



General Certificate of Education

**Health and Social Care
8621/8623/8626/8627/8629**

HC14 Diagnosis and Treatment

Report on the Examination

June 2010

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HC14 Diagnosis and Treatment

General comments

It is pleasing to report a good range of candidate performance on this paper with some very good scripts. Higher-ability candidates were able to apply technical terminology accurately and produce well-reasoned and coherent responses. Weaker candidates tended to produce answers which were lacking in relevant detail and accuracy and limited in the use of technical terminology.

Question 1

01 and 02 The majority of candidates understood how the stethoscope should be used by the GP to help diagnose Brian's medical condition and consequently gained three or more of the five marks available.

03 and 04 Percussion was also generally well known, but weaker candidates sometimes confused it with palpation.

05 Most gained two or three marks, but palpitation was a common error.

06 There were some very pleasing responses, often gaining all seven marks available as candidates demonstrated a clear understanding of the use of x-rays for diagnosis of Brian's medical condition. Weaker candidates appeared to rely on rote learning when answering this question and often became confused in their responses.

Question 2

07 When drawing conclusions from the data in the table, the weaker candidates were often restricted to simple comparisons of "more" or "less" and "most" and "least" considerations, with little attempt to manipulate or look more closely at the data. The more able candidates tended to recognise similarities as well as significant differences in the data. Candidates generally tended to consider each treatment separately and look at year-on-year patterns. There were few candidates who considered that a patient may have more than one drug treatment in any one year and/or that the numbers of patients receiving drug treatments in subsequent years may include some or all of those from the preceding years.

08 Weaker candidates tended to confuse drug classification with the different ways that drugs are named.

09 and 10 Ultrasound scanning was generally understood well and candidates therefore tended to do well.

Question 3

11 There were some good detailed comparisons of the principles of hospital and home nursing. Some candidates suggested that home nursing was entirely performed exclusively by informal carers and the weaker candidates tended to offer points for or against nursing in each location, rather than compare the principles of the two directly. 12 Virtually all candidates gained the two marks available for treatment of minor illnesses at home.

13 and 14 Electrocardiography was well described by many candidates who were able to gain at least some of the marks.

15 Body fluid sampling produced many answers naming blood glucose sampling for diabetes and urine testing for infections.

Question 4

16 Lithotripsy was generally well understood by many, but the weaker candidates suggested radioactivity was involved. A common error suggested that gallstones when broken up by the ultrasound would be excreted through the urinary system.

17 Radiotherapy was also well known with many good accounts of both external and internal applications of this technique.

18 Endoscopic surgery produced a range of responses, but most gained two of the three marks available.

19 The ethical issues associated with liver transplants for alcoholics like Tom produced a good range of responses. Weaker candidates tended to give rather one-sided accounts generally based on the waste of NHS resources and depriving of more deserving individuals while the more able gave generally more balanced and well reasoned accounts.

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