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FACEM practice exam 2023/2

Question 24

Professional concerns in a doctor

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Question 24 – 12 Marks

You are an ED consultant working in a metropolitan adult ED on the first **Sunday** morning of a new clinical year.

An 84 yo female brought in following a fall at home is being assessed by a new ED registrar working their second shift in your ED.

This is **the first and only patient** the registrar has seen this shift.

The nurse caring for the patient advises you they are concerned about the registrar's behaviour.

She states the registrar is being argumentative with staff, rude to the patient, is slurring his words, and smells of beer.

24.1

1. List three (3) possible causes of the doctor's behaviour (3 marks).

One per category

- 1. Alcohol effects (intoxication, hangover)**
2. Drug use (prescription, recreational)
- 3. Mental illness – includes any psychosocial stress**
4. *Other impairment, eg.*
 - *Hypoglycaemia*
 - *Medical condition*

24.2

Describe five (5) immediate actions you would take. (5 marks)

Accepted the following – must include points in bold

- 1. Patient safety – assign another doctor to care for patient**
2. Consider need for open disclosure with patient/family
- 3. Take registrar off the floor / off duty**
4. Arrange personal/ sick leave and safe transport home
5. Advise doctor re appropriate medical follow up & professional support (eg VDHP)
- 6. Notify ED Director/Medical Services – possible AHPRA notification**
7. Document carefully / incident report
8. Arrange support for nurse

You must ensure safety of the 84yo patient.

NB you may need to investigate circumstances before reporting to AHPRA – this can be done the next day after discussion with DEM / DMS/CMO.

There is no expectation that you manage the registrar as a patient.

24.3

Under what circumstances are you required to make a mandatory notification to the Medical Board (Australia) or Medical Council (Aotearoa/New Zealand) (4 marks)

1. **practising while intoxicated by alcohol or drugs**
2. practising with **an impairment** and placing the public at risk of substantial harm
3. **engaging in sexual misconduct in connection with their practice.**
4. practising in a way that significantly **departs from accepted professional standards** and placing the public at risk of harm

Sexual misconduct includes consensual sex with patient, carer/family, former patient. It does not have to be sexual assault.

Sexual harassment of staff, criminal behaviour, while all bad, are not grounds for a mandatory notification.

Summary

- **Intoxicated**
- Impairment
- **Sexual misconduct**
- Departure from accepted professional standards

Common errors

- 1. Listing all causes from one category**
- 2. Not ensuring safety of the patient.**
- 3. Not knowing the categories for a mandatory notification.
We need to know these as registered health practitioners.**

The purpose of mandatory notifications is to protect the public from risk of harm.

Summary

Pass mark = 7 / 12

Pass rate = 62%

Good luck everyone!

Further information



Guidelines:

Mandatory notifications about registered health practitioners

March 2020

<https://www.ahpra.gov.au/Notifications/mandatory-notifications/Mandatory-notifications.aspx>

Or search engine:

AHPRA mandatory notifications

