1.11 The Role of Individuals in Driving Medical Change, c1250-Present: 30-minute Pack

EDEXCEL 1HI0 · about 30 minutes

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Answer ALL questions. You are advised to spend about 30 minutes on this pack.

1 Explain why medical breakthroughs by individuals sometimes took a long time to be accepted by the medical establishment.

You may use the following in your answer:
- the authority of established medical teaching such as Galenism
- professional and institutional resistance to changes that threatened existing status or income

You must also use information of your own.

(Total for Question 1 is 12 marks)

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2 "Individuals, not institutions, were the decisive force behind medical progress.' How far do you agree? Explain your answer.

You may use the following in your answer:
- individual discoveries such as those by Vesalius, Jenner, Pasteur and Fleming
- the role of institutions such as universities, medical colleges and scientific societies in testing and spreading ideas

You must also use information of your own. There are 4 marks available for spelling, punctuation, grammar and the accurate use of specialist terminology.

(Total for Question 2 is 20 marks)

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Mark scheme · 1.11 The Role of Individuals in Driving Medical Change, c1250-Present: 30-minute Pack

Question 1

Level 1 Identifies one or two basic reasons why breakthroughs were resisted, with little or no supporting detail or explanation. **1-3**

Level 2 Identifies and begins to explain reasons, supported by some relevant detail and an example. **4-6**

Level 3 Explains several reasons clearly, supported by accurate and relevant detail and more than one example. **7-9**

Level 4 Explains a range of connected reasons in a well-developed, analytical way, supported throughout by precise and accurate detail and linked examples, showing how reasons reinforced each other. **10-12**

Indicative content:

- The long authority of Galen and Galenic teaching meant medical education and textbooks taught a coherent system that universities and licensing bodies defended, so students and practitioners were taught to mistrust or ignore evidence that contradicted Galen.
- Institutions and practitioners had vested interests in the status quo, including economic interests, professional reputation and accepted clinical routines, so an individual threatening those routines could be resisted or marginalised by colleagues.
- Some discoveries challenged basic assumptions about the body or disease, requiring not just new facts but a change in conceptual framework, for example the shift from humoral ideas to germ theory required replacing an entire explanatory model.
- Evidence standards and methods mattered: early experimental demonstrations might be seen as anecdotal until repeated and replicated, so institutional acceptance depended on reproducible evidence and peer endorsement.
- The personality and reputation of the discoverer influenced acceptance: a respected, well-connected figure could persuade peers faster than a less-known clinician, and social, religious or political factors could also shape whether an idea spread.
- Chance and practicalities affected the timescale: Fleming discovered penicillin in 1928 but it took Florey and Chain, wartime need and mass production to make it a usable treatment in the 1940s, showing how factors beyond the discovery itself determine acceptance and application.

Question 2

Level 1 Shows limited relevant knowledge and offers only a general or unsupported opinion on the statement. **1-4**

Level 2 Shows some relevant knowledge and begins to weigh factors for and against the statement, but the argument lacks development and specific supporting detail. **5-8**

Level 3 Shows good relevant knowledge, explains a range of factors on both sides and reaches a supported judgement, with appropriate examples. **9-12**

Level 4 Shows precise, well-selected knowledge and explains a balanced range of factors in depth, reaching a sustained, well-supported judgement, with clear links between examples and consistent use of specialist terminology. **13-16**

Indicative content:

- Arguments agreeing: individuals have often provided the initial breakthrough without which no institutional change could begin, for example Vesalius correcting anatomical errors by dissection, Jenner's steps towards vaccination, Pasteur and Koch developing germ theory, and Fleming's discovery of penicillin.
- Individuals often acted as catalysts whose experiments or observations exposed the limits of existing knowledge and forced debate, showing the centrality of personal curiosity, skill and sometimes luck in discovery.
- Arguments disagreeing: institutions were essential for turning discoveries into accepted knowledge and practical medicine, since universities, medical colleges, hospitals and scientific societies tested, taught, validated and disseminated ideas so that a lone discovery remained marginal without institutional backing.
- Examples where institutions mattered include the Royal Society and medical journals spreading accurate experimental results, and the work of Florey and Chain together with wartime production and pharmaceutical firms that made penicillin a practical treatment.
- The process of acceptance often required both: an individual provided the idea, but institutions, professional networks and economic and social conditions enabled scale, replication and integration into practice.
- A balanced judgement recognises that individuals and institutions were interdependent, with individual creativity initiating change and institutions shaping its adoption and impact; the relative importance of each varied by period and by the nature of the discovery.

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