

Radiography · Anxiety about entering the MRI scanner

SPK-RAD-01 | Original simulated candidate card

Setting: Radiology/imaging department - MRI suite

You are a radiographer in the MRI suite. Mrs Amaka Lama, aged 52, has been referred by her GP for an MRI of the lumbar spine because of persistent low back pain with pain and tingling down her left leg. Her MRI safety screening form has been completed and shows no contraindications. She has changed into a gown, but on seeing the scanner she has become panicky about the enclosed space and says she wants to go home.

Interlocutor: PATIENT

Your tasks

1. Find out what is worrying Mrs Lama about the scan (previous experiences, specific fears)
2. Explain what the scan involves (positioning; approximate length: about 20–30 minutes for today's lumbar scan, in several short sections, longer if pictures need repeating; noise; staying in contact with you)
3. Reassure Mrs Lama about the ways she can stay in control and feel more comfortable (call buzzer, stopping at any time, properly fitted MRI hearing protection with optional music through suitable headphones, support for her back)
4. Persuade her to try the scan today rather than leaving, while respecting her choice
5. Agree a plan for today and what will happen if she cannot complete the scan

Radiography · Chest X-ray for a toddler

SPK-RAD-02 | Original simulated candidate card

Setting: Radiology/imaging department - general X-ray room

You are a radiographer. Ms Anitha Mahadevan's 3-year-old son has been referred by his GP for a chest X-ray because of a cough lasting about ten days and intermittent fever for the last four days. He is too young to keep still on his own, so the department asks a parent to hold him while wearing a lead apron. Ms Mahadevan is reluctant to put on the apron and is worried about the X-ray.

Interlocutor: PARENT

Your tasks

1. Find out Ms Mahadevan's concerns about the X-ray and check whether she could be pregnant before she holds her son
2. Explain why the GP has asked for the X-ray and how small the radiation dose is for a child
3. Explain why the person holding him wears a lead apron and what will happen during the X-ray (position, holding still, how quickly it is done)
4. Reassure her about her worries
5. Agree how the X-ray will go ahead today (who will hold her son)

Radiography · Long wait before a contrast CT

SPK-RAD-03 | Original simulated candidate card

Setting: Radiology/imaging department - CT waiting area

You are a radiographer working in the CT department. Mr Tafadzwa Karimi, aged 64, is an outpatient booked for a contrast-enhanced CT scan of the abdomen, requested by his GP. He has been waiting for nearly two hours because several emergency patients had to be scanned first, and nobody has updated him. He has come to the desk, angry, saying he will leave if he is not scanned now. He is next on the list and should be scanned in about 20 minutes. Routine contrast safety screening will be completed with him separately before the injection, and department policy is that outpatients stay for 30 minutes after a contrast injection for observation before the cannula is removed and they go home.

Interlocutor: PATIENT

Your tasks

1. Acknowledge Mr Karimi's frustration and find out what is worrying him most about the delay
2. Explain why the delay has happened (urgent patients prioritised, no details about other patients) and apologise that he was not kept informed
3. Explain when his scan is likely to happen and briefly what it will involve (including the observation period afterwards)
4. Persuade him to stay for the scan (importance for his GP's assessment, rebooking would delay results)
5. Agree a plan for the rest of his visit, including how you will keep him updated

Radiography · Possible pregnancy before a lumbar spine X-ray

SPK-RAD-04 | Original simulated candidate card

Setting: Radiology/imaging department - private screening room next to the general X-ray reception

You are a radiographer. Ms Leila Ozturk, aged 26, has been referred by her GP for a lumbar spine X-ray after hurting her lower back lifting boxes at work three days ago. During routine pregnancy screening at reception she said her period is about a week late, so you have moved her to a private room next to reception to continue the conversation. Department policy is that women whose period is overdue are treated as possibly pregnant before any X-ray of the lower back, abdomen or pelvis. She wants the X-ray done today.

Interlocutor: PATIENT

Your tasks

1. Find out more about the possibility of pregnancy (when her last period started, contraception, any symptoms)
2. Explain in simple terms why the X-ray cannot go ahead today without further checks
3. Respond to her concerns about her employer and insurance claim
4. Explain the options (pregnancy test, discussion with her GP about whether the X-ray is still needed, rebooking)
5. Agree a plan with Ms Ozturk

Radiography · MRI postponed because of an unidentified pacemaker

SPK-RAD-05 | Original simulated candidate card

Setting: Radiology/imaging department - MRI safety screening area

You are a radiographer in the MRI department. A 79-year-old woman with mild dementia has been referred by her GP for a brain MRI to investigate memory decline. During the safety check, her son, Mr Rupert Carrington, tells you that she had a pacemaker fitted about ten years ago, but neither he nor his mother has any details of the device. The referral form did not mention a pacemaker, and the scan cannot go ahead safely today.

Interlocutor: RELATIVE

Your tasks

1. Find out what Mr Carrington knows about his mother's pacemaker (where and when it was fitted, any device card, recent checks) and how her memory has been changing
2. Explain in simple terms why the scan cannot be done safely today without full details of the device
3. Respond to Mr Carrington's anger and disappointment about the wasted trip
4. Explain the steps needed before the scan can be rebooked (identifying the device, arranging a pacemaker check if these have lapsed, liaising with the heart device clinic)
5. Agree a plan for rebooking and what he can do to help