OSCE stations for mental health nursing: hearing voices

OSCE stations for mental health nursing: a hearing voices support conversation explores distress and safety without arguing about the experience or confirming that the voices are real. 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. Ask how the person would like to be addressed and whether the setting feels safe. Use short sentences and reduce distracting noise if possible.
3. Invite them to describe the experience and its effect on sleep, eating and daily life. Acknowledge that the fear or distress feels real to them.
4. Ask whether voices are telling them to harm themselves or anyone else and whether they feel able to resist. Escalate an immediate safety concern urgently.
5. Explore existing coping strategies, support and any recent medicine or substance changes. Seek assessment for new confusion, illness or rapidly changing symptoms.
6. Agree the next contact with the mental health team and explain what you will share. Record the person's account and what support they accepted.
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

Agreeing with a threatening belief may increase fear. Dismissing the experience can break trust. Asking only about the words of the voices misses distress, command content and the person's immediate safety.

Try an original practice task

A partner describes being distracted by a voice during a conversation. Practise validating distress, asking about safety and explaining a referral in ordinary language.

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 hearing voices 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 CG178: psychosis and schizophrenia in adults

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