



**General Certificate of Education (A-level) Applied  
January 2011**

**Health and Social Care**

**HC14**

**(Specification  
8621/8623/8626/8627/8629)**

**Unit 14: Diagnosis and Treatment**

***Report on the Examination***

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## General comments

The pattern of performance on this paper meant that there were some very good scripts from candidates who were able to apply technical terminology accurately and produce coherent, well-reasoned responses. Less able candidates tended to produce answers lacking in relevant detail, offering vague or confused responses. These candidates were also much less secure in their use of technical terminology.

### Question 1

01, 02 Some candidates referred to the palpation process as palpitation, while others confused the palpation and percussion processes. There were, however, many good descriptions of both processes.

03 Candidates were also secure in their understanding of the use of computers to help GPs make provisional diagnoses.

04 This proved more challenging but again there were many very detailed descriptions of how a CT scan would be carried out to help diagnose the medical condition.

05 Most candidates gained the mark for the 3D image or greater detail/clarity of CT scans when compared to conventional x-ray imaging.

### Question 2

06 As with data questions from previous papers, the weaker candidates tended to make simple comparisons of “more” or “less” and “most” and “least” considerations with little attempt to manipulate or look more closely at the data. More able candidates manipulated the data and considered the continuing rise in numbers for cancer and respiratory diseases and the rise and subsequent fall in numbers for other and circulatory diseases. It was rare for candidates to consider the differences in rates of increase for the different types of hospital admission.

07 There were many vague responses, but when marks were gained, these tended to be for recognition of the varying numbers of smokers in the population during different periods.

08 – 11 Candidates generally gained high marks, demonstrating a sound understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of questionnaires and the advantages of open and closed items.

### Question 3

12 There were relatively few correct answers. Genetically-engineered drugs were often described as laboratory-designed or naturally-occurring, without understanding that a microbial life form has its DNA altered in order to synthesise the chemical required.

13 Candidates were far more successful with their understanding of the need to test a new drug prior to it being made available.

14 Some candidates confused drug classification with the ways in which drugs are named.

15 Knowledge of why some drugs are administered by mouth was generally sound but some candidates suggested that it was for speed of release.

16 Most candidates gained at least three of the six marks available with their explanations of the principles of hospital nursing when providing intensive care. Some weaker responses however, focussed only on general nursing principles and ignored the intensive care aspect required by the question.

17 Knowledge of aseptic techniques was generally sound with most candidates gaining at least two of the three marks available. Weaker responses suggested a reduced microbial environment rather than a microbe free environment.

### Question 4

18 Laser surgery was generally explained well with many candidates gaining at least three of the four marks available. The weakest responses tended to confuse laser surgery with radioactive techniques.

19 The majority of candidates successfully explained local anaesthetics and why Susan would need it. There was confusion with general anaesthetics by a small minority of candidates.

20 Discussions of the ethical issues associated with patient choice and lifestyle in relation to medical treatment for disease and dysfunction produced a good range of responses. Some candidates included age considerations in their answers without relating this to patient choice or lifestyle. There were relatively few answers dealing with the inappropriateness of patient choice against professional advice. Weaker responses tended to be one-sided and judgemental rather than the balanced discussion needed to access higher marks.

## **Mark Ranges and Award of Grades**

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.