



## 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

7 February 2019

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)

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- 1 a) Describe the characteristics of a panic attack. (6)  
b) List five differential diagnoses for a panic attack. (5)  
c) Differentiate a panic attack from a panic disorder. (4)  
d) Discuss the treatment of a panic disorder. (10)  
[25]
- 2 Miss X, a 48-year-old female presents to the emergency department with a 1-week history of acute confusion, disorientation, and disruptive and disorganised behaviour. She is known to be HIV positive, with a CD4 count of 271. She was started on antiretroviral treatment two months ago. She has no previous psychiatric history. There is no history of substance use, and no family history of a mental illness.
- a) List the differential diagnoses for her acute symptoms and motivate (factor for and against) each diagnosis. (8)
- Her family reports that she has gradually become slower and clumsier in the last 2-years and is starting to become forgetful. She was fired from her clerical job last year for poor work performance.
- b) List the four most likely differential diagnoses for her more long-standing neuropsychiatric symptoms. (4)  
c) Discuss the use of antipsychotics in patients with HIV. (13)  
[25]
- 3 a) Despite years of warnings about the hazards of prescribing benzodiazepines, these drugs continue to be used at a higher rate than what is considered appropriate. List some of the recognised good practices you would advise to Primary Health Care doctors when prescribing benzodiazepines. (8)  
b) Polypharmacy has serious potential risks and increases the side effect burden both acutely and over the long term. Discuss strategies you would employ to limit polypharmacy and over-prescribing during the maintenance phase of treating a severe mental illness. (9)  
c) Long-acting Injectable Antipsychotics (LAI) were developed in response to high rates of poor adherence to oral formulations. Briefly discuss.  
i) Advantages of LAIs. (4)  
ii) Limitations of LAIs. (4)  
[25]

- 4 A 20-year-old female comes to see you after failing her final examinations. She reports feeling sad and lonely, after recently breaking up with her boyfriend. During the interview you find her to be very tearful. You make a diagnosis of Major Depressive Disorder (MDD).
- a) Tabulate the clinical features associated with Major Depressive Disorder under the two different categories i.e. Neurovegetative and Other. (8)
  - b) Give the 1<sup>st</sup> line pharmacotherapy you would prescribe, including dose ranges, duration of treatment and the three most common side-effects associated with this drug. (6)
  - c) Discuss how you would differentiate between MDD and grief. (11)
- [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)*

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- 1 Mr Kay is a 75-year-old retired teacher who is a widow, and lives on his own. He has been living with hypertension and diabetes mellitus (for the last 20-years) which are well controlled. His daughter approaches you because she wants to place her father in an old age home, and sell the house he currently lives in. She brings him to you for a medical and mental assessment as required by the old age home.
- a) In a clinical setting how would you evaluate Mr Kay's competency to engage in selling his property? (15)
  - b) After your assessment you come to the conclusion that Mr Kay has mild cognitive deficits. During your assessment Mr Kay informs you that he wants to make amendments to his existing will. How would you evaluate his testamentary capacity? (10)
- [25]
- 2 A 9-year-old boy who has been continent of urine since the age of 3-years has now started wetting the bed. His father has lost his job 2-months ago and he has a 15-year-old sister who has been caught smoking cannabis at school. You are the GP for this family and the boy has been brought to your practice as his parents are very frustrated by his bedwetting.
- a) Discuss how you would do an assessment on any child presenting with enuresis. (10)
  - b) Discuss the management of the child in the case scenario above. (15)
- [25]
- 3 You are required to assess a 24-year-old woman who was admitted overnight after taking an overdose of "sleeping pills", which she had taken subsequent to having "a few drinks", after being told that her boyfriend was seen with another woman. You notice a number of scars on her wrists.
- a) Describe what factors you would consider in doing a suicide risk assessment. (10)
  - b) How would you assess whether she has an alcohol use disorder? (5)
  - c) List 5 features of borderline personality disorder. (5)
  - d) She denies that the scars on her wrists were due to suicide attempts, but says that she sometimes feels an urge to hurt herself. Briefly discuss the significance of this with regards to borderline personality disorder. (5)
- [25]

- 4 Mr A, a 24-year-old patient known with schizophrenia comes to see you in the casualty department. He reports that he was charged with theft after stealing a bicycle and is worried that he will be sentenced to jail. He says he stole the bicycle as the voices told him to do so. He requests admission to hospital (it is clear he hopes this will prevent him from going to jail). According to his previous notes he always has residual psychotic symptoms on follow up, despite an adequate dose of Clozapine.
- a) Discuss which options are available for admission under the Mental Health Care Act (MHCA) and the factors that should be considered when doing so. Motivate the form of admission required for this patient. (10)
- b) Discuss the ethical principles, as they apply to this case, under the following headings
- i) Beneficence.
  - ii) Non-maleficence.
  - iii) Autonomy.
  - iv) Justice. (15)
- [25]