

Instructions to candidate

You are a foundation doctor currently in your GP placement. John Evans has come in because of a persistent cough and weight loss, please take a concise history.

After 4 minutes, the examiner will give you a short description of examination findings. Afterwards, explain to the patient what you would like to do next.

SP Script

Name: John Evans

Age: 67

HPC:

You have come to the GP because you have had a cough for the last 9 months which has not got better despite antibiotics given by your GP. You have decided to come to the GP again because you saw an NHS advert on the TV that said a persistent cough could be a sign of cancer. You are worried that you may have cancer.

You have not had any fevers and the cough brings up clear sputum with some specks of blood. You have been feeling a little run down recently and have noticed that you have lost some weight in the past 3 months though haven't really measured it. You've noticed that our clothes are more loosely fitting and you've had to adjust your belt buckle.

You often get breathless but that's been a longstanding problem. You haven't noticed it gets any worse recently and have not noticed a wheeze.

PMH: COPD diagnosed 2 years ago, HTN, hyperlipidemia.

DH: Ramipril, amlodipine, atorvastatin, an inhaler (can't remember the name)

NKDA

SH: Used to work as a builder but retired about 10 years ago. Smokes around 30cigarettes a day. Has smoked since the age of 14. Does not drink in the week but often goes out at the weekend with mates for a few pints. Usually about 6-8 pints on Friday and Saturday night.

ICE: you're worried you have cancer. You just want the doctor to reassure you that it's not cancer

PAUSE while candidate reads examination findings

Take note of how the candidate breaks the bad news that you may have cancer. You can react angrily if they don't seem sincere or fail to show adequate empathy. You're obviously very upset but depending on how the candidate breaks the news, you will either feel reassured that they are going to do what they can for you, or you feel angry that you weren't taken seriously before and that this should have been picked up earlier.

The examiner gives you examination findings:

RR 17, Sats 95%

HR 88, BP 138/89

Previous weight 110kg, new weight 86kg, he appears quite cachectic.

Some clubbing noted on the fingers

Chest clear bilaterally

You notice a lump/ firmness in the left supraclavicular region

Please tell the patient what you think is going on and what you would like to do next.

Mark scheme

Feedback

Built rapport	Y/N
Took a competent history clarifying symptoms and checking for red flags	
History was organised and concise	
Communication with the patient during examination was clear	
Correct diagnosis and/or differential	
Correct management – correctly refer for 2ww appointment and urgent CXR	

Communication skills feedback;

Used SPIKES to break bad news	
Good use of non-verbal communication	
Good demonstration of empathy and active listening	

The key points to this station are time management and communication skills

It should be clear that this patient has a concerning presentation and so sufficient time should be allowed to inform the patient of what you think is happening and how it will be managed.