the way disease symptoms are caused proved challenging for many candidates. Many responses suggested modes of transmission rather than the ways disease-causing organisms cause problems in the body.

Question 2

(a) Generally candidates handled the data part of this question well. Only the more able candidates, however, tended to recognise similarities as well as differences in the data, e.g. similarities of males and females with one or two extracted teeth and three or more fillings.

(b) This generally proved more challenging, as on previous papers. A significant number of responses describing dental plaque and its formation were vague, often gaining only one of the three marks available. Likewise, how toothache is caused and abscesses develop proved difficult for lower-ability candidates.

Question 3

(a) Responses on glue ear were generally sound for the majority of candidates who recognised it as a problem of the middle ear. Weaker candidates tended to confuse the build-up of a sticky substance in the middle ear with wax formation in the outer ear canal.

(b) Most candidates recognised Ali's grandmother's progressive hearing loss, but often were unable to access the marks relating to sensorineural problems caused by cochlear hair cell degeneration.

(c) Most candidates gained at least one mark of the three available by naming tinnitus as a common dysfunction of the ear.

Question 4

- (a) The data was handled, well with many gaining over half marks.
- (b) Many confused a macular rash with a raised and/or localised/generalised rash.
- (c) The vast majority gained full marks on the first part by explaining what a migraine is and also in the second part by suggesting appropriate common causes of headaches.
- (d) Knowledge of infective and non-infective causes of food poisoning were far less secure, but the different symptoms of food poisoning were well known.