



THE COLLEGES OF MEDICINE OF SOUTH AFRICA

Incorporated Association not for gain
Reg No 1955/000003/08

Examination for the Diploma in Mental Health of the
College of Psychiatrists of South Africa

12 July 2018

Paper 1

(3 hours)

All questions are to be answered. Each question to be answered in a separate book (or books if more than one is required for the one answer)

- 1 A 50-year-old recently divorced man presents with major depression. This is his first presentation to psychiatry. There is a family history of two uncles having committed suicide. His marriage disintegrated after the death of his son in a motorcycle accident. He bought his son the motor cycle for his eighteenth birthday present. His son died a week after his birthday. He lives alone and has a very stressful job as an auditor.
- a) How would you assess for suicidal risk in this patient? (10)
 - b) What would be your bio-psycho-social clinical management of this patient? (15)
- [25]
- 2 With regard to cannabis use and psychotic disorders:
- a) Explain the biological mechanisms underlying the association between cannabis and psychosis. (5)
 - b) Specify risk factors that may increase the likelihood of developing schizophrenia after cannabis use. (5)
 - c) Describe the clinical course (acute and long-term) of cannabis use. Include a description of the clinical symptoms of intoxication and withdrawal in the answer. (10)
 - d) Discuss the role of cannabis as a potential cause of schizophrenia. (5)
- [25]
- 3 a) A 30-year-old lady presents to the emergency department with a manic episode. She is aggressive and she wants to jump from the hospital roof as she believes that she can fly. Her husband tells you that she is known with bipolar I disorder and that she was doing very well until she stopped her treatment four months ago when they decided to start a family. She is now 6 weeks pregnant. He demands that you put her back on the medication she was on before: Sodium Valproate 500mg twice daily and Olanzapine 10mg daily. Describe your approach to the assessment and acute management of this patient. (15)
- b) Write short notes on the use of the following medication in pregnancy:
- i) Lithium. (5)
 - ii) Sodium Valproate. (5)
- [25]

- 4 A 55-year-old male is accompanied by his family to the emergency department with a history of sudden onset of confusion and inappropriate behaviour. He is extremely disruptive and agitated. It is difficult to contain him to be evaluated. He is wandering around the room, shouting and insulting patients waiting to be seen for no apparent reason. Attempts to calm him down are met with physical aggression especially toward furniture in the cubicle. He is suspicious of everybody around him and appears to be responding to visual hallucinations. It is difficult to obtain a coherent history as well as conduct a mental state examination due to impairment in his attention and distractibility. He also appears to be disoriented to time and place. Your colleague advises you to admit him to the psychiatric ward for treatment of his psychosis. Upon reassessing the patient, he is found to be asleep and you have difficulty rousing him even though he did not receive any sedation in the interim and there was no history of substance use prior to admission to the hospital.
- a) The information in the case is suspicious of which DSM 5 diagnosis? (2)
 - b) What are the DSM 5 criteria of the above condition? (10)
 - c) Do you agree with the colleague's advice to admit the patient to the psychiatric ward for treatment of his psychosis? Substantiate your answer. (3)
 - d) You realise that appropriate management of the condition requires further investigation into the underlying cause. Collateral information and a thorough physical examination yield no definitive answer. What special investigations would you consider essential for the work-up of the patient and substantiate the reason for the investigations? (10)
- [25]



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Paper 2

(3 hours)

All questions are to be answered. Each question to be answered in a separate book (or books if more than one is required for the one answer)

- 1 An 11-year-old child presents with a history of disruptive and aggressive behaviour; and poor school performance.
 - a) What information would you seek on history? (7)
 - b) Discuss your differential diagnosis. (8)
 - c) Outline your management of this patient if you make a diagnosis of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. (10)

[25]

- 2 A 77-year-old male is brought to you by his family. He has no previous psychiatric history; and besides hypertension and type II diabetes mellitus, he has no other significant medical history. After assessing him, you suspect he may have a neurocognitive disorder due to vascular disease.
 - a) Tabulate the differences between mild and major neurocognitive disorder. (5)
 - b) List the cognitive domains that may be affected, and for each, describe the possible complaints the family may report on history that would indicate impairment in that domain. (9)
 - c) Discuss the role of pharmacotherapy in the management of this patient. (11)

[25]

- 3 Write short notes on the following:
 - a) Mental health services are delivered at 3 levels namely primary, secondary and tertiary levels. What are the components of primary health care and what are the staff complements of the components? (15)
 - b) Confidentiality refers to the medical premise that binds the medical practitioners to keep secret all information divulged by patients during a doctor-patient interaction. When are you allowed to breach doctor-patient confidentiality in a mental health setting? (5)
 - c) What is your involvement as a general practitioner in the clinical management of persons referred by the Criminal Justice system? (5)

[25]

- 4 Mr. Smith is a 26-year-old male with a 5 year history of Schizophrenia. He is brought to the emergency department of your district hospital by his parents against his wishes. He has not taken his treatment for several months and describes a 6 weeks history of auditory hallucinations telling him that he is not safe, as well as persecutory delusions that he is in danger from the South African police services (SAPS) as they are involved in a conspiracy with Interpol to arrest him for crimes he has not committed. He refuses hospital admission as he does not believe that he is unwell. He lost his job a few weeks ago due to his "odd behaviour" at work.

- a) Outline the factors which may influence his non-adherence to medication. (10)
 - b) How may stigma impact the lives of people living with mental illness? (8)
 - c) Following his admission as an involuntary user under the Mental Health Care Act, Mr. Smith requires a dental extraction and significant dental repair due to a dental abscess. His dentist recommends that the procedure is conducted under general anaesthesia due to the extent of the work and asks you to sign Mr. Smith's consent form as he is an involuntary user. This is not an emergency procedure. Discuss your approach to this request. (7)
- [25]