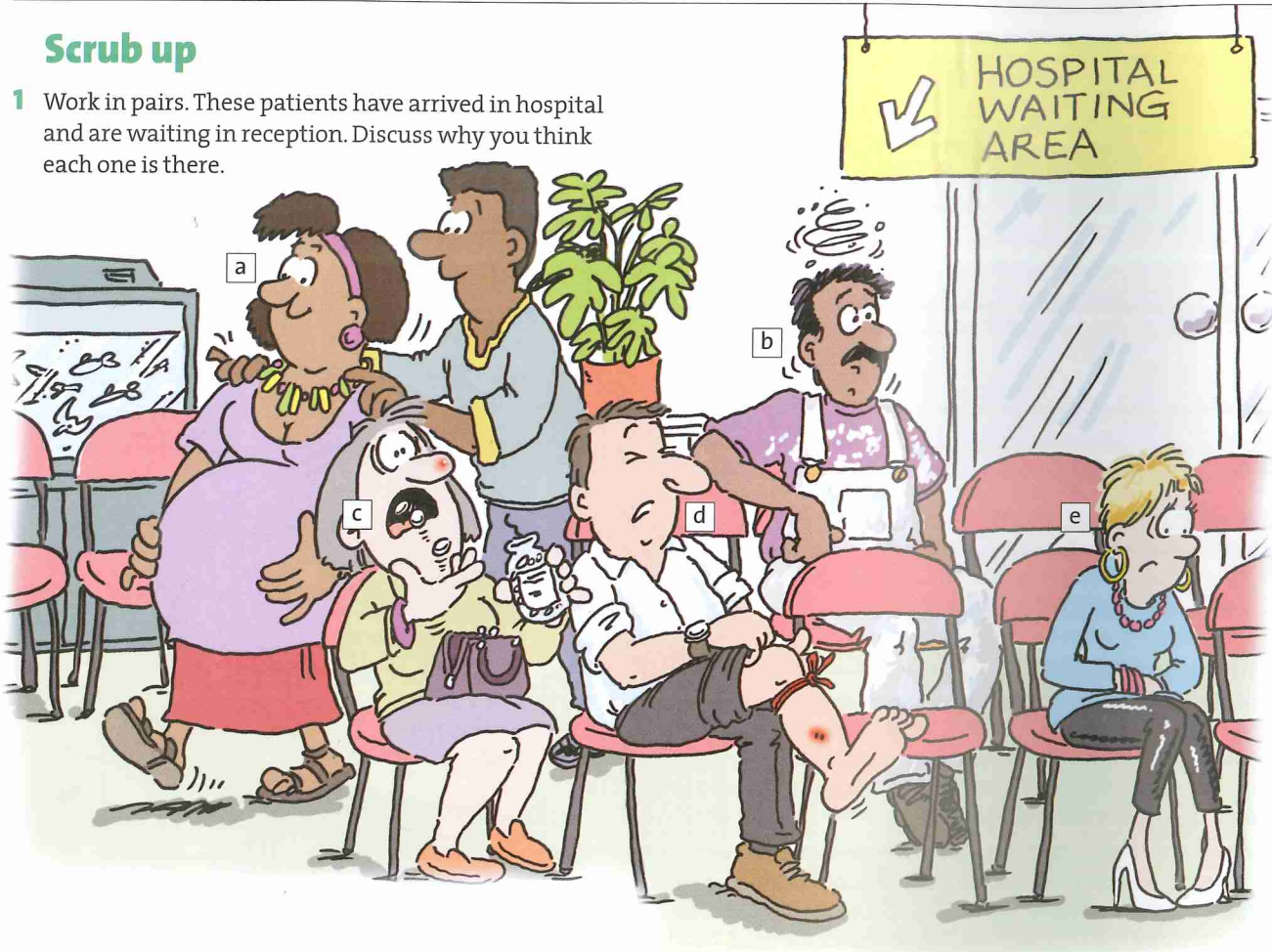


3 Hospital admissions

Scrub up

1 Work in pairs. These patients have arrived in hospital and are waiting in reception. Discuss why you think each one is there.



2 Listen to the patients describe their problems, and decide which one is speaking.

- 1 _____ 3 _____ 5 _____
 2 _____ 4 _____

3 Decide the order, 1-5, in which the patients should be seen.

Vocabulary

The admissions procedure

1 Complete the sentences with the words below.

- | | |
|-----------------------|--------------|
| a triage nurse | treatment |
| an initial assessment | a priority |
| life-threatening | waiting room |
| registration | cubicle |

- 1 Take a seat in the _____.
- 2 The first nurse you meet will be a specialist called _____.
- 3 This nurse will make _____ of your problem.
- 4 This helps decide who is _____.
- 5 A patient with a _____ condition will see a doctor immediately.
- 6 A nurse will get personal details from you and fill in a hospital _____ form.
- 7 When there is a free _____, a doctor will see you.
- 8 The doctor will decide on the _____.

2 Have you ever been admitted to hospital? Do you have any stories of unusual hospital admissions? Describe exactly what happened.

In this unit

- describing the hospital admissions procedure
- describing what happened
- filling in a patient record card
- Past Simple v Past Continuous
- writing a summary of a patient

It's my job

- 1 Work in pairs. Discuss the question.
 - What are the main responsibilities of a hospital receptionist?
- 2 Read about Carmen and answer the questions.
 - 1 What qualities does Carmen need in her job?
 - 2 How do medical staff cause Carmen problems?
 - 3 What does she know about medicine?

Carmen Dornan

I'm a hospital receptionist. If you need to find somebody, or if you need to know anything about the hospital – ask me. If you want new paper towels, or you need to speak to a surgeon – ask me.

I often meet people when they are frightened, angry, or drunk, so it's important to be diplomatic and strong. I often need to reassure people, so it's important to be calm.

My normal work is to greet and assist patients when they arrive, make appointments for patients, record patients' information, and organize and file patient records. I also keep the accounts. You need to be very organized to do this job.

Of course, I have to operate a computer, a fax machine, and other office equipment, but I also have to know first aid, and understand medical terminology and abbreviations. My biggest problems are with the handwriting of medical staff. It wastes a lot of time when I don't understand reports and forms because of handwriting or abbreviations.

I believe that without me and the other receptionists the whole hospital would come to a stop.



Vocabulary

Patient record

- 1 Which *Scrub up* patient is recorded on this form?

PATIENT RECORD			
Surname	Grady	First name	Jim
DOB	2.3.50	Gender	M F
Occupation	retired		
Marital status	widowed		
Next of kin	son		
Contact no.	07765 432178		
Smoking intake	n/a		
Alcohol intake	30 units per week		
Reason for admission	snake bite		
Medical history	high blood pressure		
Allergies	none		
GP	Dr Parkinson, Central Surgery		

- 2 Find words and abbreviations in the patient record with these meanings.

- | | |
|--|-------------------|
| 1 job | <u>occupation</u> |
| 2 bad reactions, for example to certain medications | _____ |
| 3 family doctor | _____ |
| 4 closest relative | _____ |
| 5 the amount of something you eat, drink, etc. regularly | _____ |
| 6 date of birth | _____ |
| 7 male / female | _____ |
| 8 past illnesses and injuries | _____ |
| 9 married / single / divorced / widowed | _____ |
| 10 not applicable (= not a question for this patient) | _____ |
| 11 in each (day, week, etc.) | _____ |
| 12 number | _____ |

Research shows that **hospital admissions increase** when there is a full moon, and in the two days following a World Cup defeat.



Listening

A patient record form

- 1 Listen to the nurse get personal details from a patient. As you listen, complete the form.

PATIENT RECORD

Surname
 First name
 Gender M F
 DOB
 Place of birth
 Occupation
 Marital status
 Next of kin
 Contact no.
 Smoking intake
 Alcohol intake
 Reason for admission
 Family history
 mental illness tuberculosis
 diabetes HIV/AIDS



- 2 Listen again and complete these questions that the nurse asks.

- 1 What _____ you?
- 2 _____ date of birth?
- 3 _____ you born?

- 4 _____ married?
- 5 _____ smoke?
- 6 _____ do you smoke a _____?
- 7 _____ allergic to _____?
- 8 Do any of your _____ family _____ from any of the following ...?

Speaking

- 1 Student As work together in pairs. Student Bs work together in pairs. You are going to play the role of a patient admitted to hospital. Invent the following details.

- full name
- date and place of birth
- allergies
- smoking and alcohol intake
- occupation
- marital status
- next of kin
- reason for admission
- family history
- medical history

- 2 Student A – you are the nurse. Ask Student B, the patient, questions to complete the patient record below.

- 3 Now change roles.

PATIENT RECORD

Surname
 First name
 Gender M F
 DOB
 Place of birth
 Occupation
 Marital status
 Next of kin
 Contact no.
 Smoking intake
 Alcohol intake
 Reason for admission
 Medical history
 Family history



In one year in the UK, **10,733** people were admitted to hospital because of accidents with **socks and tights**.

● Language spot

Past Simple v Past Continuous

- We use the Past Simple to talk about things which happened in the past.

I felt terrible when I got home last night.

I slipped on ice and hurt my knee.

- Some verbs have a regular Past Simple, ending in *-ed*.
ask – asked arrive – arrived

- The Past Simple of some verbs is irregular.
go – went come – came take – took

Find examples of the Past Simple in the Listening script for *Scrub up* on p.125. Write the base form for each one.

EXAMPLE *had (have)*

- When we are telling a story, we often use a verb in the Past Continuous to give a background to what happened.

I was riding my bike. A cat ran in front of me and I fell off.

She cut her finger when she was preparing food.

Underline examples of the Past Continuous in the Listening script for *Scrub up* on p.125.

» Go to Grammar reference p.117

- 1 Complete the sentences using the verbs in brackets in the Past Simple and Past Continuous tenses. Decide the order of the verbs first.

- 1 When he was working, he broke his arm.
(break, work)
- 2 My son _____ a firework when it _____ and _____ his hand. (explode, hold, burn)
- 3 I _____ of the car. My dad _____ the door and _____ my fingers. (get out, break, close)
- 4 My mum _____ in the bathroom. She _____ and _____ her head. (hit, fall, get dressed)
- 5 I _____ to music, when suddenly I _____ a whistling in my ear and I _____ deaf. (hear, go, listen)
- 6 I _____ in the park, and a man _____ me and _____ me. (punch, chase, run)

- 2 Write at least three sentences about these people, inventing details about what happened to them.



- 3 Describe an accident that happened to you. What were you doing and what happened?



Every minute spent filling in forms is a minute spent not with patients.

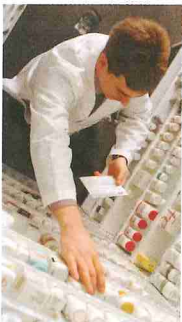
Elena Kneip
Nurse

Reading

Bad handwriting

- 1 What do people say about your handwriting? Is it clear and easy to read?
- 2 As fast as you can, write down three types of medicine and three diseases. Show it to your partner. Can they read what you have written? Have you made any mistakes?
- 3 Read the article and decide if these sentences are true (T) or false (F).
 - 1 Nurses study doctors' handwriting at school. _____
 - 2 Doctors generally write numbers more carefully than words. _____
 - 3 Methimazole and Metolazone are used for different conditions. _____
 - 4 Ramachandra Kolluru is a pharmacist. _____

- 5 Researchers could understand 84% of doctors' notes. _____
- 6 Many hospitals use abbreviations in order to avoid mistakes. _____
- 7 At Charing Cross Hospital, staff carry computers around. _____
- 4 Find words in the article to match these definitions.
 - 1 non-medical people who work in hospital offices _____
 - 2 written instructions on what drug to give a patient _____
 - 3 made somebody pay money as a punishment _____
 - 4 to cut off part of the body _____
 - 5 an arm or leg _____
 - 6 mistakes that result in death _____



There is an old joke that doctors go to school to learn how to write badly, and nurses go to school to learn how to read doctors' handwriting. There is truth in the joke – computer analysis of the handwriting of medical staff shows that doctors' writing is a lot worse than that of nurses and administrative staff. Maybe it's because doctors are always under pressure of time that they write very fast. The habit starts when they are medical students and gets worse as time passes.

Computer analysis shows that generally, medical staff are careful with numbers. However, they tend to form letters of the alphabet badly. When drug names look very similar, bad handwriting can mean patients get the wrong medicine. A young girl nearly died when she was given Methimazole instead of Metolazone (one is for high blood pressure and the other is for thyroid problems). And in 1999, an American cardiologist, Ramachandra Kolluru, wrote a prescription so badly that the pharmacist gave a patient the wrong medicine. This time the patient did die and a court fined the doctor 225,000 US dollars.

Recently, researchers studied 50 patient progress notes. They found that they could not read 16% of the words. The misunderstandings that this causes can mean that a patient is given the wrong blood, or that a surgeon amputates the wrong limb. Fatal errors, of course, make news, but studies show that every year hundreds of thousands of mistakes are made in hospitals around the world, and a lot of them are because of

bad handwriting or abbreviations which nobody understands. Bad handwriting also causes delays, which are expensive and wasteful.

There are many technological solutions for the problem, and though digital technology can't improve handwriting, it can improve the situation. At London's Charing Cross Hospital, for example, patients wear bar codes (the same as in a supermarket) on their wrists or ankles. Staff use the bar codes along with hand-held computers to get accurate, clear, and easy-to-read information.



Writing

Patient summary

- 1 Read this summary about Mustapha Hussein, the patient in *Listening*. Find three mistakes in it.

Mustapha Hussein was admitted with possible concussion after falling from a ladder and hitting his head. Mr Hussein was born in 1982. He is divorced, and works as a painter. His next of kin is his brother, Yusuf. He can be contacted on 07709-401229. Mr Hussein smokes 40 cigarettes a day. He does not drink alcohol. He is not allergic to anything. There is a family history of diabetes on his father's side.

- 2 Write a similar summary about Sarah Behr using the information on the patient record below.

PATIENT RECORD

Surname	Behr	First name	Sarah
DOB	2/1/84	Gender	M F
Occupation	teacher		
Marital status	married		
Next of kin	father Ian		
Contact no.	01792-793456		
Smoking intake	n/a		
Alcohol intake	10 units per week		
Reason for admission	suspected fractured arm		
Family history	heart disease (father's side)		
Allergies	nuts		

Checklist

Assess your progress in this unit. Tick (✓) the statements which are true.

- I can describe the admissions procedure
- I can understand and complete patient records
- I can ask somebody for their personal details
- I can describe events in the past
- I can understand an article about handwriting

Key words

Adjectives

allergic
fatal

Nouns

accounts
appointment
cubicle
first aid
initial assessment
life-threatening condition
limb
prescription
priority
progress notes
registration
treatment
triage nurse

Look back through this unit. Find five more words or expressions that you think are useful.