**Simulated Patient Case**

***Diane Peterson – Work Related Back Injury***

Adapted from Medical College of Wisconsin Medical Interviewing Office of Educational Services / SP Program.Case modified for Australian audience by Kirrian Steer, Simulation Technician - LaTrobe University.

# Facilitator Case Reference Guide

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| Presenting Complaint:  (with setting/vitals) | Work-related back injury problems. |
| Gender and Age Range: | Male / Female, age 35-50 |
| Name: | Diane Peterson |
| Opening Statement: | “I have this sharp pain in my back that is just killing me” |
| Brief Summary: | Patient works as nursing assistant at nursing home. While lifting heavy patient, felt sudden onset of low back pain. No previous back problems. Pain and stiffness worsened over the next few hours until patient had to leave work and come here. Pain is shooting down the right leg to the ankle; it is difficult to walk-partly because moving increases pain and partly because right leg feels weak. The patient’s supervisor at work is not sympathetic. |
| Case Objectives: | 1. Participant will demonstrate introductions, explanation of their role, and establishment of rapport. 2. Participant will demonstrate the appropriate use of open-ended and focused questions. 3. Participant will demonstrate the ability to elicit a complete description of the chief complaint, including all dimensions of the symptom. 4. Participant will demonstrate closure of the interview and transition to the next stage of the encounter. 5. Participant will demonstrate clarification of the patient’s agenda for the visit. |
| Key Challenge(s) of Case: | Introduce self, establishing rapport, open and closed questions, active listening, closing. Obtaining an occupational history, a complete description of pain and functional limitations. Respond to obvious distress. |
| Differential Diagnosis (actual diagnosis): | Disc herniation  Muscle or ligament strain. |
| Exam Room Needs: | General Clinic Exam Room |
| Follow-up Station Needs: | None |
| Activities & Time Req: | Small Group Teaching Format – 15 minutes for encounter |
| Data Collection Methods: | Facilitator will provide verbal feedback on performance  Simulated Patient will give feedback on communication skill  Facilitator will fill out written review of each participant performance |
| Course, Participant Level: | Undergraduate or professional level. |
| Correlations: | Back and spinal cord anatomy, radicular pain and dermatomes in neuroscience |
| Reading: |  |
| Case Authors: | Joan Bedinghaus, MD , Tisha Palmer, SP Coordinator  Modified by Kirrian Steer, Simulation Technician |
| Date (orig. / last revision) | November 20, 2001 / September 22, 2006  Modified April 17 2013 |

Simulated Patient (SP) Case Instructions

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| **Patient Name** | Diane Peterson |
| **Gender/Race/Age (age range)** | Female, Age 40 yrs old |
| **Presenting Situation** | Diane Peterson, age 40 presents to the clinic today with back pain. |
| **Opening Statement** | “I have this sharp pain in my back that is just killing me” |
| **Elaboration of Complaint** | You work as a nursing assistant at a local nursing home. While lifting a heavy paralyzed patient who had slumped in bed, you felt a sudden onset of low back pain. The human resources department at the nursing home said you should come to this clinic for your workplace injury. |
| **Clinical Content\*** | Present illness/symptoms:   * Sudden onset of back pain. When the injury “happened” it felt sharp and sudden. You describe the pain as DEEP and AWFUL. Your pain and stiffness has gotten worse over the last few hours and you had to leave work and come here. If asked to rate the pain your having now on a 0-10 scale, you would answer an 8. * Pain is shooting down your right leg to the ankle. It is difficult to walk – partly because moving increases your pain and partly because your right leg feels weak. You shift uncomfortably in your chair, often wincing and grimacing in your discomfort. * You took 2 Advil about 30 minutes after the pain started. This had no effect.   Pertinent Past Medical History:   * You have never had any prior back pain or difficulties with your back. * Other than this injury, you have been in good health. You smoke 1 pack/day and drink alcohol – 6 beers on the weekend. You do not use any other drugs and take no medications. You do not exercise on a regular basis though you do get quite a bit of exercise on the job.   Family Medical History:   * Your parents are both alive and well, living in Queensland. * You had one brother who died several years ago of a drug overdose. |
| **Physical Exam** | No physical exam will be performed. |
| **Psychosocial Profile** | You have only been working at the Albury District Nursing Home (David St) for a short time and are still in the three month probation period. Your supervisor at work was not at all sympathetic to your injury. You are at the end of your probation period at work and do not have any accrued time off. You are quite worried about how this injury might affect your job status and financial picture. You need a form filled out because of leaving work early today and a doctor’s note to take any time off.  You are married with 2 children in high school. Your husband is laid off. You are also responsible for caring for your elderly mother-in-law, visiting her most evenings to clean and do laundry. |
| **Scenario Development** | You should be sitting, uncomfortably, in a chair when the participant(s) start the scenario. In general, let the participant(s) set the pace and scope of the interview. You are to remain slightly anxious about work and in quite a lot of pain during the entire session.  If the scenario/ communication should come to a stall (more than a necessary pregnant pause). You can use one of the following questions to “jump start” the conversation:   * Is this what a slipped disc feels like? * Don’t I need a MRI or something? * Can I get something for the pain that won’t make me sleepy? I really can’t afford to miss any work. * This should all be covered by Workcover, right? |

# Participant Reference Guide

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| **Instructions:** | Please review the following materials in preparation for Interview Session |
| **Reading Assignment**: |  |
| Patient Information: | Diane Peterson is a 40 year old woman who is here to see you for back pain. She is a new patient to this clinic. |
| Brief Summary: | The patient is here today at the clinic to see you for a work related injury. |
| Your Case Objectives: | 1. Demonstrate introductions, explanation of your role, and establishment of rapport. 2. Demonstrate the appropriate use of open-ended and focused questions. 3. Demonstrate the ability to elicit a complete description of the chief complaint, including all dimensions of the symptom: (**P**lace, **Q**uality, **R**adiation, **S**everity, and **T**ime course). 4. Demonstrate clarification of the patient’s needs for the visit. 5. Respond to the patient’s distress. |
| Key Challenge(s) of Case: | Introducing self, establishing rapport, open and closed questions, active listening, closing. Obtaining an occupational history, a complete description of pain and functional limitations. Respond to obvious distress. |
| Activities & Time Req: | Small Group Teaching Format – 15 - 20 minutes for encounter |
| Data Collection Methods: | Facilitator will provide verbal feedback on performance.  Simulated Patient will give feedback on communication skills.  Facilitator will fill out written review of each participant performance.  All participants will submit written history to facilitator. |
| Correlations: | Back and spinal cord anatomy, radicular pain and dermatomes in Neuroscience. |

# Participant Assignment Form

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| **Interviewer:** | You are charged with obtaining a complete problem history from the patient, Ms. Peterson.  Signal the beginning of your interview by introducing yourself and explaining your role. As instructed, you may call a “Time Out” at any point in the interview to get suggestions from fellow participants/facilitator if needed.  You will have 15 –20 minutes TOTAL time to complete the interview. The facilitator will let you know when time is up. |
| **Observers:** | You will be responsible for attuning to the following aspects of the interview and the interviewer’s performance:   1. Did the interviewer ask appropriate open ended / closed ended questions and give the patient ample time to respond? 2. Describe how the interviewer responded to the patient’s distress. 3. Give examples of the interviewer(s) reflecting the patient’s language and summarising to check for understanding. 4. Has a complete description of the problem been obtained?   \* Keep in mind that you will be asked to share your impressions and comments on these criteria following the interview |
| Written Assignment (All 6 Participants) | Each of you will be responsible for writing a medical history for Ms. Peterson which should include:   * Identifying data * Chief complaint: incorporate the patient’s words * History of the present illness, organizing the story * Be sure to include all the important elements of the patient’s problem   **The medical history in its entirety should be about a page and should be turned into your facilitator no later than 1 week from your interview date.**  **This should be submitted via inter-office mail or e-mail.** |

Facilitator’s Checklist of Content and Communication

Participant Name:

Facilitator:

I. Content Checklist- Check if the participant asked or did the following:

\_\_\_\_\_ Asked about pain location (lower back, radiating down right leg)

\_\_\_\_\_ Asked about pain onset (started when moving patient)

\_\_\_\_\_ Asked about pain quality (sharp, deep)

\_\_\_\_\_ Asked about pain intensity (best = 7, worst = 8)

\_\_\_\_\_ Asked about prior history of back problems (none)

\_\_\_\_\_ Asked what makes pain better (really nothing)

\_\_\_\_\_ Asked what makes pain worse (movement)

\_\_\_\_\_ Asked how pain affects function (can’t work)

\_\_\_\_\_ Asked about emotional state (a little anxious)

II. Communication Skills Checklist- Check if the participant:

\_\_\_\_\_ Introduced self and explained role

\_\_\_\_\_ Started with open-ended questions

\_\_\_\_\_ Gave patient time to answer fully

\_\_\_\_\_ Responded to patient’s distress

\_\_\_\_\_ Checked for understanding

**Additional Comments/Suggestions for Improvement:**

This resource was developed as part of the Simulated Learning Environments Program (2011-13)*: Clinical Simulation Learning Centres (CSLC): Enhancing Simulated Learning Environment (SLE) services in the Hume region*

