OSCE stations for mental health nursing: perinatal wellbeing

OSCE stations for mental health nursing: a perinatal mental health conversation explores emotional wellbeing during pregnancy or after birth and identifies urgent concerns for parent and baby. 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. Confirm the stage of pregnancy or postnatal care and arrange a private conversation. Ask how the person has been feeling and what support is available.
3. Explore low mood, loss of interest, worry, sleep and ability to manage daily life. Ask about previous mental health difficulties and treatment in a non-judgemental way.
4. Ask directly about self-harm, suicidal thoughts and worries about the baby's safety. Sudden severe confusion, unusual beliefs or marked behavioural change after birth may indicate postpartum psychosis. Arrange immediate specialist assessment; imminent danger to parent or baby requires emergency help and safe supervision.
5. Use a validated questionnaire only within training and the care pathway. A questionnaire result is not a diagnosis or a reason to ignore the person's account.
6. Agree referral and follow-up with maternity, primary care or mental health services as appropriate. Explain urgent contact arrangements and record any safeguarding concerns.
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

Calling every difficulty baby blues can delay help. Do not assume that a supportive partner removes risk. Do not recommend stopping prescribed mental health medicines during pregnancy without specialist review.

Try an original practice task

Use a fictional postnatal conversation about feeling unable to cope. Practise asking about safety gently and arranging a clear handover to the appropriate service.

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 perinatal wellbeing 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 CG192: antenatal and postnatal mental health

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