Patient consent must be obtained for all Substantial Comparability Case based Discussion assessments. The Substantial Comparability candidate’s practice in obtaining patient consent for the Case based Discussion assessments should be in accordance with The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists Code of Ethics.

In failing to obtain consent, or in failing to ensure due processes are followed in respecting patients’ rights, and the assessor’s and College’s professionalism, the candidate is failing to demonstrate a reasonable standard of an essential aspect of professionalism.

The completed Case-based Discussion Patient Consent Obtained form needs to be submitted to the RANZCP Specialist International Medical Graduate Education team with the three case summaries at least two weeks prior to the Case based Discussion assessment.

On the day of the Case based Discussion assessment, three completed Case-based Discussion Patient Information and Consent form, for each of the three cases submitted, will need to be sighted by the assessor conducting the Case based Discussion. The Case based Discussion cannot proceed unless the assessor has the certainty of patient consent for access to all three patient’s clinical files, even though only one will be selected by the assessor on the day of the assessment.

- Where a patient is a minor or has diminished ability due to permanent mental impairment, it is appropriate to obtain consent from their parent, legal guardian or carer.
- Where a patient during the time that consent is required to be obtained, becomes acutely unwell to the extent that they become temporarily unable to provide consent, it is inappropriate to rely on consent from another party for the purpose of a Case based Discussion.
- Where a patient or their parent/guardian/carer has provided consent, they have the right to withdraw consent at any time before the Case based Discussion.

IMPORTANT: outcome if patient consent is not available for a Case based Discussion

The Committee for Specialist International Medical Graduate Education has determined that if patient consent is not obtained for each of the three cases and three completed patient consent forms are not available for the assessor to sight on the day of the assessment, then the Case based Discussion should not proceed. This will be regarded as a Did Not Achieve attempt; with the candidate scoring Did Not Achieve on the professionalism domain.

However, if consent from a patient is withdrawn at the last minute and this is out of the control of the Substantial Comparability candidate, then this should constitute an incident (see Case-Based Discussion incident report form) rather than an automatic Did Not Achieve outcome. The invalidated consent form should still be presented to the assessor to demonstrate that the candidate has followed the required process. The incident report form should be completed and submitted to the College by the assessor. The Case based Discussion should not proceed in this instance.

For further information, please refer to the Handbook for Workplace-Based Assessments.

Any queries can be directed to comparability@ranzcp.org.