

SAMPLE MULTIPLE CHOICE AND ESSAY QUESTION AND ANSWER

Multiple Choice Portion of the Exam

You will be given three hours to answer a 120-question multiple choice exam. Each of the four possible answers contains one answer that is the “best answer”. We strongly suggest the following strategy:

1. Read each question carefully. Make sure you are answering what is being asked. If a question says “What is the first thing you will do?”, answer the first thing you will do. Do not take for granted that the obvious first step is assumed!
2. There will be four answers provided. Eliminate the answers that are obviously wrong and then re-read the question and choose the best answer.
3. Keep an eye on the clock. Three hours seems like a lot of time, but it goes by swiftly!

Following are some sample multiple choice question and answers:

In general terms, which of the following financial products is considered to involve the most risk?

- A. Life insurance.
- B. Annuities.
- C. Deposit accounts in FDIC member banks.
- D. Mutual funds.

In addition to legal and financial facts about the client, and the client's attitude about his or her circumstances, what should always be contained in a client file?

- A. Comprehensive employment history for the client.
- B. Complete details of childhood growth and development with school progress.
- C. Detailed verbatim accounts of all contacts with the client and all providers.
- D. Information necessary to understand the client and factors important to decision-making.

Essay Portion of the Exam

You will be given three hours to review six questions and choose four to answer in essay format. Some tips for you to consider:

- Assuming it takes you 10 minutes to read through the six questions, and decide which four to answer, you will be left with 2 hours and 50 minutes to answer four questions. This leaves you about 40 minutes per answer, so be aware of your time!
- When answering an essay question, be sure to explain your process thoroughly. The evaluators do not know what you are thinking from beginning to end!
- A helpful concept is to respond to the questions posed as if you were explaining your actions to a friend or a family member.
- There are different evaluators looking at your answers to the same essay, so be sure to thoroughly answer each question as if you were explaining your process to different people.
- Do not use lists or bullets to answer the essay questions. Write as if you are speaking conversationally to another individual explaining why you are making your decisions.

In an attempt to share what the NMG evaluators are looking for in a response to an essay question, we provide the following example:

Ramon

Five years ago you were appointed guardian of person for Ramon. Ramon is a 38-year-old male with an intellectual disability who has lived in a care facility since he was 16 years old. He has had infrequent contact with any family members for many years. A genetic spinal condition causes Ramon to be in a permanently prone position on a gurney. He communicates effectively and frequently with a communication board. Ramon has communicated that he would like to be able to get around using a wheelchair. The physician is recommending surgery for Ramon that could allow him to sit upright. His mother has recently re-established contact and is adamantly opposed to the surgery, stating she will sue anyone who has anything to do with operating on her son.

1. What factors do you need to consider before making a decision about the surgery?

As I have visited with Ramon monthly for the past 5 years and have developed a strong relationship with him, the first action I would take is to discuss his understanding of and feelings about this surgery. Before I schedule this visit with Ramon, I will research the proposed surgery and talk directly with his surgeon about the pros and cons and likely recovery issues involved. After visiting with him, if Ramon appears to understand much of what he needs to do, I will schedule a visit for him with a different surgeon to obtain a second opinion about whether this should be done. I will need to discuss what services and supports he will need as he goes through the surgery and recovery with the other members of his service team after talking with the surgeons. We will need to identify the therapists and other services he will need for rehabilitation. As to the family, I believe there may be some family members who would support this, and I will attempt to meet with them and with his mother to try to understand her reluctance, and her lack of involvement with Ramon, if she will discuss these issues with me. I may need to contact my attorney about this, either after I meet with her, or if she refuses to meet with me. Overall, if Ramon is clear about his desire to do this, and the benefits of a more active and comfortable life outweigh the risks involved, I will likely give informed consent for this to be done.

2. Based on the decision you make, what will you include in your guardianship plan?

I would be thinking about what was coming in terms of a difference in life style, life ability, and life adjustments, and considering what to incorporate into my guardianship plan-the specifics, methods and plans for those changes. I would be educating myself on the spectrum of types of surgeries to correct prone positioning, morbidity factors and what to expect with the type of surgery recommended.

Then my guardianship plan should include a more intense, genuine, and robust communication with Ramon, his reasoning/wishes/expectations, his medical team, his caregiving team, and his mother and any other family member who may surface, since this surgery can be a life altering event in combination with a possible liable suit considering the verbal threat of litigation made by Ramon's mother.

Pre-planning for aftercare needs in the emotional, mental and physical scopes, as well as quality of life impacts could be implemented into a guardianship plan. A review of legal code in the state where Ramon resides would be prudent since visits from his mother may cause distress to Ramon and carry over to staff regardless of surgery or not. Discussions and plans for possible placement alternatives to another less restrictive environment may be needed if improvements in mobility and a more independent life for Ramon results from all supported decision efforts with him to go ahead with surgery. These discussions and plans would include those who would be in the day to day care with Ramon should surgery have an optimal outcome, or those who would be caring for Ramon in an outcome that was not as complete as was hoped for.

A guardianship plan to accommodate these changes would possibly include environmental changes, counseling options, medical team changes, an updated care plan and assessments, financial reviews of associated costs, DME changes and new or updated therapies that may be required. Also a prudent look into protection from liability from Ramon's mother and her threats which could accelerate if a decision for surgery was made as well as her having a negative impact on all care teams during recovery and aftercare.

3. Explain how you limit your potential liability from the mother's threatened lawsuit.

Although she may not follow through with her threatened lawsuit, I have already taken action to protect myself from liability. There are several steps that I take as a matter of practice in all my cases, with or without the fear of being sued. I consistently document all my conversations including with whom, what was discussed, and what I promised I would do. And then I make sure that I follow up with the appropriate and necessary actions. The conversations that I have had with Ramon for as long as I've been appointed are all well documented, with particular detail on his goals, needs, and preferences concerning his care. I have documented what I've done to facilitate his communication struggles. His statements about his desire to be more mobile and the details of the doctor's surgery recommendation and its risks and benefits are carefully noted. This strong documentation will guide me in whatever consent I give for the surgery and will be available to the court in the event of litigation.

Concerning the mother's sudden appearance, I will endeavor to meet with her in an environment conducive to calm conversations. I need to learn more about her relationship with Ramon, the circumstances that led to her absence from his life, the reasons the family came to the decision to place him in a long-term care facility. This information will help me better understand her aversion to the surgery and her relationship with her son. I will also attempt to explain to her my responsibilities and authority to make medical decisions on behalf of Ramon and the steps I have taken to understand and carry out his wishes.

I will make sure there are appropriate arrangements for Ramon and his mother to communicate as long as he wants to engage with her and there would be no significant risk of harm to Ramon. I will assist her and Ramon use whatever communication supports are necessary. Ramon may be his own best advocate for why he wants the surgery.

I may consider trying to locate and engage other family members to better understand the family dynamics. This could be helpful in building support for Ramon and to gain further understanding of his views and circumstances. Family mediation is a possibility provided Ramon desires it, he can effectively participate, and there is a possibility of defusing family tensions. Of course, Ramon's direction and needs are the first considerations.

Going forward, I would request the court appoint a guardian ad litem along with my request for judicial guidance in making this important medical decision—not for any pending litigation, but as to the surgery question. Getting to the court first and explaining my actions may be an important strategy to head off any litigation.

I also will sit down with my attorney to discuss any further actions I need to take, along with notifying my insurance carrier of the possibility of litigation over my medical decision in support of Ramon's expressed desires.