



Blog of the Month

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Palliative Medicine ST3 Interviews

Portfolio Preparation

The ST3 recruitment website contains detailed information on organising your portfolio and provides an “evidence summary form” which should be completed in advance. A well organised file makes it easier for the interviewers to find evidence and allocate the appropriate marks. To make evidence obvious, highlight your name in publications or presentations. The portfolio can take some time to organise so leaving plenty of time for this is advisable. Once completed make sure you know your evidence well, read it through 48 hours before the interview so that if asked about a particular piece of work you are familiar with it.

Interview Preparation

Practice is essential to allow you to answer questions in a confident and efficient way. Finding a trusted colleague to practice questions with and provide feedback is a great way to prepare and will allow you to identify areas to develop.

What is the interview like?

The interview consists of three stations which are approximately ten minutes in length each and the whole process will take around 45 minutes. All stations have 5 minutes preparation time prior to each one and in stations 2 and 3 this time is needed to read a scenario. A breakdown of the scores available in each is available on the ST3 website.

Station 1 – Portfolio station

The interviewers will have your evidence folder and review it prior to meeting you. This station allows time for the interviewers to ask about your experience and suitability for the post. It provides an opportunity to describe how you have shown commitment to the specialty and the skills you have already to bring to palliative medicine. A knowledge of the person specification is helpful to look at desirable characteristics for potential trainees and what the interviewers will be able to score candidates on.



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Station 2

This station begins with a clinical scenario and the interviewers will want your opinion on how to proceed in the circumstances presented to you. It is useful to have a structure on how to present your clinical thoughts to keep your answer focused and logical. Consideration should be given to patient safety, finding out more information and seeking support when appropriate. The second half of this station concentrates on professionalism and governance. It is advisable to review Good Medical Practice for this.

Station 3

You are given details of a scenario which will require you to use your communication skills. There will be an actor to role play the scenario with you and following this the interviewers will ask you to provide reflection on your communications skills. In preparation it's helpful to review your communication for possible reflections and be honest in your reflection to the interviewers. I made an error in my scenario but reflected honestly and openly about it.

Plan "B"

Competition can be tough for an ST3 post, however, round 2 recruitment often has training numbers for a later intake and the application process is identical. Additionally, working in a hospice or with a palliative care team can provide invaluable experience prior to reapplication and is a common route to training.