

OET

OCCUPATIONAL ENGLISH TEST NURSING & MEDICINE

Ros Wright

Medical Advisers: Dr Christopher A Green, Dr Rebecca L Winslow
Series Consultant: Alison Ramsey

Speaking & Writing
SKILLS BUILDER



The English
Language Test
for Healthcare
Professionals



Express Publishing

Respiratory (1)



Objectives

OET Speaking

- Employing a patient-centred approach
- Initiating the interaction
- Building relationships

Medical Focus

Obstructive sleep apnoea (OSA)

Grammatical Expression

Present tense review

Lexis

Dependent prepositions 1

OET Writing

Opening & closing a letter

OET Speaking | Employing a patient-centred approach

1.1 In small groups, discuss these comments.

'A patient is an individual to be cared for, not a medical condition to be treated.'

'Don't talk at your patient, talk with your patient.'

1.2 In pairs, read the extract and discuss the questions.



This approach to patient care is where the doctor plays the dominant role. Unlike more holistic approaches, the doctor merely considers the patient's physical symptoms, then utilises their skills to select the best medical treatment or procedure to improve the patient's condition. The patient is not expected to actively participate in the discussion around their condition and is generally encouraged to agree to the doctor's decisions.

- What approach to patient care is being described?
- How does it compare to the approach used in your country?

1.3 Who would say the following statements about patient care? Write *HP* (healthcare professional) or *P* (patient) next to each comment.

- 'Patient-centred care is essential because it treats me as a person and not simply as an individual with a series of long-term conditions.' *P*
- 'The starting point to delivering patient-centred care is remembering what it's like to be a patient.'
- 'It's really about what we can do together, rather than what they can do for me.'
- 'Patients are a key resource in care, not just a set of problems.'
- 'Unless we involve the person before us and their concerns and beliefs, we'll never engage them in participation of their care.'
- 'It forces me to take some responsibility of my care and to share that power in a real partnership.'

Test Tip

It is essential that OET candidates demonstrate a 'patient-centred approach'.

The principles of patient-centred care:

- Coordinating and integrating care
- Working together to make sure there is good communication, information and education
- Making sure people are physically comfortable and safe
- Ensuring there is continuity between and within healthcare services

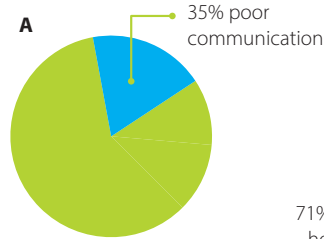
1.4 In pairs, add three or four more principles to this list. Then answer the questions.

- What are the benefits of patient-centred care?
- Does everyone respond well to the patient-centred care approach? Why (not)?

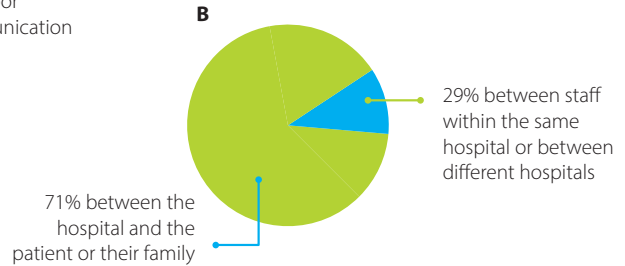
OET Speaking | Initiating the interaction

2.1 As a group, read the statistics. Do they surprise you? Why (not)?

Reason for Complaints in UK Hospitals

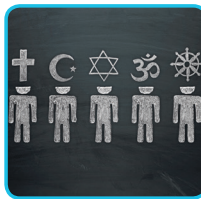


Poor Communication



Parliamentary & Health Service Ombudsman (2015)

2.2 In small groups, look at the photos below and discuss how these issues cause poor communication between healthcare professionals and patients or relatives. Then brainstorm four or five more causes of poor communication.



religion



IT



background noise



body language



anxiety

2.3 1.2 You're going to hear a medical communications expert talk about barriers to effective patient communication. Listen to Part 1 and complete rows 1–3 of the table.

Barriers to Communication in Healthcare	
Category	Examples
1 Environmental	
2 Physical	
3 Psychological	
4 Linguistic	
5 Sociocultural	
6 Technological	

2.4 1.3 Listen to Part 2 and complete the rest of the table.

2.5 In small groups, discuss ways to improve communication caused by the following barriers:

- Information overload
- Medical jargon*
- Pain
- Time pressure

*words/expressions used in a particular profession which are difficult for other people to understand

2.6 In pairs, discuss these questions.

- What are your personal communication barriers as a healthcare professional?
- What is the impact of these on your communication with patients and carers/relatives?
- How could you improve your communication style?

Medical Focus | Obstructive sleep apnoea (OSA)

3.1 In small groups, decide if these facts are *T* (true) or *F* (false). Check your answers on page 131.

- a 3.9 million is the estimated number of patients with OSA in the UK.
 - b Alcohol use is a major risk factor for OSA in patients in the UK.
 - c In the UK, GPs are legally responsible to inform the DVLA* of their patients' condition.
 - d Instances of OSA in children in the UK have increased significantly since 2010.
- *Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency*

3.2 What is your experience of OSA in your professional or personal life?

3.3 In small groups, test your patient vocabulary. Read the presentation slides on Continuous Positive Airway Pressure (CPAP) and match the underlined terms with the correct patient-friendly term.

- | | |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| a area behind the palate _____ | g part of throat behind mouth and nasal cavity _____ |
| b eardrum _____ | h runny nose _____ |
| c collapsed lung _____ | i sleeplessness/inability to sleep _____ |
| d fear of enclosed spaces _____ | |
| e graze/rash _____ | |
| f nosebleed _____ | |

Slide 1

CPAP Therapy: Most effective treatment

- Increases calibre airway in retropalatal and retroglossal regions
- Increases lateral dimensions in upper airway
- Thins lateral pharyngeal walls
- Maintains upper airway patency during sleep preventing soft-tissue collapse



Slide 2

Complications & Adverse Effects of CPAP

- Sensation of suffocation or claustrophobia
- Difficulty exhaling
- Insomnia
- Musculoskeletal chest discomfort
- Pneumothorax
- Sinus discomfort
- Mask related problems (skin abrasions, conjunctivitis)
- Nasal problems **can** include rhinorrhoea, epistaxis (*rare*)
- Rupture of tympanic membrane (*rare*)

3.4 Read the presentation slides in Ex. 3.3 again and answer the questions.

- a How would you explain the benefits of CPAP to a patient with OSA?
- b According to the presenter, how might CPAP affect a patient psychologically?
- c What problems does the presenter mention related to the equipment?
- d In Slide 2, what does the word **can** signify in this particular context?

3.5 Work in pairs. You may need to go online for further information.

- Student A:** Explain to a newly diagnosed patient how to use a CPAP machine.
- Student B:** Explain possible lifestyle changes you might suggest to a patient with OSA.

As you explain, check your patient has understood. Use expressions such as:
Is that clear? Does that make sense? What have you understood so far?



OET Speaking | Building relationships

4.1 Read the candidate role card. In pairs, use the verbs in the box to complete the tasks.

ask assure encourage explain **find-out**

Test Tip

Other common functions in the role play include 'Explain, Reassure and Persuade'.

SETTING Outpatient clinic

NURSE The 49-year-old diabetic patient is suffering from obesity and hypertension and has been referred by their GP to your clinic to determine whether they have sleep apnoea. You are the nurse helping to manage the clinic, which is running nearly an hour late today. You want the patient to complete a form to calculate their Epworth Sleepiness Scale (ESS).

TASK

- Find out* what the patient knows about the purpose of the clinic and _____ if necessary.
- _____ the patient to fill in the questionnaire.
- _____ the patient the doctor needs the results of the questionnaire to help him provide the best care.
- Strongly _____ the patient to answer the questions honestly.

4.2 Read the role card again and answer the questionnaire.

OET Speaking Questionnaire

- Where does the conversation take place? *Outpatient clinic*
- What is your role? *Nurse*
- What is the role of the interlocutor? _____
- Have you met the patient/carer/relative before? _____
- What is the main aim of the conversation? _____
- How urgent is the situation? _____
- How do you think the patient/carer/relative is feeling? _____
- What information do you need to gather? _____
- What information do you need to provide? _____
- What is/are the (potential) point(s) of tension? _____

4.3 In small groups, compare the interlocutor role card with the role card in Ex. 4.1. Discuss the similarities and differences. What is the significance of these for the candidate?

SETTING Outpatient clinic

PATIENT You are a 49-year-old diabetic suffering from obesity and high blood pressure. You're embarrassed as your spouse complains about your snoring and noticed you sometimes stop breathing, then start again with a jolt. Colleagues comment you are sleepy and you often want to nod off. Your GP has made an appointment at the sleep clinic. You are annoyed as the appointments are running late.

TASK

- Ask what happens at the clinic.
- If asked, tell the nurse you don't remember what sleep apnoea is and why your GP has recommended you to the clinic.
- Express your annoyance at the questionnaire – you completed one at the surgery two months ago.
- Explain you want your spouse to join you, as s/he can describe some of the problems.
- Reluctantly agree to complete the questionnaire and wait to see the doctor.

e.g. Similar: setting / Different: hypertension vs. high blood pressure

4.4 Work in pairs and look at the photos below. How do you usually begin your conversation in these situations?



- a routine problem b test results c urgent issue d with a relative

4.5 Reorder the words to form introductions and match them to the correct photos (a–d) in Ex. 4.4.

- 1 looking after your father. / Good afternoon, / I'm the nurse / it's Ms Taylor, isn't it? / I'm Eva and
- 2 have a little chat about / Nice to / the results of your blood tests. / see you again. / Thanks for coming in / Your doctor asked me to / Hello, Mr Martin. / to see us today. /
- 3 I understand / coming in today, Toby. / Thanks for / some back pain, / you've been experiencing / is that right?
- 4 something for that, / I can see you're / Is that OK? / I can give you / Hello Helen, / but first / ask you a few questions. / in a lot of pain. / I need to

4.6 1.4 Match the two halves to form more introductions. Which is the best introduction for Ex. 4.1? Why? Listen to Part 1 and check.

Test Tip
It's your job to start the role play; don't wait for the interlocutor to speak first!

- | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>a Hello, Mr Brown, my name's Laura. I'm the nurse in charge of today's clinic. How are ...</p> <p>b Hello, Mr Brown. How have ...</p> <p>c Hello, Mr Brown. I'm sorry for the delay. My name's Laura and I'm the nurse ...</p> <p>d Hello, Mr Brown. I'm sorry for the delay. My name's Laura. How ...</p> | <p>i are you today?</p> <p>ii you today?</p> <p>iii in charge of today's clinic.</p> <p>iv you been since we last saw you?</p> |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

4.7 1.5 Listen to Part 2 and circle the correct words to complete the statements.

- The patient's GP **had explained** / **hadn't explained** the procedure at the sleep clinic.
- The patient will have his **weight and height** / **height and weight** and oxygen levels recorded.
- The patient has been waiting for almost **30** / **20** / **60** minutes.
- The patient **has already completed** / **refuses to complete** / **agrees to complete** a form.

4.8 In pairs, brainstorm two or three ways the nurse (a) demonstrates a respectful attitude, (b) could improve her communication.

e.g. (a) She introduces herself to the patient.

4.9 In pairs, compare these questions. Which one is the best? Why?

- a Do you know about the sleep clinic? b So I guess your GP explained what's going to happen today. c What do you know about the sleep clinic?

4.10 Complete two more questions to find out what the patient understands about the sleep clinic.

- How much _____?
- Can I just ask, _____?

4.11 In pairs, practise introductions and tasks (a–b) on the candidate role card.

Grammatical Expression | Present tense review

5.1 1.6 Dr Chambers is dictating a referral letter to her secretary. Listen and complete the letter.

Dear Dr Chan,

I **a)** *am writing* to refer a patient of mine for your further assessment. Ms Alison McTaggart

b) _____ 49 years old and **c)** _____ of disrupted sleep pattern.

The patient **d)** _____ part-time in a pharmacy and **e)** _____ after teenage

sons, both of whom **f)** _____ mildly autistic. Ms McTaggart **g)** _____

overweight with a BMI of 27 and **h)** _____ a five-year history of type 2 diabetes.

5.2 Read the information in the grammar box. Look at the letter in Ex. 5.1, underline examples of the present simple and circle examples of the present continuous. Then answer the questions.

Expressing the present in healthcare

- 1 Use the **present simple** to write or talk about habits or routine and factual information, including family, past medical and current social histories.
e.g. Sally suffers from mild depression, but is not on any medication. She has no history of allergies.
- 2 The **present continuous** expresses an action in progress or a temporary action that is repeated over a specific period of time.
e.g. I am referring Ms Barber to you for further investigation. Blood tests are taking place in Room 10.

 GR: p. 103

- a Which example(s) in Ex. 5.1 indicate(s) a routine, a fact?
- b What is the difference between the use of the present continuous in (a) and (c) in Ex. 5.1?

5.3 Read these sentences from referral letters. Correct one mistake in each sentence.

- a Ms Dawes is still needing assistance with her ADLs, in particular washing and dressing.
- b I am referring this patient who is requiring further investigation into possible OSA.
- c The patient's current medication includes salbutamol, which she is taking twice daily.
- d The patient no longer smoke and is a moderate to heavy drinker.
- e I strongly recommends she attend a diabetes clinic.
- f His social history isn't indicating anything remarkable with regards to his symptoms.
- g I discharge this patient into your care.
- h The patient had a two-year history of OSA.

Test Tip

A patient's medical history can never be erased – it's **always** in the present simple.

5.4 1.7 A nurse asks Debbie about her sleep pattern. Put the verbs into the correct tense. Then listen and check.

Nurse: **a)** *Are you sleeping (sleep)* well at the moment, Debbie?

Debbie: Not really, no. It sometimes **b)** _____ (**take**) me three hours to get to sleep. I **c)** _____ (**find**) I **d)** _____ always _____ (**worry**) about it too.

Nurse: I **e)** _____ (**see**). It's important that you **f)** _____ (**not/use**) your bedroom for anything other than sleeping. I **g)** _____ (**want**) you to try and do something to relax before you **h)** _____ (**go**) to bed, such as **i)** _____ (**have**) a warm bath or read.

Debbie: OK, I can do that. And what about sleeping during the day?

Nurse: Why? **j)** _____ you _____ (**take**) a lot of naps these days?

Debbie: Yes. I **k)** _____ (**get**) tired quite easily and I often **l)** _____ (**nap**) after lunch.

Lexis | Dependent prepositions 1

6.1 Many verbs and nouns in English are followed by prepositions. Look at these examples.



a My skin **breaks out** in a rash whenever I use a particular washing powder.

b *This patient presented today with signs of fatigue and complaining of continued disrupted sleep.*

6.2 Complete the article, using the expressions in the box.

carried out **linked to** lead to looking into
put the blame on research into result of

Sleep Apnoea: Surge in Number of Children Admitted to Hospital

The growing number of young people in the UK with this disorder may be

- a)** *linked to* rising obesity levels.
b) _____ sleep apnoea
c) _____ by a consultant in paediatric sleep medicine has concluded that the number of hospital admissions of children and teenagers with the

condition has risen sharply over the past four years. The **d)** _____ the condition is disrupted sleep, which can also **e)** _____ other health and behavioural problems. Experts **f)** _____ this phenomenon **g)** _____ childhood obesity.

6.3 In pairs, discuss the questions.

- a** To what extent do the results of the research surprise you?
b What does the noun **surge** in the title mean?
c What kind of behavioural problems might sleep apnoea cause in children?
d What advice might you give a parent whose child is suffering from sleep apnoea?

6.4 Match these verbs to the correct preposition. Use a dictionary if necessary.

benefit recover ask
check prescribe set
suffer **FOR** flare
clear **FROM**
throw **UP** come
arrange withdraw care
recommend

Note: Blue arrows point from 'suffer' to 'FROM' and from 'care' to 'UP'.

6.5 Write a sentence for each expression in Ex. 6.4 to help you remember the meaning.

*e.g. The patient **cares for** her elderly mother and two teenage sons.*



OET Writing | Opening & closing a letter

7.1 As a group, complete the OET Writing task with the words/phrases in the box. Then answer the questions (a–b).

body ~~case notes~~ complete sentences letter note form relevant

Test Tip

Remember to write your letter from today's perspective.

WRITING SUB-TEST: NURSING
TIME ALLOWED: READING TIME: 5 MINUTES
WRITING TIME: 40 MINUTES

Mr Anton Faure is an 87-year-old patient in the medical ward at the New Cross Hospital, where you are a Charge Nurse.

Using the information given in the **1) case notes**, write a discharge letter to Jill Templar, Senior Nurse at the Maples Nursing Home, 20 Banks Street, Ambledown who'll be responsible for his care.

In your answer:

2) Expand the _____ notes into _____.

3) Do not use _____.

4) Use _____ format.

The **5)** _____ of the letter should be approximately 180–200 words.

- a What is the significance of the instruction in (2)?
- b What do you think is included in the body of the letter?

7.2 In pairs, look at the task in Ex. 7.1 again and answer the OET Writing Questionnaire.

7.3 In pairs, answer and compare your thoughts. Then read the commentary on page 71.

- a I'm concerned about completing the letter in 40 minutes. **Yes / A little / No**
- b I'm concerned about writing the letter within the word count. **Yes / A little / No**
- c I'm concerned about having to write in a formal style. **Yes / A little / No**
- d I'm concerned about my spelling in English. **Yes / A little / No**

7.4 Look at the opening submitted by OET candidate, Andras. Correct the mistakes.

Jill Templar
Maples Nursing Home
20 Banks Street
Ambledown
11th of Aug 2019

Re: Mr Anton Faure, an 87-year-old male patient widowed, for discharge from New Cross Hospital on 12 Aug 2019.

Dear Ms Jill

7.5 Write the correct salutation for these recipients.

- a The manager of the Maples Nursing Home.
- b No name is mentioned.

7.6 Reorder the words to form three closings for a letter.

a	b	c
any / Please / with / queries. / contact / me	to contact me. / require / please / feel free / If you / any additional information,	hesitate to / require / Should you / please do not / contact me. / any further information,
Yours sincerely, Charge Nurse	Yours sincerely, Doctor	Yours sincerely, Doctor

7.7 Write a closing for the letter in Ex. 7.4.

OET Writing Questionnaire

- 1 Who is the candidate writing to (recipient)?
- 2 Does the recipient know the patient?
- 3 What is the purpose of the letter?
- 4 What is the current situation?
- 5 How urgent is the situation?

Test Tip

Don't forget commas [,] after *Dear Dr Smith, ...* and *Yours sincerely, ...*