

Tips for Assessors – Chart Review

The purpose of the PRA-BC chart review is to aid assessors in evaluating a candidate’s **medical record- keeping competencies** (as required by law) and clinical reasoning skills. As per College of Physicians and Surgeons of BC (CPSBC) standards and guidelines:

“[A] unified medical record must be maintained for every patient in the care of a physician in which all components (clinical notes, laboratory and imaging reports, hospital summaries and surgical reports, consultations, etc.) are gathered into one file, in one location, so far as possible.”

How to Perform a Chart Review

1. Case selection can be random or selected by the candidate or assessor to address a specific concern, patient profile, competency, etc.
2. Assessor reviews the chart note in advance of meeting with the candidate.
3. Assessor guides candidate in revealing his/her thought processes during the clinical encounter; the use of probing or open-ended questions may be of aid here (see examples on following page).

Assessing Medical Record Keeping Skills

Whether paper or electronic format, medical records must provide comprehensive documentation of the care provided to the patients and it must be complete and legible, as required by the Canadian Medical Association’s *Code of Ethics* and the bylaws under the *Health Professions Act* in British Columbia.

Legal Requirements of a Medical Record in BC (refer to CPSBC for more details)

Statutory requirements for medical records include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Recorded in English;
2. Explain the reason for the visit;
3. Provide the history and record of any examinations, investigations, diagnoses, treatments, and/or medications;
4. Include a follow-up plan;
5. Completed in a timely fashion.

Criteria to Consider when Reviewing Candidate Charts

History review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main reason for visit is clearly identified, relevant questions and pertinent negatives are stated • Ongoing medical problems and major health risks are listed • Relevant past medical history and family history are stated
Physical examination review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pertinent positive and negative findings on exam are included

Clear diagnosis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Differential diagnosis included as necessary
Treatment plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Correct treatment Follow-up arranged New medication profile reviewed Referrals completed as necessary
Overall review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization of note, patient profile sheet updated, legibility, format, length, thoroughness

Assessing Clinical Reasoning Skills

Although not specifically designed for the assessment of clinical reasoning skills, information gathered during a chart review may elicit particular competency concern(s). If this is the case, the assessor may guide the candidate in revealing his/her thought processes during the clinical encounter through use of probing, open-ended questions.

Concern	Example probing/open-ended questions
Premature diagnostic closure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “What features of the patient’s presentation led you to your top three diagnoses?”
Management choices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Can you tell me if there were any other tests that you thought of but deferred or ruled out, and why?”
Organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Tell me about how you organize your medical records to ensure they are in compliance with regulatory requirements?”
Patient-centeredness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “What did you learn about the patient’s concerns surrounding their illness?”
Comprehensive care skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “What logic did you employ when determining whether you would discuss preventive interventions, such as smoking cessation, with this patient?”

Note: Chart Reviews MUST be co-signed by candidate prior to returning forms to PRA-BC offices.

References/Resources:

- College of Physicians and Surgeons of British Columbia. Professional Standards and Guidelines – Medical Records. September 2014. <https://www.cpsbc.ca/files/pdf/PSG-Medical-Records.pdf>
- Canadian Medical Protective Association (CMPA) – Electronic Records Handbook https://oplfrpd5.cmpa-acpm.ca/documents/10179/24937/com_electronic_records_handbook-e.pdf
- Canadian Medical Protective Association (CMPA) – Electronic Records 10 Tips to Improve Safety https://oplfrpd5.cmpa-acpm.ca/documents/10179/301287261/com_electronic_records_poster_letter_size-e.pdf
- Doctors of BC – Privacy Toolkit <https://www.doctorsofbc.ca/publications-media/privacy-toolkit>
- Saskatchewan International Physicians Practice Assessment (SIPPA) Information Binder for Assessors of IMGs. Accessed: Fall 2012 <http://saskdocs.ca/work/family-physician---imgs/sippa/>