OSCE stations for mental health nursing: safety plan

OSCE stations for mental health nursing: a collaborative safety plan records practical support a person can use when distress or thoughts of self-harm return. Use this original practice checklist with your course guidance and supervised skills teaching.

Numbered practice steps

1. Confirm identity using the setting's required identifiers. Introduce yourself as a student, explain the task, obtain consent and perform hand hygiene before contact or equipment use.
2. Check whether the person needs immediate medical or crisis help before making a plan. A written plan must not delay urgent assessment or treatment.
3. Ask what they notice before a crisis builds. Record warning signs in their own words, including situations, feelings or changes in behaviour they recognise.
4. Explore coping actions and safe places that have helped before. Choose actions they can realistically use rather than copying a standard list they do not trust.
5. Identify supportive people and professional contacts. Agree how to seek urgent help and discuss reducing access to means in a collaborative, safe way.
6. Write the plan together in an accessible form. Check how the person will find it, who may receive a copy and when the care team will review it.
7. Close by checking understanding, ensuring comfort and cleaning your hands and equipment as appropriate. Document findings and hand over any unresolved safety concern to the supervising practitioner.

Common omissions

A safety plan is not a contract promising that harm will not happen. Listing unavailable contacts makes the plan unusable. Ask whether contacting family is safe and wanted before involving them.

Try an original practice task

Work with a partner to make a short plan using fictional contact details only. Ask them to show how they would use it if distress increased outside usual clinic hours.

These steps support learning, rather than authorising independent treatment. Follow your school's task and local policy; ask for help when a decision exceeds your competence.

Related nursing practice

Return to mental nursing OSCE practice or use the full checklist directory.

For a related communication exercise, try the safety plan practice station. Its task and clinical setting may differ from this checklist.

Common questions

Is this a school marking sheet?

No. This is an original learning checklist. Your school sets the task and assessment criteria.

Can I print this checklist?

Yes. Use the PDF download on this page for practice.

Sources

- NMC: The Code
- NICE NG225: self-harm assessment and care

Checked 2026-11-13. Fees and rules change, so confirm them with the regulator before you book.