

Skills practice scenario 7 – prostate cancer

Remember the 'patient' and 'professional' scripts need to be presented on separate folded sheets for the trio group work. It doesn't matter if details are changed, e.g. gender or age of 'patient' or title of 'professional', if that works better for the group.

'Patient' - Neville Bowling

You are a 72-year-old, African-Caribbean man who went to see your GP initially because you had some problems with getting up too much at night to pass urine. You were aware of prostate cancer because your father died of it when he was in his 80s and you requested investigations for this. You had the blood test which showed a raised PSA, so you were referred urgently and, after seeing the specialist, had a biopsy. At your next appointment with the specialist he confirmed that you had prostate cancer and mentioned something about a Gleason score of 4&3 but, despite him briefly explaining, you really have no idea what that means. He talked about treatment options but it was very confusing as he seemed to offer you radiotherapy, surgery or even doing nothing. You weren't expecting this as you just thought you would be told what treatment you needed. The nurse gave you lots of information and told you about a website that might help but you are feeling pretty lost and don't understand how you are supposed to make this decision. You know your GP well and are hoping she can help you make this decision. However, one of the things you are concerned about is erectile dysfunction and aren't sure how comfortable you will be asking about this.

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'Professional' – Dr Simpkins

You can see that Neville is coming in to see you. It is a single appointment and you know he has recently been diagnosed with prostate cancer, so you presume it is going to be about this. You check his notes and there is a long letter from the specialist mentioning multiple treatment options and some of the potential risks and side effects of these, but you don't have time to really digest it as it's the middle of a busy clinic. When Neville comes in he wants to discuss the different options with you and is hoping you can help him make the decision. You feel quite uncertain about the pros and cons of the different options, but you do know Neville well.

