

## **For busy revalidating GPs and Clinical Skills Assessment candidates**

Welcome to real general practice, an innovative approach to improving consulting skills for GPs, GP registrars and medical students.

My name is Keith Birrell. I'm a GP trainer I work in the Sunderland area of the United Kingdom and I've been teaching and training since 1994.

My training style has a proven success rate. All of my own registrars have passed the Clinical Skills Assessment exam. I've been training for 8 years and I've had 23 successful registrars. Not to mention the registrars who have benefited from the communication skills workshops and the mock exam circuits that I have run, or been involved in.

I want to thank my patients for generously allowing me to record their consultations and for allowing you to be a fly on the wall of my consulting room. I also want to thank my contributors, and my learners, for allowing me to record their lessons. You will benefit from the combined wealth of consulting experience and teaching prowess, that I have captured on your behalf.

General practice training is largely an apprenticeship. One of the most effective learning techniques that we have in general practice is the see one, do one, technique that occurs in our shared surgeries. Shared surgeries allow GPs in training to acquire new knowledge and skills, and to give nuance to the way that they communicate with patients, as they learn from an expert. Having said that, there are experts and experts. As an experienced trainer, I myself continue to learn every year, of ways to improve my consulting skills and I have taken the opportunity, whilst organising this teaching program to refine my own skills and to improve the way in which I share decisions with my patients. I've been very fortunate to collaborate with two esteemed colleagues, who have both allowed me to record our teaching sessions. Malcolm Thomas and Dave Tomson both share their insights with us. Malcolm Thomas is the founder member of Effective Professional Interactions. He has held almost every GP Deanery role in the North East but now works full time teaching consultation skills. Dave Tomson is a GP in North Shields. He has a career long interest in the nature of the consultation and in communication skills. He has produced some ground breaking materials to put patients in a more powerful position to make more appropriate shared decisions in health care. These MAGIC materials are available via [patient.info/doctor/decision-aids](http://patient.info/doctor/decision-aids).

You may have your own preferred learning style but I would encourage you to step out of your comfort zone. Educational theory tells us that challenging yourself with these different techniques will push you to improve. Role-play is not everybody's cup of tea but your exam is a role-play. Becoming comfortable with role-play is in your interests.

Our multimedia materials will allow you to access training, which will be relevant to you as a GP registrar, a medical student or a jobbing GP. Many of the materials that we produce will also be useful to your patients. As busy GPs your time is rationed. Patients' decisions are becoming increasingly complex. Allowing patients to make informed decisions takes time. It's important that patients can access materials to help them to make informed decisions, and that that information should be up-to-date and accessible to them. Please feel free to signpost your patients to our materials. These are freely available at [realgeneralpractice.co.uk](http://realgeneralpractice.co.uk). These patient decision aids are available in multimedia formats

and we have recorded audio clips of extended decision option discussions for some of the conditions.

These extended decision option recordings are to allow patients to have a better idea of the pros and cons of some of the options that are relevant to them for each condition. Whilst recording these audios, and whilst teaching our patient decision options workshop, I reminded myself of how time-consuming it is, to go through all the pros and cons that are relevant to any individual patient. These audios are available to patients, to access themselves via [realgeneralpractice.co.uk](http://realgeneralpractice.co.uk). I would encourage you to signpost patients to these during your consultations. Then ask them to contact you on the phone to ask for your help to move forward with their decisions.

Real general practice is designed to help you to acquire the skills and knowledge necessary for you to pass the clinical skills assessment exam. It will demonstrate to you: how busy GPs incorporate up-to-date knowledge and evidence based, patient-centred practice into their consultations. CSA candidates and medical students will often prefer to use our material in study groups, with or without the support of a trainer. Busy GPs can bring themselves up-to-date listening to audio material on their smart phones wherever and whenever they feel so inclined.

This course consists of 4 groups of educational material:

1. Role play scenarios for your CSA study group.
2. Communication skills learning. These are teaching sessions recorded with our communication skills experts to improve your consultations.
3. Shared decision options. These are extended option discussions with patients with specific conditions. These recordings are suitable for GPs and patients alike.
4. Consultations with patients with problems from all of the GP curriculum areas. This allows you to be comprehensive in your learning. And to tick some boxes in your e-portfolio.

Using our app, or our website, you will be able to access 4 groups of educational materials:

1.



Follow the 3 doctors image link to access case scenarios, to help you to prepare for your Clinical Skills Assessment.

We would suggest that the actors, who play each of the patients in our scenarios, listen to the consultation from which the scenario was derived, as well as reading their role. Ideally do this before the group meets. Use our app via your tablet device to access this material. Alternatively; print it out from the website.

After your study group has finished: you can listen to the audios of the other scenarios. We have interactive, printable, colour-in scripts to help you to check that you are understanding how GPs organise the consultation. You will need 10 different coloured pencils and a printer to test your understanding of the structure of the consultation.

We even have an innovative coloured map of the consultation for you to print off, laminate and to put on your consulting room wall. The map takes you from Land's End to John O'Groats. via all the 10 landmarks of the GP consultation.



2.

Follow the icon of the native Indian American girl sending smoke signals, to access the second group of audio materials. This group of materials will help you to improve your consulting skills. The communication skills that we describe, and rehearse, are ideal for GPs to use in a 10 minute consultation. We also teach you how to put patients in a better position to be able to make their own decisions. Download these materials onto your smart phone so that you can listen on the move.

3.



Follow the icon of swings and roundabouts to access audios to facilitate patient centred decisions. No single “best” option suits every patient. Just like some children prefer swings, some children prefer roundabouts. I have recorded these extended conversations with real patients to illustrate the broad range of options available to patients who have a similar diagnosis or problem. Clinicians need to be aware of the range of options that they might be able to offer each patient. In normal consultations we focus on the options available, that potentially satisfy an individual patient’s values and capabilities. Many of these recordings are longer than 10 minutes, so that we can educate other patients with other possible preferences. Download these materials onto your smart phone.

4.



Follow the dotting the i's and crossing the t's link icon to access audios of a range of consultations. We aim to cover the broad range of the sort of consultations that we see every month in General Practice. Most of these consultations are about 10 minutes long. We aim to give you enough knowledge to allow you to do your job competently. The recordings aim to cover the curriculum and to allow GPs to improve their knowledge across a large range of the topics, topics that you might face in your consulting room. A few of the scenarios are play acted by doctors and actors, this allows us to explore areas of the curriculum which might be too sensitive to record from real consultations. These few acted scenarios are based on real recorded consultations. Download these materials onto your smart phone. As you leave work, you might choose an audio from the curriculum area that challenged you that day. For example perhaps you saw a patient with vertigo today. You might choose to listen to a vertigo consultation.

The majority of the audio clips are bite sized. Short enough to listen to as you commute to work. Download the audios to your smartphone or download our app. The app allows you access the audios and the written material. Our podcasts are also available via iTunes, google play or wherever you get your podcasts. Most of us could listen for a few minutes as we commute to work, drawing inspiration for how to approach our next surgery.