

OCCUPATIONAL ENGLISH TEST

WRITING SUB-TEST: MEDICINE

SAMPLE RESPONSE: LETTER OF REFERRAL

Dr B White
Neurosurgeon
City Hospital
Newtown

12 February 2017

Re: Mr George Poulos

Dear Dr White,

Thank you for seeing Mr George Poulos, a 45-year-old stockbroker, who is suffering from severe lower back pain, probably discogenic, with radiculopathy. I would appreciate your opinion as to whether he could benefit from surgery.

Mr Poulos presented on 29/01/17 with severe lower back pain of two days' duration, following lifting heavy logs of wood into a wheelbarrow. On examination, he had fingertip to patella flexion (with pain), SLR L=90 R=90 and no sensory loss. I advised analgesics and time off work.

Initially pain was limited to the lower back, but over the last two weeks it has progressed to radiate down the right leg, with tingling in the calf. There is loss of light touch sensation in the lateral distal calf and plantar aspect of the foot. The right ankle reflex is absent. There is a progressive reduction in lumbar flexion and SLR, and the severity of the pain is increasing.

Please note that Mr Poulos had an allergic reaction to radiographic contrast agent when given an MRI for a head injury approximately 15 years ago. He is also allergic to pethidine and penicillin.

Could you please organise an MRI and advise regarding the possibility of surgery for Mr Poulos?

Yours sincerely,

Doctor