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## **Abortion Counselling**

### **Instructions for Student**

You are working in a GP practice and have been asked to talk to 18-year-old Miss Elizabeth Brown who is 10 weeks pregnant and feels that she is not in a good stage of her life to become a mother. She wants to discuss having a termination of pregnancy.

Take a history (5 mins)  
Discuss options (7 mins)  
Create a plan for treatment (3 mins)

### Instructions for patient

Act upset and scared about the situation until the student discusses confidentiality with you and assures you that all information will be between you and the medical team.

#### **History of Presenting Complaint:**

- You have been sexually active with your current partner for 5 months and have been using condoms, until one occasion 10 weeks ago when you decided to take a risk.
- You did not think that the one-off occasion would have affected you until you realized you had missed your period.
- You have taken a little while to discuss the situation with your boyfriend who has decided he does not want to have a baby at the current time.
- You have also decided yourself that you are studying to go to university, not earning any money and are not ready to be a mother.
- You do not want your parents to find out as you feel it would cause you more distress than you are already in.
- Following the abortion you would like to go onto the contraceptive pill in order to have a routine whereby you do not decide to take risks like you have done.

#### **Obstetrics and Gynaecological History**

- You have never been pregnant
- Periods are regular, approximately 4 days of bleeding every 30 days and are not heavy.
- Age at menarchy was 15.
- No symptoms of STD such as irregular bleeding, pain or abnormally coloured/smelly discharge.

#### **Past Medical History:**

- No conditions to note.
- Never been in hospital.

#### **Drug History:**

- None

#### **Family History:**

- None

#### **Social History:**

- Currently in last year of college studying towards university entrance for Primary School Teaching.
- Does not smoke.
- Drinks approximately 3 units per week.
- Keeps very active with dance and gymnastics.

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**Questions to ask student:**

- Will it hurt?
- How long will it take?
- Will I see the baby?
- Will anyone find out?

### **Mark Scheme for Examiner**

This station is assessing the communication and reassurance skills of the student, as well as the provision of information regarding all options in pregnancy.

- 1) Starts with Open Questions
- 2) Ask about LMP (more precise) Asks how long patient is likely to have been pregnant for.
- 3) Asks about current relationship (are they supportive?)
- 4) Discusses patient's main concerns regarding confidentiality.
- 5) Carries out confirmatory pregnancy test in the surgery.
- 6) Discusses options available, i.e. TOP, adoption, continuing with pregnancy, help received if the decision is to continue.
- 7) Decide on a suitable step forward and fully takes into account the patients choice. Ensures patient is definitely happy with decision. Does the patient want more time to think about things?
- 8) Plan to write a referral letter for a Termination of Pregnancy at the nearest NHS hospital as soon as possible.
- 9) Arrange for the patient to book an appointment following TOP to discuss contraceptive options, but give information regarding different types for her to think about in the meantime.

#### **Extra Questions for examiner to ask:**

- 1) What is the upper time limit for abortion to be carried out? And why?
- 2) What are the different methods of abortion at different stages in a pregnancy? Medical, surgical
- 3) How would you go about referring the patient for TOP?
- 4) What are some ethical issues arising around abortions?
- 5) What would you do if you had a moral objection as a doctor to abortion?