

GERIATRIC EVALUATION AND MANAGEMENT SESSIONS (GEMS)
University of Pittsburgh
Area of Concentration in Geriatrics for Medical Students

GEMS SESSION TOPICS

1. Introduction, sign up, overview
2. Life review and health care use and experiences
3. Functional assessment (ADL and IADL) and medication review
4. Cognitive assessment
5. Mobility and sensory assessment
6. How to say goodbye

GEMS STUDENT GUIDELINES

Courtesy and Professionalism

It is the responsibility of health professionals to create an atmosphere of trust with patients. The health professional should offer a neat and respectful appearance, behave in a professional manner, be sensitive to privacy and personal issues, have good listening skills and make an effort to help the patient feel at ease. These interview experiences provide the student with a chance to think about how health professionals create an atmosphere of trust and professionalism and to begin to practice these behaviors. Here are some suggestions for your interview sessions.

1. When you are assigned your older person to interview, contact them by telephone. Introduce yourself, explain the purpose of your call and determine a convenient time to visit.
2. For the visit, dress in neat, fairly conservative clothing. You do not need to wear suits or dresses but should avoid very revealing or ragged outfits. You want to dress in a way that will make old people comfortable with you.
3. At the beginning of the visit, introduce yourself and the purpose of your visit. Shake hands and inquire about where he/she would prefer to conduct the interview.
4. Sit where you can interact face to face and check if your older person can hear you well.
5. Explain the goal of your visit; to learn more about the lives of older adults. Explain that you will be taking notes during the interview. You may want to explain the GEMS program for a few minutes as a perspective on why you are doing this activity.
6. Use the following pages to guide your interview. It is ok to expand beyond or to move to other topics. Be thoughtful and cautious about topics that are painful or sensitive.
7. At the end, thank the older person for their time and shake hands again.

Suggested Interview Questions for Life Review

1. What was your life like when you were my age? (probes: where they lived, who was in the family, what they were doing, what their daily life was like, how they traveled, how they communicated over distances, what was going on in the world)
2. What are the most important events or people that have influenced who you are? Why? (probes: people- family, friends, community leaders like teachers or religious leaders, public figures; events: personal like marriage, children, jobs, or public like depression, war)
3. What are some of the good things about growing old? What are some of the hard things?

Suggested Interview Questions for Health Care

1. Where do you go for your health care?
2. How do you get to your health care appointments?
3. How do you pay for your medications?(eg pay all costs themselves, insurance pays part, Medicaid pays, clinic gives samples, other)
4. About how much do you pay for medications every month?
5. Has there been a health care provider who has been especially helpful to you (such as nurse, social worker, doctor, therapist,) pharmacist etc)? What did you value most about the help?
6. What are some of the good things that your health care providers have done for you?
7. What are some things that they could do better?
8. Have you been in the hospital in the last year? What went well? What could be done better?