

OET Speaking: Medicine 14

Patient's Role Play Card

ROLE PLAYER CARD		MEDICINE
SETTING	Surgical Ward	
PATIENT	You, Mr. Richard Parker brought your 5-year-old daughter, Fiona to the Emergency Department yesterday night. She has been suffering from vomiting and headaches for the past week. You are a single parent.	
TASK	• Express your shock at the diagnosis as you expected it to be something minor. • Find out the safeness of the surgery and severeness of pain. • Ask questions about re-occurrence and adverse effects to the child's health. • Find out post discharge care. • Express your feeling of guilt for not always being there for her.	

Doctor's Role Play Card

ROLE PLAYER CARD		MEDICINE
SETTING	Surgical Ward	
DOCTOR	You are speaking to Mr. Richard Parker, the father (single parent) of a 5-year-old girl, Fiona, who was brought to the hospital yesterday night with a week's history of headaches and vomiting. A tumour was discovered at the back of her brain on the left side in the MRI scan, and you have to give the father this news. Fiona is scheduled for a surgery. The father is distressed and utterly shocked by this news.	
TASK	● Explain the diagnosis (brain tumour, requires surgery to remove the tumour; surgery is completely safe and his daughter will be sedated). ● Assure him that the tumor is benign (means it won't spread to other parts of the body) and not likely to recur. ● Reassure the father about his daughter's recovery (should recover completely from surgery). ● Explain the need for follow ups after discharge (ensure the tumor has been removed completely). ● Offer suggestions about physical, speech or occupational therapy to speed up the process of recovery. ● Encourage him to stop self blaming (e.g. empathize with his feelings of self-blame, reassure him that it's not his fault) and offer him help to find a support group for connecting with caregivers.	

Common Expressions for Each Task

Task 1. Empathy

Explain the MRI findings — a brain tumour — and inform the father that surgery is planned.

"I need to share some important findings with you about ~. The scan has revealed ~."

- ☐ I need to share some important findings with you about Fiona's MRI results. The scan has revealed a tumour at the back of her brain.
- ☐ I need to share some important findings with you about the MRI scan. The scan has revealed an abnormal growth in the brain that needs to be treated with surgery.

Task 2 Reassurance

Assure the father that the tumour is benign and not likely to spread or recur.

"I want to reassure you that ~ — this means it ~, and the outlook is ~."

- ☐ I want to reassure you that the tumour is benign — this means it's not cancerous, and the outlook for a full recovery is very positive.
- ☐ I want to reassure you that the tumour is benign — this means it won't spread to other parts of the body, and once removed, is unlikely to return.

Task 3 Reassurance

Reassure the father that his daughter is expected to make a full recovery after surgery.

"Children typically recover very well from this type of surgery — ~."

- ☐ Children typically recover very well from this type of surgery — Fiona will be sedated throughout, and we expect her to be back to herself within a few weeks.
- ☐ Children typically recover very well from this type of surgery — the procedure itself is safe, and we'll be managing her pain carefully throughout her recovery.

Task 4 Next Steps

Explain the need for follow-up appointments after discharge to ensure complete recovery.

"After discharge, what we'll do is ~. This is to make sure ~."

- ☐ After discharge, what we'll do is schedule regular follow-up appointments. This is to make sure the tumour has been fully removed and that there are no signs of it returning.
- ☐ After discharge, what we'll do is bring Fiona in for check-ups over the coming months. This is to make sure everything is healing properly and that she's developing as expected.

Task 5 Advising

Suggest physical, speech, or occupational therapy to support recovery.

"To help ~ get back to normal as quickly as possible, we may recommend ~."

- ☐ To help Fiona get back to normal as quickly as possible, we may recommend some sessions with a physiotherapist or occupational therapist to support her recovery.
- ☐ To help Fiona regain full function as quickly as possible, we may recommend speech therapy or physical therapy, depending on how she responds after the operation.

Task 6 Empathy

Empathise with the father's feelings of self-blame and offer to connect him with a support group.

"Please don't blame yourself for this — ~. You're doing ~."

- ☐ Please don't blame yourself for this — you brought her in as soon as you realised something was wrong. You're doing everything a good parent can do.
- ☐ Please don't blame yourself for this — you couldn't have known from these symptoms alone. You're doing the best you can, and that's more than enough.

Doctor:

Mr. Parker, I know this must be incredibly difficult to hear, but I need to talk to you about the results of Fiona's MRI scan. It revealed a tumor located at the back of her brain, on the left side. I understand this is a shock, especially when you thought it might just be a minor issue, but please know that we are here to help you through this.

Father (Patient role):

A *tumor*? I thought it was just a stomach bug or something mild... I can't believe this.

Doctor:

I completely understand your reaction. It's a lot to take in. The good news is that the tumor is **benign**—that means it's *not cancerous*, and it will not spread to other parts of her body. We've scheduled Fiona for surgery to remove the tumor. It's a safe procedure, and she will be completely sedated during the operation. She won't feel any pain.

Father:

Is it really safe? Will she be in a lot of pain after the surgery?

Doctor:

That's a very reasonable question. Yes, brain surgery always sounds serious, but our team is highly experienced, and we've performed many surgeries like this before. Fiona will be in safe hands. After surgery, there might be some discomfort, but we'll manage her pain very carefully. Most children bounce back quite well, and we expect her to make a full recovery.

Father:

Will this happen again? Could this affect her later in life?

Doctor:

Fortunately, because the tumor is benign, it is very unlikely to return. We'll schedule regular follow-up appointments after the surgery to make sure everything is healing properly and that no part of the tumor remains. This way, we can be absolutely certain about her recovery.

Father:

What do I need to do after she comes home?

Doctor:

Great question. After discharge, Fiona may need some time to regain her strength. Depending on how she feels, we might suggest **physical therapy**, or perhaps **speech or occupational therapy**, just to help her get back to her normal self as quickly as possible. We'll guide you through everything step-by-step.

Father:

I feel so guilty... I've been so busy with work... maybe if I had brought her in earlier...

Doctor:

Mr. Parker, please don't blame yourself. You brought Fiona in when you realized something was wrong, and that's what matters. As a single parent, you already carry so much responsibility. You're doing the best you can—and that's more than enough. If it helps, I can connect you with a support group for parents in similar situations. You're not alone in this.
