

Case Study as Evidence

What is a case study or scenario?

This is the story of a patient or client in a clinical situation who presents with health or lifestyle challenges. The practitioner must apply critical thinking and knowledge about their practice to this patient's case. In nursing or social work where the emphasis is on professional practice, and the case study is used as an **example** of work in those fields.

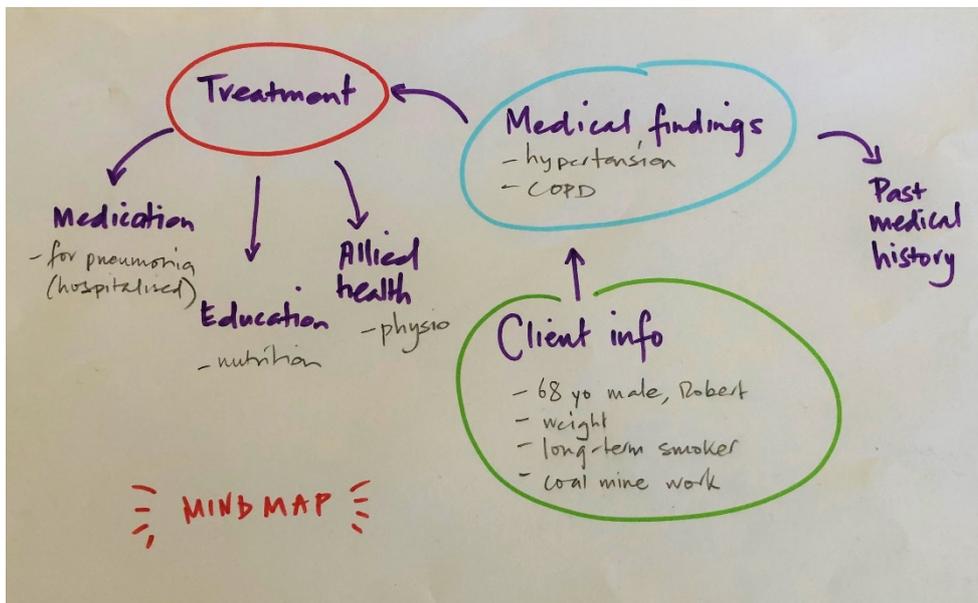
Why are we asked to respond to a case study?

Examining case studies is a safe way to expose students to clinical situations. This provides you with the opportunity to research and apply evidence-based practice to the scenario. The questions guide your thinking and focus your response to a specific case.

This applied learning approach develops patient-centred care - the scenario illustrates a possible 'real world' situation. Your job is to **APPLY** your researched knowledge about theories, standards and practices to this case study.

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 assignment 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 essay will focus on/examine/explore, etc. Follow the example below, noting the components.

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.

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.

Statement about the key topic

Health professionals must always seek to deliver high quality patient-centred care. To do this effectively, they must demonstrate knowledge and excellent care practices for each patient from admission to hospital to recovery at home.

This essay/report will

Why specific practices are important

Evelyn is a 76-year-old woman diagnosed with asthma ...

Key details of the case, naming the client

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

Medication management

Sub-heading, where permitted

Evelyn currently takes....

This is indicated due to.... As noted by Smith et al. (2021), 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, side-effects or evidence relating to pregnancy should not be included as they are not relevant to the case study.

Other resources

- <https://students.flinders.edu.au/content/dam/student/slc/case-studies.pdf>

Other helpsheets available

- Writing an Introduction
- Mind Maps
- Incorporating Evidence