

Introduction

Each candidate will do five separate simulated office orals. Each of these oral examinations is 15 minutes in length and involves an interview with a simulated patient. In the simulated office orals the patient will be role-played by a family physician. This individual will also be responsible for scoring the candidate.

In all of these interviews the simulated patients/examiners have been programmed to play the part of a patient. The candidate will not perform a physical examination, but will be required to discuss the problem with the patient and bring the visit to a satisfactory conclusion within the defined time frame. The candidate is expected to define and manage the problems presented by the patient. There is an emphasis in the scoring on understanding the patient's perspective of their problems and to arrive at a plan of management, which is satisfactory to both parties. This is to be done in the context of the entire encounter utilizing appropriate interview techniques. The best advice is to try to behave as you would if you were seeing a patient in your own office. The patient/examiner will not be trying to mislead you.

The preparation for this examination takes place daily in your private office or family practice unit. Practice eligible candidates are encouraged to take advantage of workshops available either through a residency program in their area or through their local College chapter.

Prior to each SOO you will be given instructions and information by an assistant coordinator. You should read these instructions carefully and repeatedly. They contain a varying amount of information about the patient including at least his/her name and age. Be sure to ask the coordinator about any matter that causes you concern or uncertainty.

During the examination be aware of your own timing. You are also being timed by the examiner and will normally be given a warning when there are three minutes left. You are, however, responsible for managing your own time during the course of the interview. At 15 minutes, the examiner will signal the end of the examination. You are expected to stop immediately, and to leave any notes with the examiner. In the event that you finish your interview before the 15 minutes have elapsed, you may leave the room.

Make notes even if they comprise no more than a listing of the problems that you identify during the interview and use these notes to assist you during your summation. This will prevent you from forgetting to deal with any problems that you have identified in the course of the interview.

Please be aware that your Simulated Office Oral examination may be viewed by means of video equipment and/or viewing mirrors however the purpose for this is to validate the performance of the examiner and not the candidate. Your examination will not be recorded.

During the intervals between the oral examinations it is unwise to discuss the content of the oral examinations with other candidates who may not have done that particular examination. Experience has shown that prior knowledge of the clinical content of oral examinations has resulted in poorer performance than might otherwise have been expected.

Most importantly, do not be discouraged if you feel you have done poorly in any one or more of the orals. Always keep in mind that the overall certification examination process comprises many different instruments and it is quite possible to be successful on the examination in spite of a poor performance on one or more of the oral examinations.