SEMINAR 5: CONFIDENTIALITY

HANDOUT 5.1

For each situation described below, ring the most suitable description:

0   :   No breach of confidentiality
1   :   Trivial breach of confidentiality
2   :   Significant breach of confidentiality
3   :   Serious breach of confidentiality

A    Over supper, a doctor tells his/her spouse about some of the patients seen in clinic afternoon, identifying some of these patients

<div align="center">0  1 2 3</div>

B    Medical students discuss 'a case' in the hospital lift. Other people (strangers to the students) are also in the lift.

<div align="center">0  1 2 3</div>

C    A GP receptionist sees that a neighbour has had an appointment with the GP. Suspecting the neighbour is pregnant, and wishing to congratulate her, she looks in the notes.

<div align="center">0  1 2 3</div>

D    You visit a friend of yours who is in the maternity hospital two days after she had a baby. On the door of her single room there is a notice: 'barrier nursing'. You ask the ward sister if you can enter the room. "Oh yes" she replies "she's a hepatitis carrier, but there is no risk".

<div align="center">0  1 2 3</div>

E    A friend of yours tells you something personal about him/herself 'in strict confidence'. You tell another friend of yours, telling him/her to tell no one else.

<div align="center">0  1 2 3</div>

F    In the 'clinical details' section of a blood form you write '? alcohol abuse'. The form is placed in a routine transparent envelope together with a blood sample. The porter who takes the blood to the laboratory notices that the sample is from someone he knows, and sees your 'clinical details'

<div align="center">0  1 2 3</div>

G    The phone rings on the ward. You answer it. The caller asks how a particular patient is. Since you know the patient, you tell the caller that the patient has pneumonia on top of bronchitis and that IV antibiotics have been started. On putting the phone down, the ward sister asks who called. You don't know.

<div align="center">0  1 2 3</div>