



Medical Faculty, Bern Institute for General Practice (BIHAM)



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Patient interview guide – English translation

You can start the interview:

"I'm at the very beginning of my medical student studies. Interviewing patients will be very important in my future professional life. I'd therefore like to learn how to interview professionally and learn how it feels to play the doctor's role. I would like to hear from you what it feels like to be a person with an illness, and how you cope with your everyday life."

During the interview, remember that the focus should be on the patient rather than the illness. The following questions are a guide to possible questions, but focus on questions b-i.

Paediatric patients: usually you interview the parents of the sick child. Depending on the age, the child may also be able to answer some questions. Go through the interview guide in advance with your GP teacher and consider together which questions need to be adapted for a child of this age.

Questions for the patient (a-i):

a) Can you tell me something about yourself?

How old are you? Are you working, retired (unfit to work, welfare payments, pension)? Are you married? Do you live alone? Do you have a family? Friends? Hobbies?

How do you live? House/flat? Do you need help at home or nursing care? Do you have any physical disabilities?

b) You need regular medical care from your general practitioner. Do you have one, or several illnesses? Which? Which of these illnesses affects you the most in your day-to-day life?

Please tick the group to which the illness belongs:

- Heart disease
- Pulmonary disease
- Back pain
- Depression
- Other

Have you had this illness for a long time? What sort of illness is it?

When did you first notice the illness? What did you notice, what were your symptoms?

Who looked after you?

Which treatment did you have? Do you need to take medication?

How do you feel with the treatment (medications, other forms of therapy)? Have you notice any side-effects? Has the treatment finished? Do you feel better, worse?

- c) How has your illness changed your life?
For example, how has your employment situation changed?
... your home environment (relocation, adaptations, mobility)
... your contact with other people
... your hobbies
... your support in everyday life (nursing care, home help)
- d) How has the illness changed you as a human being?
Have you noticed a change in your mood (e.g. more often sad)?
Who or what gives you support in this difficult situation?
Has your attitude been changed by the illness? How, exactly?
What are your expectations or hopes for the future?
- e) How do those around you handle your illness?
Have you had comments from the people around you? What? How have you felt about this?
- f) What does your GP mean to you in this whole situation?
and the practice nurse?
- g) What do you value most about your GP?
Your GP is my teaching doctor, which means that I learn from her/him. Which of her/his skills is important to you, that I should learn so that I can be a good doctor?
Are there any problems?
- h) Are there any other medical professionals who help to care for you?
District nurses
Physiotherapy
Diabetes advisor ...
- i) Do you have any other tips for me as a future doctor?

Think about and make notes on:

What are the patient's health beliefs? (modern medicine, complementary medicine, self-healing etc.)

Hopes and expectations of the patient?

Illness-related beliefs (chance, bogeyman, acceptance etc.)

Your emotional response to the patient?

If relevant, the patient's motivation to implement changes (dietary, weight loss, etc.)

Also make notes on your observations regarding:

Observation of the patient, visually, auditory, smell

General condition, age, height, respiratory rate, ability to move about

Behavioural observation (emotions and cognition)

At the end of the interview, please make sure you thank the patient for his/her time and cooperation.