Case Study: Nursing

What is a case study or scenario?

A case study or scenario presents a patient or client experiencing health, social, or lifestyle challenges. It requires the practitioner to apply professional knowledge, critical thinking, and decision-making skills to analyse the situation and determine appropriate responses. In fields such as nursing and healthcare professions, case studies reflect real-world professional practice.

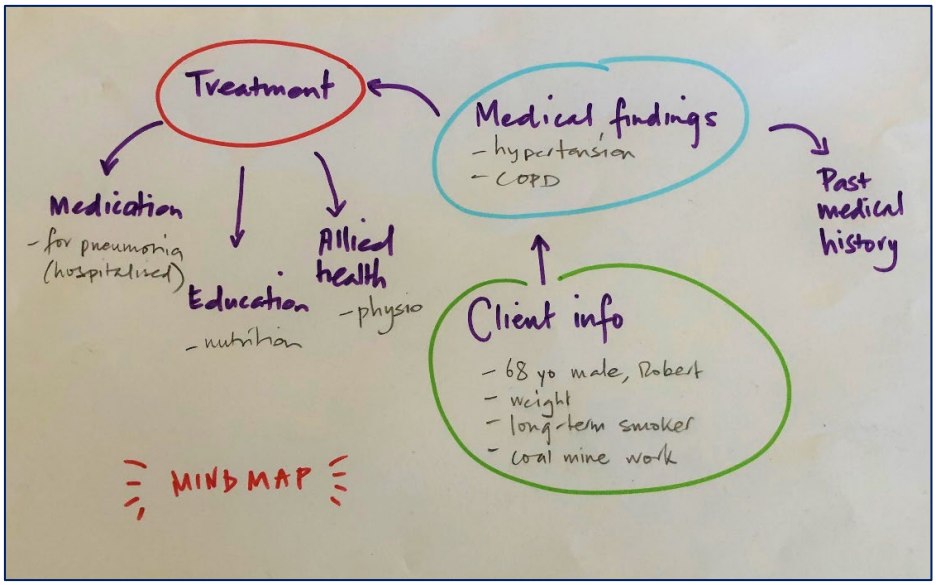
Why are we asked to respond to a case study?

Examining case studies is a safe way to explore real-world professional situations. They allow students to research, analyse, and apply evidence-based knowledge to a specific scenario. By responding to case study questions, you develop critical thinking, problem-solving, and patient-centred practice skills. Your task is to apply relevant theories, standards, and professional practices to the case, rather than simply describing them.

Eight steps to writing your response

1. Read the instructions carefully. **Identify** the key knowledge areas to be assessed.

2. Create a mind-map based on the case notes. Link items of information according to patterns you see.



3. Note the assessment questions beside the relevant items of information from the case.

4. Search for current, peer-reviewed journal articles and texts that give answers to each question AND are relevant to the details of the case.

5. Draft an introduction that states the key topic, and what your response will focus on/examine/explore, etc. Your introduction sets the scene for the reader. It states the topic and tells the reader where the answers are, rather than expecting them to search for responses.

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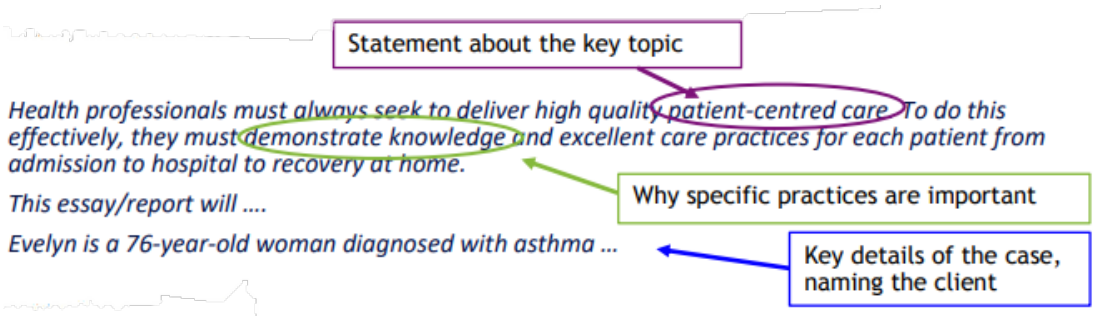
Sample introduction
Name the key topic, which is nursing roles and practices. State why it is important for nurses to engage in these specific practices or roles. Briefly introduce the case.



6. Answer the question/s

- Where relevant and permitted, create sub-headings for each response, e.g., Hygiene, Medication management, etc.
- If your lecturer asks for an essay with no headings, make sure the concluding or opening sentence of your paragraphs introduces the new topic and produces a logical flow of information.
- Describe how theoretical knowledge will be applied to practice.

Sample question
Evelyn has been prescribed Salbutamol, Symbicort and Tiotropium. Discuss the indications for Evelyn's medication and outline what nursing considerations and patient education should be undertaken.

Sample answer outline
Sub-heading, where permitted
Medication management
Evelyn currently takes ... This is indicated due to ... As noted by Smith et al. (2029), Salbutamol ... When providing medication to Evelyn, it is appropriate for the nurse to consider ... In fact, MIMS contraindications for this drug include ... (MIMS Australia, n.d., para. 20), so the nurse must also ... Education for Evelyn should include ...

7. Incorporate information from the case study or scenario and use relevant evidence. For example, as Evelyn is 76 years old, side-effects or evidence relating to pregnancy should not be included as they are not relevant to the case study.

Related Helpsheets

- Mind Maps
- Writing an Introduction
- Incorporating Evidence

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