



**INSTITUTE
OF MEDICINE**

ROYAL COLLEGE OF
PHYSICIANS OF IRELAND

INTERNATIONAL CLINICAL FELLOWSHIP TRAINING IN

CARDIOLOGY



This curriculum of training in Cardiology was developed in 2010 and undergoes an annual review by Dr James Crowley, Clinical Lead, Dr Ann O’Shaughnessy, Head of Education , and by the Cardiology Training Committee. The curriculum is approved by the Institute of Medicine.

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Introduction

The International Clinical Fellowship Programme (ICFP) provides a route for overseas doctors wishing to undergo structured and advanced postgraduate medical training in Ireland. The ICFP enables suitably qualified overseas postgraduate medical trainees to undertake a fixed period of active training in clinical services in Ireland.

The purpose of the ICFP is to enable overseas trainees to gain access to structured training and in active clinical environments that they cannot get in their own country, with a view to enhancing and improving the individual's medical training and learning and, in the medium to long term, the health services in their own countries.

This Programme will allow participants to access a structured period of training and experience as developed by the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland to specifically meet the clinical needs of participants as defined by their home country's health service.

Aims

Upon satisfactory completion of the ICFP, the doctor will be **competent** to undertake comprehensive medical practice in their chosen specialty in a **professional** manner, in keeping with the needs of the healthcare system.

Competencies, at a level consistent with practice in the specialty, will include the following:

- Patient care that is appropriate, effective and compassionate dealing with health problems and health promotion.
- Medical knowledge in the basic biomedical, behavioural and clinical sciences, medical ethics and medical jurisprudence and application of such knowledge in patient care.
- Interpersonal and communication skills that ensure effective information exchange with individual patients and their families and teamwork with other health professionals, the scientific community and the public.
- Appraisal and utilisation of new scientific knowledge to update and continuously improve clinical practice.
- Capability to be a scholar, contributing to development and research in the field of the chosen specialty.
- Professionalism.
- Ability to understand health care and identify and carry out system-based improvement of care.

Professionalism

Medical professionalism is a core element of being a good doctor. Good medical practice is based on a relationship of trust between profession and society, in which doctors are expected to meet the highest standards of professional practice and behaviour. It involves partnership between patient and doctor that is based on mutual respect, confidentiality, honesty, responsibility and accountability. In addition to maintaining clinical competence, a doctor should also:

- Show integrity, compassion and concern for others in day-to-day practice
- Develop and maintain a sensitive and understanding attitude with patients
- Exercise good judgement and communicate sound clinical advice to patients
- Search for the best evidence to guide professional practice
- Be committed to continuous improvement and excellence in the provision of health care whether working alone or as part of a team

Prior to commencing their sponsored clinical placements, all participants will also be required to undergo the mandatory screening requirements of the relevant clinical site/service including occupational health assessment and Garda/Police clearance.

Training Programme Duration & Organisation of Training

The period of clinical training that will be provided under the International Clinical Fellowship Programme (ICFP) for medical specialities is up to 3 years, after which the overseas doctors will be required to return to their country of origin.

Each ICFP is developed by the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland will be specifically designed so as to meet the training needs of participants to support the health service in their home country.

- All appointees to the ICFP will be assessed by the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland to ensure that they possess the necessary requirements from a training and clinical service perspective.
- Each overseas doctor participating in the ICFP will be enrolled with the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland and will be under the supervision of a consultant doctor who is registered on the Specialist Division of the Register of Medical Practitioners maintained by the Medical Council and who is an approved consultant trainer.
- Appointees to the ICFP will normally be registered on the Supervised Division of the Register of Medical Practitioners maintained by the Medical Council in Ireland.
- Appointees will agree a training plan with their trainers at the beginning of each training year.
- For the duration of their International Medical Graduate (IMG) programme and associated clinical placements, all participants will remain directly employed and directly paid by their sponsoring state at a rate appropriate to their training level in Ireland and benchmarked against the salary scales applicable to NCHD's in Ireland;
- Successful completion of an ICFP will result in the participant being issued with a formal Certificate of completion for the Fellowship Programme by the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland. This Certificate will enable the participant's parent training body in their sponsoring home country to formally recognise and accredit their time spent training in Ireland.

The training programme offered will provide opportunities to fulfil all the requirements of the curriculum of training. There will be posts in both general hospitals and teaching hospitals.

Each post within the programme will have a named trainer/educational supervisor and programmes will be under the direction of the National Specialist Director of the relevant medical speciality to be confirmed by the College. Programmes will be as flexible as possible consistent with curricular requirements, for example to allow the trainee to develop their sub-specialty interest.

ePortfolio logbook

Each trainee is responsible for maintaining an up-to-date record of progress through training and compiling a portfolio of achievements for presentation at each annual assessment review. The trainee also has a duty to maximise opportunities to learn, supplementing the training offered with additional self-directed learning in order to fulfil all the educational goals of the curriculum.

Up-to-date training records and an ePortfolio of achievements will be maintained by the trainee throughout. The training records will be countersigned as appropriate by the trainers to confirm the satisfactory fulfilment of the required training experience and the acquisition of the competencies set out in the training plan. They will remain the property of the trainee and must be produced at their annual assessment review.

Trainees must co-operate with the College in completing their training plan.

It is in a trainee's own interest to maintain contact with the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland, and to respond promptly to all correspondence relating to training. At review, your ePortfolio will be examined.

Review

A consultant trainer/educational supervisor will be identified for each participant in the programme. He/she will be responsible for ensuring that the educational potential of the post is translated into effective training which is being fully utilized. Only departments approved for Training by the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland and its constituent training bodies will be used.

The training objectives to be secured should be agreed between each trainee and trainer at the commencement of each posting in the form of a written training plan. The trainer will be available throughout, as necessary, to supervise the training process. In each year trainees undergo a formal review by an appropriate panel. The panel will review in detail the training record, will explore with the trainee the range of experience and depth of understanding which has been achieved and consider individual trainer's reports. An opportunity is also given to the trainee to comment on the training being provided; identifying in confidence any deficiencies in relation to a particular post.

A quarterly and annual review of progress through training will be undertaken on behalf of the International Clinical Fellowship Programme (ICFP). These will include assessments and reports by educational supervisors, confirmation of achievements and the contents of the ePortfolio will be reviewed. At some or all of these annual reviews a non-specialty assessor will be present capable of addressing core competencies.

The award of a Certificate of completion will be determined by a satisfactory outcome after completion of the entire series of assessments.

Generic Components

This chapter covers the generic components which are relevant to international trainees of all specialties but with varying degrees of relevance and appropriateness, depending on the specialty.

As such, this chapter needs to be viewed as an appropriate guide of the level of knowledge and skills required from all trainees with differing application levels in practice.

Good Professional Practice

Objective: Trainees must appreciate that medical professionalism is a core element of being a good doctor and that good medical practice is based on a relationship of trust between the profession and society, in which doctors are expected to meet the highest standards of professional practice and behaviour.

Medical Council Domains of Good Professional Practice: Relating to Patients, Communication and Interpersonal Skills, Professionalism, Patient Safety and Quality of Patient Care.

KNOWLEDGE

Effective Communication

- How to listen to patients and colleagues
- The principles of open disclosure
- Knowledge and understanding of valid consent
- Teamwork
- Continuity of care

Ethics

- Respect for autonomy and shared decision making
- How to enable patients to make their own decisions about their health care
- How to place the patient at the centre of care
- How to protect and properly use sensitive and private patient information in accordance with data protection legislation and how to maintain confidentiality
- The judicious sharing of information with other healthcare professionals where necessary for care following Medical Council Guidelines
- Maintaining competence and assuring quality of medical practice
- How to work within ethical and legal guideline when providing clinical care, carrying research and dealing with end of life issues

Honesty, openness and transparency (mistakes and near misses)

- Preventing and managing near misses and adverse events.
- When and how to report a near miss or adverse event
- Incident reporting; root cause and system analysis
- Understanding and learning from errors
- Understanding and managing clinical risk
- Managing complaints
- Following open disclosure practices
- Knowledge of national policy and National Guidelines on Open Disclosure

Raising concerns about patient safety

- Safe working practice, role of procedures and protocols in optimal practice
- The importance of standardising practice through the use of checklists, and being vigilant
- Safe healthcare systems and provision of a safe working environment
- Awareness of the multiple factors involved in failures
- Knowledge and understanding of Reason's Swiss cheese model
- Understanding how and why systems break down and why errors are made
- Health care errors and system failures
- Human and economic costs in system failures
- The important of informing a person of authority of systems or service structures that may lead to unsafe practices which may put patients, yourself or other colleagues at risk
- Awareness of the Irish Medical Councils policy on raising concerns about safety in the environment in which you work

SKILLS

- Effective communication with patients, families and colleagues
- Co-operation and collaboration with colleagues to achieve safe and effective quality patient care
- Being an effective team player
- Ethical and legal decision making skills
- Minimising errors during invasive procedures by developing and adhering to best-practice guidelines for safe surgery
- Minimising medication errors by practicing safe prescribing principles
- Ability to learn from errors and near misses to prevent future errors
- Managing errors and near-misses
- Using relevant information from complaints, incident reports, litigation and quality improvement reports in order to control risks
- Managing complaints
- Using the Open Disclosure Process Algorithm

ASSESSMENT & LEARNING METHODS

- Consultant feedback at annual assessment
- Workplace based assessment e.g. Mini-CEX, DOPS, CBD
- Educational supervisor's reports on observed performance (in the workplace): prioritisation of patient safety in practice
- RCPI HST Leadership in Clinical Practice
- RCPI Ethics programmes
- Medical Council Guide to Professional Conduct and Ethics
- Reflective learning around ethical dilemmas encountered in clinical practice
- Quality improvement methodology course - recommended

Infection Control

Objective: To be able to appropriately manage infections and risk factors for infection at an institutional level, including the prevention of cross-infections and hospital acquired infection

Medical Council Domains of Good Professional Practice: Patient Safety and Quality of Patient Care; Management (including Self-Management).

KNOWLEDGE

Within a consultation

- The principles of infection control as defined by the HIQA
- How to minimise the risk of cross-infection during a patient encounter by adhering to best practice guidelines available, including the 5 Moments for Hand Hygiene guidelines
- The principles of preventing infection in high risk groups e.g. managing antibiotic use to prevent *Clostridium difficile*
- Knowledge and understanding of the local antibiotic prescribing policy
- Awareness of infections of concern, e.g. MRSA, *Clostridium difficile*
- Best practice in isolation precautions
- When and how to notify relevant authorities in the case of notifiable infectious disease
- Understanding the increased risk of infection to patients in surgery or during an invasive procedure and adhering to guidelines for minimising infection in such cases
- The guidelines for needle-stick injury prevention and management

During an outbreak

- Guidelines for minimising infection in the wider community in cases of communicable diseases and how to seek expert opinion or guidance from infection control specialists where necessary
- Hospital policy/seeking guidance from occupational health professional regarding the need to stay off work/restrict duties when experiencing infections the onward transmission of which might impact on the health of others

SKILLS

- Practicing aseptic techniques and hand hygiene
- Following local and national guidelines for infection control and management
- Prescribing antibiotics according to antibiotic guidelines
- Encouraging staff, patients and relatives to observe infection control principles
- Communicating effectively with patients regarding treatment and measures recommended to prevent re-infection or spread
- Collaborating with infection control colleagues to manage more complex or uncommon types of infection including those requiring isolation e.g. transplant cases, immunocompromised host
- In the case of infectious diseases requiring disclosure:
 - Working knowledge of those infections requiring notification
 - Undertaking notification promptly
 - Collaborating with external agencies regarding reporting, investigating and management of notifiable diseases
 - Enlisting / requiring patients' involvement in solving their health problems, providing information and education
 - Utilising and valuing contributions of health education and disease prevention and infection control to health in a community

ASSESSMENT & LEARNING METHODS

- Consultant feedback at annual assessment
- Workplace based assessment e.g. Mini-CEX, DOPS, CBD
- Educational supervisor's reports on observed performance (in the workplace): practicing aseptic techniques as appropriate to the case and setting, investigating and managing infection, prescribing antibiotics according to guidelines
- Completion of infection control induction in the workplace
- Personal Protective Equipment Training Course (In hospital)

Self-Care and Maintaining Well-Being

Objectives:

1. To ensure that trainees understand how their personal histories and current personal lives, as well as their values, attitudes, and biases affect their care of patients so that they can use their emotional responses in patient care to their patients' benefit
2. To ensure that trainees care for themselves physically and emotionally, and seek opportunities for enhancing their self-awareness and personal growth

Medical Council Domains of Good Professional Practice: Patient Safety and Quality of Patient Care, Relating to Patients, Communication and Interpersonal Skills, Collaboration and Teamwork, Management (including self-management).

KNOWLEDGE

- Self-awareness including preferences and biases
- Personal psychological strengths and limitations
- Understand how personality characteristics, such as need for approval, judgemental tendencies, needs for perfection and control etc., affect relationships with patients and others
- Knowledge of core beliefs, ideals, and personal philosophies of life, and how these relate to own goals in medicine
- Know how family-of-origin, race, class, religion and gender issues have shaped own attitudes and abilities to discuss these issues with patients
- Understand the difference between feelings of sympathy and feelings of empathy
- Know the factors between a doctor and patient that enhance or interfere with abilities to experience and convey empathy
- Understanding of own attitudes toward uncertainty and risk taking and own need for reassurance
- How own relationships with certain patients can reflect attitudes toward paternalism, autonomy, benevolence, non-maleficence and justice
- Recognise own feelings in straightforward and complex patient-doctor interactions
- Recognising the symptoms of stress and burn out

SKILLS

- Exhibiting empathy and showing consideration for all patients, their impairments and attitudes irrespective of cultural and other differences
- Ability to create boundaries with patients that allow for therapeutic alliance
- Challenge authority appropriately from a firm sense of own values and integrity and respond appropriately to situations that involve abuse, unethical behaviour and coercion
- Recognise own limits and seek appropriate support and consultation
- Work collaboratively and effectively with colleagues and other members of health care teams
- Manage effectively commitments to work and personal lives, taking the time to nurture important relationship and oneself
- Ability to recognise when falling behind and adjusting accordingly
- Demonstrating the ability to cope with changing circumstances, variable demand, being prepared to re-prioritise and ask for help
- Utilising a non-judgemental approach to patient's problem
- Recognise the warning signs of emotional ill-health in self and others and be able to ask for appropriate help
- Commitment to lifelong process of developing and fostering self-awareness, personal growth and well being
- Be open to receiving feedback from others as to how attitudes and behaviours are affecting their care of patients and their interactions with others
- Holding realistic expectations of own and of others' performance, time-conscious, punctual
- Valuing the breadth and depth of experience that can be accessed by associating with professional colleagues

ASSESSMENT & LEARNING METHODS

- On-going supervision
- RCPI Ethics programmes
- Wellness Matters Course (Mandatory)
- RCPI HST Leadership in Clinical Practice course

Communication in Clinical and Professional Setting

Objective: To demonstrate the ability to communicate effectively and sensitively with patients, their relatives, carers and with professional colleagues in different situations.

Medical Council Domains of Good Professional Practice: Relating to Patients; Communication and Interpersonal Skills.

KNOWLEDGE

Within a consultation

- How to effectively listen and attend to patients
- How to structure an interview to obtain/convey information; identify concerns, expectations and priorities; promote understanding, reach conclusions; use appropriate language.
- How to empower the patient and encourage self-management

Difficult circumstances

- Understanding of potential areas for difficulty and awkward situations
- How to negotiate cultural, language barriers, dealing with sensory or psychological and/or intellectual impairments and how to deal with challenging or aggressive behaviour
- Knowing how and when to break bad news
- How to communicate essential information where difficulties exist, how to appropriately utilise the assistance of interpreters, chaperones, and relatives.
- How to deal with anger and frustration in self and others
- Selecting appropriate environment; seeking assistance, making and taking time

Dealing with professional colleagues and others

- How to communicate with doctors and other members of the healthcare team
- How to provide a concise, written, verbal, or electronic, problem-orientated statement of facts and opinions
- The legal context of status of records and reports, of data protection confidentiality
- Freedom of Information (FOI) issues
- Understanding of the importance of legible, accessible, records to continuity of care
- Knowing when urgent contact becomes necessary and the appropriate place for verbal, telephone, electronic, or written communication
- Recognition of roles and skills of other health professionals
- Awareness of own abilities/limitations and when to seek help or give assistance, advice to others; when to delegate responsibility and when to refer

Maintaining continuity of care

- Understanding the relevance of continuity of care to outcome, within and between phases of healthcare management
- The importance of completion of tasks and documentation, e.g. before handover to another team, department, specialty, including identifying outstanding issues and uncertainties
- Knowledge of the required attitudes, skills and behaviours which facilitate continuity of care including, being available and contactable, alerting others to avoid potential confusion or misunderstanding through communications failure

Giving explanations

- The importance of possessing the facts, and of recognising uncertainty and conflicting evidence on which decisions have to be based
- How to secure and retain attention avoiding distraction
- Understanding how adults receive information best, the relative value of the spoken, written, visual means of communication, use of reinforcement to assist retention
- Knowledge of the risks of information overload
- Tailoring the communication of information to the level of understanding of the recipient
- Strategies to achieve the level of understanding necessary to gain co-operation and partnership; compliance, informed choice, acceptance of opinion, advice, recommendation

Responding to complaints

- Value of hearing and dealing with complaints promptly; the appropriate level, the procedures (departmental and institutional); sources of advice, and assistance available
- The importance of obtaining and recording accurate and full information, seeking confirmation from multiple sources
- Knowledge of how to establish facts, identify issues and respond quickly and appropriately to a complaint received

SKILLS

- Ability to appropriately elicit facts, using a mix of open and closed-ended questions
- Using “active listening” techniques such as nodding and eye contact
- Giving information clearly, avoiding jargon, confirming understanding, ability to encourage co-operation, compliance; obtaining informed consent
- Showing consideration and respect for other’s culture, opinions, patient’s right to be informed and make choices
- Respecting another’s right to opinions and to accept or reject advice
- Valuing perspectives of others contributing to management decisions
- Conflict resolution
- Dealing with complaints
- Communicating decisions in a clear and thoughtful manner
- Presentation skills
- Maintaining (legible) records
- being available, contactable, time-conscious
- Setting realistic objectives, identifying and prioritising outstanding problems
- Using language, literature (e.g. leaflets) diagrams, educational aids and resources appropriately
- Establish facts, identify issues and respond quickly and appropriately to a complaint received
- Accepting responsibility, involving others, and consulting appropriately
- Obtaining informed consent
- Discussing informed consent
- Giving and receiving feedback

ASSESSMENT & LEARNING METHODS

- Mastering Communication course (Year 1)
- Consultant feedback at annual assessment
 - Workplace based assessment e.g. Mini-CEX, DOPS, CBD
 - Educational supervisor’s reports on observed performance (in the workplace): communication with others e.g. at handover. ward rounds, multidisciplinary team members
- Presentations
- RCPI Ethics programmes
- RCPI HST Leadership in Clinical Practice Course

Leadership

Objective: To have the knowledge, skills and attitudes to act in a leadership role and work with colleagues to plan, deliver and develop services for improved patient care and service delivery.

Medical Council Domains of Good Professional Practice: Patient Safety and Quality of Patient Care; Communication and Interpersonal Skill; Collaboration and Teamwork; Management (including Self-Management); Scholarship.

KNOWLEDGE

Personal qualities of leaders

- Knowledge of what leadership is in the context of the healthcare system appropriate to training level
- The importance of good communication in teams and the role of human interactions on effectiveness and patient safety

Working with others

- Awareness of own personal style and other styles and their impact on team performance
- The importance of good communication in teams and the role of human interactions on effectiveness and patient safety

Managing services

- The structure and function of Irish health care system
- Awareness of the challenges of managing in healthcare
 - Role of governance
 - Clinical directors
- Knowledge of planning and design of services
- Knowledge and understanding of the financing of the health service
 - Knowledge of how to prepare a budget
 - Defining value
 - Managing resources
- Knowledge and understanding of the importance of human factors in service delivery
 - How to manage staff training, development and education
- Managing performance
 - How to perform staff appraisal and deal effectively with poor staff performance
 - How to reward and incentivise staff for quality and efficiency

Setting direction

- The external and internal drivers setting the context for change
- Knowledge of systems and resource management that guide service development
- How to make decisions using evidence-based medicine and performance measures
- How to evaluate the impact of change on health outcomes through ongoing service evaluation

SKILLS

- Effective communication with patients, families and colleagues
- Co-operation and collaboration with others; patients, service users, carers colleagues within and across systems
- Being an effective team player
- Ability to manage resources and people
- Managing performance and performance indicators

Demonstrating personal qualities

- Efficiently and effectively managing one-self and one's time especially when faced with challenging situations
- Continues personal and professional development through scholarship and further training and education where appropriate
- Acting with integrity and honesty with all people at all times
- Developing networks to expand knowledge and sphere of influence
- Building and maintaining key relationships
- Adapting style to work with different people and different situations
- Contributing to the planning and design of services

ASSESSMENT & LEARNING METHODS

- Mastering Communication course (Year 1)
- RCPI HST Leadership in Clinical Practice (Year 3 – 5)
- Consultant feedback at annual assessment
- Workplace based assessment e.g. Mini-CEX, DOPS, CBD
- Educational supervisor's reports on observed performance (in the workplace): on management and leadership skills
- Involvement in hospital committees where possible e.g. Division of Medicine, Drugs and Therapeutics, Infection Control etc.

Quality Improvement

Objective: To demonstrate the ability to identify areas for improvement and implement basic quality improvement skills and knowledge to improve patient safety and quality in the healthcare system.

Medical Council Domains of Good Professional Practice: Patient Safety and Quality of Patient Care; Communication and Interpersonal Skills; Collaboration and Teamwork; Management; Relating to Patients; Professionalism

KNOWLEDGE

Personal qualities of leaders

- The importance of prioritising the patient and patient safety in all clinical activities and interactions

Managing services

- Knowledge of systems design and the role of microsystems
- Understanding of human factors and culture on patient safety and quality

Improving services

- How to ensure patient safety by adopting and incorporating a patient safety culture
- How to critically evaluate where services can be improved by measuring performance, and acting to improve quality standards where possible
- How to encourage a culture of improvement and innovation

Setting direction

- How to create a 'burning platform' and motivate other healthcare professionals to work together within quality improvement
- Knowledge of the wider healthcare system direction and how that may impact local organisations

SKILLS

- Improvement approach to all problems or issues
- Engaging colleagues, patients and the wider system to identify issues and implement improvements
- Use of quality improvement methodologies, tools and techniques within every day practice
- Ensuring patient safety by adopting and incorporating a patient safety culture
- Critically evaluating where services can be improved by measuring performance, and acting to raise standards where possible
- Encouraging a culture of improvement and innovation

Demonstrating personal qualities

- Encouraging contributions and involvement from others including patients, carers, members of the multidisciplinary team and the wider community
- Considering process and system design, contributing to the planning and design of services

ASSESSMENT & LEARNING METHODS

- RCPI HST Leadership in Clinical Practice
- Consultant feedback at annual assessment
- Involvement in hospital committees where possible e.g. Division of Medicine, Drugs and Therapeutics, Infection Control etc.

Scholarship

Objective: To develop skills in personal/professional development, teaching, educational supervision and research

Medical Council Domains of Good Professional Practice: Scholarship

KNOWLEDGE

Teaching, educational supervision and assessment

- Principles of adult learning, teaching and learning methods available and strategies
- Educational principles directing assessment methods including, formative vs. summative methods
- The value of regular appraisal / assessment in informing training process
- How to set effective educational objectives and map benefits to learner
- Design and delivery of an effective teaching event, both small and large group
- Use of appropriate technology / materials

Research, methodology and critical evaluation

- Designing and resourcing a research project
- Research methodology, valid statistical analysis, writing and publishing papers
- Ethical considerations and obtaining ethical approval
- Reviewing literature, framing questions, designing a project capable of providing an answer
- How to write results and conclusions, writing and/or presenting a paper
- How to present data in a clear, honest and critical fashion

Audit

- Basis for developing evidence-based medicine, kinds of evidence, evaluation; methodologies of clinical trials
- Sources from which useful data for audit can be obtained, the methods of collection, handling data, the audit cycle
- Means of determining best practice, preparing protocols, guidelines, evaluating their performance
- The importance of re-audit

SKILLS

- Bed-side undergraduate and post graduate teaching
- Developing and delivering lectures
- Carrying out research in an ethical and professional manner
- Performing an audit
- Presentation and writing skills – remaining impartial and objective
- Adequate preparation, timekeeping
- Using technology / materials

ASSESSMENT & LEARNING METHODS

- Health Research (online) – An Introduction
- Effective Teaching and Supervising Skills course (online) - recommended
- Educational Assessment Skills course - recommended
- Performing audit (online) course –mandatory
- Health Research Methods for Clinicians - recommended

Management

Objective: To understand the organisation, regulation and structures of the health services, nationally and locally, and to be competent in the use and management of information on health and health services, to develop personal effectiveness and the skills applicable to the management of staff and activities within a healthcare team.

Medical Council Domains of Good Professional Practice: Management.

KNOWLEDGE

Health service structure, management and organisation

- The administrative structure of the Irish Health Service, services provided in Ireland and their funding and how to engage with these for best results
- Department of Health, HSE and hospital management structures and systems
- The national regulatory bodies, health agencies and patient representative groups
- Understanding the need for business plans, annual hospital budgets, the relationship between the hospital and PCCC

The provision and use of information in order to regulate and improve service provision

- Methods of collecting, analysing and presenting information relevant to the health of a population and the apportionment of healthcare resources
- The common ways in which data is presented, knowing of the sources which can provide information relevant to national or to local services and publications available

Maintaining medical knowledge with a view to delivering effective clinical care

- Understanding the contribution that current, accurate knowledge can make to establishing clinical effectiveness, best practice and treatment protocols
- Knowledge of sources providing updates, literature reviews and digests

Delegation skills, empowerment and conflict management

- How to assess and develop personal effectiveness, improve negotiating, influencing and leadership skills
- How to manage time efficiently, deal with pressure and stress
- How to motivate others and operate within a multidisciplinary team

SKILLS

- Chairing, organising and participating in effective meetings
- Managing risks
- Managing time
- Delegating tasks effectively
- Managing conflicts
- Exploring, directing and pursuing a project, negotiating through the relevant departments at an appropriate level
- Ability to achieve results through an understanding of the organisation and its operation
- Ability to seek / locate information in order to define an issue needing attention e.g. to provide data relevant to a proposal for change, establishing a priority, obtaining resources
- Ability to make use of information, use IT, undertake searches and obtain aggregated data, to critically evaluate proposals for change e.g. innovative treatments, new technologies
- Ability to adjust to change, apply management, negotiating skills to manage change
- Appropriately using management techniques and seeking to improve these skills and personal effectiveness

ASSESSMENT & LEARNING METHODS

- Mastering Communication course
- Performing Audit online course
- RCPI HST Leadership in Clinical Practice
- Annual audit
- Consultant feedback on management and leadership skills
- Involvement in hospital committees

Standards of Care

Objective: To be able to consistently and effectively assess and treat patients' problems

Medical Council Domains of Good Professional Practice: Patient Safety and Quality of Patient Care; Relating to Patients; Communication and Interpersonal Skills; Collaboration and Teamwork: Management (including Self-Management); Clinical Skills.

KNOWLEDGE

Diagnosing Patients

- How to carry out appropriate history taking
- How to appropriately examine a patient
- How to make a differential diagnosis

Investigation, indications, risks, cost-effectiveness

- The pathophysiological basis of the investigation
- Understand the clinical significance of reference ranges, positive and negative predictive value and potential risks of inappropriate tests
- The procedures for commonly used investigations, common or/and serious risks
- Understanding of the sensitivity and specificity of results, artefacts, PPV and NPV
- Understanding significance, interpreting and explaining results of investigations
- Logical approach in choosing, sequencing and prioritising investigations

Treatment and management of disease

- Natural history of diseases
- Quality of life concepts
- How to accurately assess patient's needs, prescribe, arrange treatment, recognise and deal with reactions / side effects
- How to set realistic therapeutic goals, to utilise rehabilitation services, and use palliative care approach appropriately
- Recognising that illness (especially chronic and/or incapacity) has an impact on relationships and family, having financial as well as social effects e.g. driving

Disease prevention and health education

- Screening for disease: methods, advantages and limitations
- Health promotion and support agencies; means of providing sources of information for patients
- Risk factors, preventive measures, and change strategies applicable to smoking, alcohol, drug abuse, and lifestyle
- Disease notification; methods of collection and sources of data

Notes, records, correspondence

- Functions of medical records, their value as an accurate up-to-date commentary and source of data
- An understanding of the need and appropriate use of problem-orientated discharge notes, letters, more detailed case reports, concise out-patient reports and focused reviews
- Appreciating the importance of up-to-date, easily available, accurate information, and the need for communicating promptly e.g. with primary care

Prioritising, resourcing and decision taking

- How to prioritise demands, respond to patients' needs and sequence urgent tasks
- Establishing (clinical) priorities e.g. for investigations, intervention; how to set realistic goals; understanding the need to allocate sufficient time, knowing when to seek help
- Understanding the need to complete tasks, reach a conclusion, make a decision, and take action within allocated time
- Knowing how and when to conclude

Handover

- Know what are the essential requirements to run an effective handover meeting
 - Sufficient and accurate patients information
 - Adequate time
 - Clear roles and leadership
 - Adequate IT
- Know how to prioritise patient safety
 - Identify most clinically unstable patients
 - Use ISBAR (Identify, Situation, Background, Assessment, Recommendations)
 - Proper identification of tasks and follow-ups required
 - Contingency plans in place
- Know how to focus the team on actions
 - Tasks are prioritised
 - Plans for further care are put in place
 - Unstable patients are reviewed

Relevance of professional bodies

- Understanding the relevance to practice of standards of care set down by recognised professional bodies – the Medical Council, Medical Colleges and their Faculties, and the additional support available from professional organisations e.g. IMO, Medical Defence Organisations and from the various specialist and learned societies

SKILLS

- Taking and analysing a clinical history and performing a reliable and appropriate examination, arriving at a diagnosis and a differential diagnosis
- Liaising, discussing and negotiating effectively with those undertaking the investigation
- Selecting investigations carefully and appropriately, considering (patients') needs, risks, value and cost effectiveness
- Appropriately selecting treatment and management of disease
- Discussing, planning and delivering care appropriate to patient's needs and wishes
- Preventing disease using the appropriate channels and providing appropriate health education and promotion
- Collating evidence, summarising, recognising when objective has been met
- Screening
- Working effectively with others including
 - Effective listening
 - Ability to articulate and deliver instructions
 - Encourage questions and openness
 - Leadership skills
- Ability to prioritise
- Ability to delegate effectively
- Ability to advise on and promote lifestyle change, stopping smoking, control of alcohol intake, exercise and nutrition
- Ability to assess and explain risk, encourage positive behaviours e.g. immunisation and preventive measures
- Involve patients' in solving their health problems, by providing information and education
- Availing of support provided by voluntary agencies and patient support groups, as well as expert services e.g. detoxification / psychiatric services
- Act in accordance with, up to date standards on palliative care needs assessment
- Valuing contributions of health education and disease prevention to health in a community
- Compile accurate and appropriate detailed medical notes and care reports including the results of examinations, investigations, procedures performed, sufficient to provide an accurate, detailed account of the diagnostic and management process and outcome, providing concise, informative progress reports (both written and oral)
- Transfer information in an appropriate and timely manner

- Maintaining legible records in line with the Guide to Professional Conduct and Ethics for Registered Medical Practitioners in Ireland
- Actively engaging with professional/representative/specialist bodies

ASSESSMENT & LEARNING METHODS

- Consultant feedback
- Workplace based assessment e.g. Mini-CEX, DOPS, CBD
- Educational supervisor's reports on observed performance (in the workplace)
- Audit
- Medical Council Guide to Professional Conduct and Ethics

Dealing with & Managing Acutely Ill Patients in Appropriate Specialties

Objectives: To be able to assess and initiate management of patients presenting as emergencies, and to appropriately communicate the diagnosis and prognosis. Trainees should be able to recognise the critically ill and immediately assess and resuscitate if necessary, formulate a differential diagnosis, treat and/or refer as appropriate, elect relevant investigations and accurately interpret reports.

Medical Council Domains of Good Professional Practice: Patient Safety and Quality of Patient Care, Clinical Skills.

KNOWLEDGE

Management of acutely ill patients with medical problems

- Presentation of potentially life-threatening problems
- Indications for urgent intervention, the additional information necessary to support action (e.g. results of investigations) and treatment protocols
- When to seek help, refer/transfer to another specialty
- ACLS protocols
- Ethical and legal principles relevant to resuscitation and DNAR in line with National Consent Policy
- How to manage acute medical intake, receive and refer patients appropriately, interact efficiently and effectively with other members of the medical team, accept/undertake responsibility appropriately
- Management of overdose
- How to anticipate / recognise, assess and manage life-threatening emergencies, recognise significantly abnormal physiology e.g. dysrhythmia and provide the means to correct e.g. defibrillation
- How to convey essential information quickly to relevant personnel: maintaining legible up-to-date records documenting results of investigations, making lists of problems dealt with or remaining, identifying areas of uncertainty; ensuring safe handover

Managing the deteriorating patient

- How to categorise a patients' severity of illness using Early Warning Scores (EWS) guidelines
- How to perform an early detection of patient deterioration
- How to use a structured communication tool (ISBAR)
- How to promote an early medical review, prompted by specific trigger points
- How to use a definitive escalation plan

Discharge planning

- Knowledge of patient pathways
- How to distinguish between illness and disease, disability and dependency
- Understanding the potential impact of illness and impairment on activities of daily living, family relationships, status, independence, awareness of quality of life issues
- Role and skills of other members of the healthcare team, how to devise and deliver a care package
- The support available from other agencies e.g. specialist nurses, social workers, community care
- Principles of shared care with the general practitioner service
- Awareness of the pressures/dynamics within a family, the economic factors delaying discharge but recognise the limit to benefit derived from in-patient care

SKILLS

- BLS/ACLS (or APLS for Paediatrics)
- Dealing with common medical emergencies
- Interpreting blood results, ECG/Rhythm strips, chest X-Ray, CT brain
- Giving clear instructions to both medical and hospital staff
- Ordering relevant follow up investigations
- Discharge planning, including complex discharge
- Knowledge of HIPE (Hospital In-Patient Enquiry)
- Multidisciplinary team working
- Communication skills
- Delivering early, regular and on-going consultation with family members (with the patient's permission) and primary care physicians
- Remaining calm, delegating appropriately, ensuring good communication
- Attempting to meet patients' / relatives' needs and concerns, respecting their views and right to be informed in accordance with Medical Council Guidelines
- Establishing liaison with family and community care, primary care, communicate / report to agencies involved
- Demonstrating awareness of the wide ranging effects of illness and the need to bridge the gap between hospital and home
- Categorising a patients' severity of illness
- Performing an early detection of patient deterioration
- Use of structured communication tools (e.g. ISBAR)

ASSESSMENT & LEARNING METHODS

- ACLS course
- Record of on call experience
- Mini-CEX (acute setting)
- Case Based Discussion (CBD)
- Consultant feedback

Therapeutics and Safe Prescribing

Objective: To progressively develop ability to prescribe, review and monitor appropriate therapeutic interventions relevant to clinical practice in specific specialities including non-pharmacological therapies and preventative care.

Medical Council Domains of Good Professional Practice: Patient Safety and Quality of Patient Care.

KNOWLEDGE

- Pharmacology, therapeutics of treatments prescribed, choice of routes of administration, dosing schedules, compliance strategies; the objectives, risks and complications of treatment cost-effectiveness
- Indications, contraindications, side effects, drug interaction, dosage and route of administration of commonly used drugs
- Commonly prescribed medications
- Adverse drug reactions to commonly used drugs, including complementary medicines
- Identifying common prescribing hazards
- Identifying high risk medications
- Drugs requiring therapeutic drug monitoring and interpretation of results
- The effects of age, body size, organ dysfunction and concurrent illness or physiological state e.g. pregnancy on drug distribution and metabolism relevant to own practice
- Recognising the roles of regulatory agencies involved in drug use, monitoring and licensing e.g. IMB, and hospital formulary committees
- Procedure for monitoring, managing and reporting adverse drug reaction
- Effects of medications on patient activities including potential effects on a patient's fitness to drive
- The role of The National Medicines Information Centre (NMIC) in promoting safe and efficient use of medicine
- Differentiating drug allergy from drug side effects
- Know the difference between an early and late drug allergy, and drug side-effects
- Good Clinical Practice guidelines for seeing and managing patients who are on clinical research trials
- Best practice in the pharmacological management of cancer pain
- The management of constipation in adult patients receiving palliative care

SKILLS

- Writing a prescription in line with guidelines
- Appropriately prescribing for the elderly, children and pregnant and breast feeding women
- Making appropriate dose adjustments following therapeutic drug monitoring, or physiological change (e.g. deteriorating renal function)
- Reviewing and revising patients' long term medications
- Anticipating and avoiding defined drug interactions, including complementary medicines
- Advising patients (and carers) about important interactions and adverse drug effects including effects on driving
- Providing comprehensible explanations to the patient, and carers when relevant, for the use of medicines
- Being open to advice and input from other health professionals on prescribing
- Participating in adverse drug event reporting
- Take and record an accurate drug allergy history and history of previous side effects

ASSESSMENT & LEARNING METHODS

- Consultant feedback
- Workplace based assessment e.g. Mini-CEX, DOPS, CBD
- Educational supervisor's reports on observed performance (in the workplace): prioritisation of patient safety in prescribing practice
- Guidance for health and social care providers - Principles of good practice in medication reconciliation (HIQA)

Specialty Section

The Electrocardiogram: Standard ECG, Ambulatory ECG, Exercise ECG

Objectives: To select, perform and interpret each of the three non-invasive ECG techniques

KNOWLEDGE

Identify the indications and recognise the limitations of the following modalities

ECG

- The physiology and anatomy of the conduction system.
- Cellular and molecular mechanisms involved in the electrical activity of the heart.
- Basic principles of ECG.
- Normal evolution of the electrical vectors during the cardiac cycle.
- Recognise the normal ECG, and explain how it is formed.
- ECG characteristics of atrial and ventricular hypertrophies, bundle branch blocks and other conduction blocks, tachycardias, bradycardias, acute and chronic myocardial ischemia, pericarditis and myocarditis, electrolyte abnormalities, preexcitation, QT abnormalities, pacemaker dysfunction.

Exercise ECG Testing

- Main indications, contraindications and limitations
- Evaluation of
 - ischemia
 - valvular diseases
 - hypertrophic cardiomyopathy
 - treatment response
 - functional capacity
 - inducible arrhythmias
- Criteria for stopping the testing
- Complications and their treatment

SKILLS

- Choose the appropriate techniques for specific clinical situations including a thorough understanding of the Bayesian approach.
- Choose techniques modalities and protocols in a clinical useful and cost effective way, avoiding over- and underutilisation of tests
- Appropriate selection of ECG techniques necessary for the patients' management.
- Explain to patients and their family the implications of the results of the electrocardiogram.
- Perform and interpret ECG, ambulatory ECGs/loop recorder ECGs and exercise ECG testing in the clinical context
- Identify the normal and abnormal ECG, in particular:
 - arrhythmias
 - bundle branch blocks
 - hypertrophy
 - acute and chronic ischemia
 - QT abnormalities
 - pericarditis
 - electrolyte abnormalities
 - pacemaker dysfunctions
- Integrate data from different electrocardiographic techniques, as well as from other non-invasive and invasive techniques.
- Recognise strengths and weaknesses of ambulatory ECGs/loop recorder ECGs in a clinical situation.
- Cooperate with interventional cardiologists, electrophysiologists, anaesthetists, cardiac surgeons, as well as with other doctors involved in emergency medicine and intensive care.
- Recognise that the diagnosis and treatment of some arrhythmias need sometimes a multidisciplinary approach.
- Manage complications in a proper and timely way.

ASSESSMENT & LEARNING METHOD

- Record of ECGs performed and interpreted in logbook:
 - ECG
 - Ambulatory ECGs/loop recorder ECGs
 - Exercise ECG testing
- DOPs
 - Stress Test
 - Ambulatory ECGs
- In-house ECG's

Non-Invasive Imaging – Echocardiography, CMR, Cardiac CT

Objectives: Appropriately select from the four imaging modalities of:

- Echocardiography;
- Cardiac Magnetic Resonance (CMR)
- Computed Tomography (CT)

and then integrate the results into individual patient care.

KNOWLEDGE

- Knowledge of indications and interpretation of ultrasound measurements for cardiac structure and function.

Echocardiography Techniques

- M-mode
- 2-dimensional (2D) mode
- Doppler imaging (blood flow and tissue)
- Contrast echocardiography
- Indications:
 - Evaluation of systolic and diastolic function (including ejection fraction) of the left ventricle
 - Regional wall motion abnormalities
 - LV mass
 - Chamber volumes and wall dimensions
 - Cardiomyopathies
 - Valvular morphology and function, including stenosis and regurgitation
 - Right ventricular function
 - Shunt lesions
 - Pericardial masses (tumours, thrombi, vegetations)
 - Congenital heart disease
 - Aortic disease
- Modalities
 - Transthoracic echo
 - Stress test
 - Contrast echocardiography
 - 3D echocardiography

Cardiovascular Magnetic Resonance (CMR) Techniques

- 2D mode
- Perfusion imaging
- Late enhancement
- Indication
 - Volumes
 - Ejection fraction
 - LV mass
 - Shunt
- Modalities
 - Cine-MR
 - MR angiography
 - T1 imaging

Cardiac Computed Tomography Techniques

- 2D
- 3D
- Indications
 - Calcium score
 - Coronary Artery Disease (CAD) (including grafts and stents)
- Modalities
 - Ultra-fast CT
 - Coronary angiogram

SKILLS

- Appropriate selection of imaging techniques for specific clinical situations, including a thorough understanding of the Bayesian approach
- Choose imaging techniques, modalities and protocols in a clinically useful and cost-effective way, avoiding over and underutilisation of tests, keeping in mind radiation exposure, where appropriate
- Integrate data from different non-invasive techniques as well as from invasive imaging
- Stress testing
- Cooperate with interventional cardiologists, electrophysiologists, anaesthesiologists and other physicians involved in emergency medicine and intensive care, and with cardiac surgeons
- Explain to patients the implications of the results of the test

ASSESSMENT & LEARNING METHOD

- ACLS
- DOPS:
 - Transthoracic echo
- Experience in an echo laboratory
- Document performance and interpretation of:
 - Transthoracic, transoesophageal and stress echocardiography
- Exposure to CT, CMR
 - Evaluate CT examinations in the clinical context
- Study Day

Invasive Imaging – Catheterisation and Angiography

Objectives: Coronary and left ventricular angiography: To be able to perform and interpret native coronary and surgical conduit angiograms and left ventricular angiograms

Cardiac catheterisation: To be able to perform and interpret right and left heart catheterisation.

KNOWLEDGE

- Principles of fluoroscopic imaging, radiation physics and safety.
- Potential complications of cardiac catheterisation and angiography (including hypotension, heart failure, arrhythmias, ischemic neurologic damage, myocardial ischaemia, contrast reaction, cholesterol embolism, renal failure, vascular complications retroperitoneal bleeding, and cardiac tamponade).
- Radiological anatomy of the heart, aorta, large vessels and coronary arteries, as well as that of the femoral, radial and brachial arteries used for vascular access during catheterisation.
- Knowledge of catheterisation lab equipment (physiological monitoring, transducers, blood gas analysers, power injector).
- Pressure waveforms obtained during cardiac catheterisation.
- Routine collection of haemodynamic and oxymetric data, and how to calculate cardiac output, vascular resistances, valve areas, and AV shunts from measurements.
- Percutaneous and cut down techniques of catheterisation.
- Type of catheters used in coronary arteriography and cardiac catheterisation.
- Equipment and technique used of transseptal cardiac catheterisation, and its applications.
- When and how to perform cardiac pacing and pericardiocentesis, and the potential complications associated with its use.
- Basic principles and indications for intracoronary ultrasound, Doppler and pressure assessment.

SKILLS

- Ordering, performing and interpreting invasive tests, by appropriately weighing up the risks and benefits of these procedures.
- Select the appropriate treatment modality (medical, percutaneous or surgical) based on the data generated by cardiac catheterisation, taking the clinical context into account.
- Obtain percutaneous arterial access (femoral, radial, brachial) and venous access and achieve haemostasis after catheterisation.
- Perform left heart catheterization including coronary angiography, ventriculography, and angiography of coronary bypass grafts
- Perform right heart catheterisation at the bedside including measurement of cardiac output, pressure measurement and oxymetry
- Proficiency in managing life-threatening arrhythmias and other emergency situations in the cath lab, including resuscitation and life support measures.
- Evaluate normal and pathological coronary angiograms, ventriculograms, aortograms, and pulmonary angiograms.
- Recognise the limitations and potential risk of invasive procedures and inform patients accordingly.
- Recognise the risks of ionizing radiation for the patient and clinical personnel.
- Consult and liaise with nurse and technician personnel and specialized physicians

ASSESSMENT & LEARNING METHODS

- Documented experience:
 - Left heart catheterization including coronary angiography, ventriculography, and angiography of coronary bypass grafts
 - Right heart catheterisation at the bedside including measurement of cardiac output, pressure measurement and oxymetry
- Study Day

Clinical Pharmacology

Objectives: To master the theory and practice of state-of-the-art pharmacological treatment of cardiovascular disorders

KNOWLEDGE

- Classification and mode of action of drugs (with emphasis on angiotensin-converting enzyme inhibitors, angiotensin-receptor blockers, aldosterone antagonists, renin inhibitors, antiarrhythmic drugs, betablockers, calcium antagonists, diuretics, lipid-lowering drugs, antiplatelet agents, anticoagulants, inotropes, digitalis, nitrates, other vasodilating drugs, drugs with cardiac toxicity and other drugs with novel mechanisms like potassium channel blockers)
- Recognise for the drugs listed above:
 - Pharmacokinetics (absorption, bioavailability, distribution, biotransformation, excretion)
 - Pharmacodynamics
 - Pharmacogenetics
 - Indications.
 - Contraindications
 - Interactions
 - Adverse effects and toxicity.
- Perform and interpret diagnostic tests to assess drug efficacy and safety (laboratory tests, ECG and haemodynamic monitoring, Echo).
- Knowledge of randomised clinical trials and evidence-based medicine.

SKILLS

- Take a relevant history of a patient's medication regime, including purchase of over the counter medicines. Identify and incorporate the importance of herbal remedies taken by patients.
- Assess the risks and benefits of prescribing an individualized drug treatment regimen for a given cardiovascular condition.
- Monitor the desired effects of a patient's drug therapy and also the side effects.
- Recognise and manage possible drug interactions (including treatments of concomitant diseases).
- Evaluate the design and results of published clinical trials.
- Incorporate the principles of evidence-based therapy and current guidelines into clinical practice.
- Communicate with patients and their family members to improve treatment compliance, and to ensure early recognition of possible adverse effects.
- Consider cost-effectiveness and feasibility of the prescribed treatment regimen

ASSESSMENT AND LEARNING METHODS

- Study Day

Cardiovascular Disease Prevention – Risk Factors, Assessment and Management

Objectives: To assess and treat patients with risk factors for cardiovascular disease. Evaluate how different prevention methods work. Describe cardiovascular disease and risk factors in the local community. Contribute to the global efforts in reducing Cardiovascular morbidity and mortality by communicating the prevention message to the public. Approach risk prevention in a holistic way, understanding the potentiation of cardiovascular risk by clustering of risk factors. Diagnose and treat different forms of arterial hypertension. Assess cardiac and other endorgan complications in patients with arterial hypertension. Diagnose and treat cardiovascular complications in the diabetic patient, appreciating the continuum ranging from impaired fasting glucose to insulin dependent diabetes and its complications.

KNOWLEDGE

- Epidemiology of cardiovascular disease in the local community: incidence, prevalence, survival
- Risk factors and describe distribution and frequency of high risk conditions in the local community
- Risk assessment in primary prevention, multifactorial risk interaction: risk scoring charts.
- Diet and nutrition in relation to cardiovascular risk management.
- Special treatment/prevention strategies for smoking, dyslipidaemia, diabetes mellitus, hypertension, physical inactivity, left ventricular hypertrophy (LVH), obesity, metabolic syndrome, psychosocial factors.
- Recognise that risk factors often cluster and require a comprehensive approach.
- Risk assessment in secondary prevention including drug therapy.
- Complications and consequences of specific risk factors.

Hypertension

- Epidemiology aetiology and pathophysiology of Essential Hypertension.
- Complications and consequences of essential hypertension.
- Diagnosis and assessment of essential hypertension; - Blood pressure measurement, including ambulatory blood pressure monitoring
- Symptoms and signs of target organ damage
- Diagnostic procedures
- Management of essential hypertension.
- Secondary hypertension and recall its various causes
- Renovascular hypertension
- Bilateral renal parenchymal disease
- Hypertension induced by hormonal contraceptives and conjugated oestrogens
- Other forms of secondary hypertension.
- Cell biology of left ventricular hypertrophy

Dyslipidemia

- Diagnoses and treatment of different forms of dyslipidemia.
- Cardiac and extra-cardiac complications of dyslipidemia.
- Epidemiology, aetiology and pathophysiology of dyslipidemia
- Complications and consequences of dyslipidemia
- Diagnosis, assessment and management of dyslipidemia.
- Cell biology of atherosclerosis.

Diabetic heart disease

- Diabetes Mellitus
- Role of diabetes in Coronary heart disease in the following areas
 - Epidemiology
 - Pathophysiology of cardiovascular complications
 - Role of risk factor intervention
 - screening for CAD in diabetics
 - screening for diabetes in CAD (oral glucose testing)
- Pathophysiology of diabetes and its non-cardiac and cardiac complications (CAD, diabetic cardiomyopathy, autonomic neuropathy and its cardiovascular affects).
- Treatments including diet, exercise, hypoglycaemic drugs and insulin
- Current thinking regarding the concept of the metabolic syndrome

SKILLS

- Evaluate CVD risk and assess global CVD risk at individual level (HeartSCORE).and population level (mortality, morbidity, disability)
- Evaluate the benefit of prevention at individual and population levels
- Appreciate the importance of risk factor management.
- Evaluate and manage risk factors appropriately and communicate their importance to patients, their families and the wider community.
- Appreciate variation in CVD risks across population, socioeconomic, gender, and racial groups.
- Through patient education, encourage a healthier lifestyle with specific emphasis on risk factors and maintenance of favourable risk profile over lifetime.
- Offer advice and support to family members with inherited CVD.
- Cooperate with other specialists such as dieticians, diabetologists and specialist nurses.
- Participate actively at CVD prevention programs (children, adults and elderly).
- Consider cost-effectiveness of the prescribed treatment regimen.
- Assess blood pressure using the correct methods for diagnosis and treatment control in hypertension, including ambulatory blood pressure monitoring.
- Advise patients on lifestyle management and treatment compliance.
- Advise patients on measuring their own blood pressure.
- Perform cost efficient screening for secondary hypertension.
- Select adequate treatment for lowering blood pressure to target values and prevent/treat end-organ damage.
- Select appropriate parameters in order to describe the risk profile in an individual patient with hypertension.
- Identify secondary organ damage (in particular cardiac, neurological, renal and atherosclerotic vascular disease) caused by hypertension.
- Manage multi-drug treatment regimes according to a patient's co-morbidities and possible side effects.
- Recognise that the diagnosis and treatment of hypertension need a multidisciplinary approach.
- Be able to motivate the patient to maintain long term compliance with antihypertensive therapy.
- Appreciate that hypertension itself is often under diagnosed and under -treated.
- Recognise the clustering of risk factors that include hypertension in order to formulate a holistic approach to patient management
- Assess dyslipidemia using the correct methods for diagnosis and therapeutic control.
- Advise patients on measuring their lipids.
- Select adequate treatment for lowering blood pressure to target values and prevent/treat its consequences
- Recognise that the diagnosis and treatment of dyslipidemia sometimes need a multidisciplinary approach.

- Be able to motivate the patient to maintain long-term compliance with antihypertensive lipid lowering therapy
- Recognise the clustering of risk factors that include dyslipidemia in order to formulate an integrated approach to patient management.
- Select appropriate parameters to describe the risk profile in an individual patient with dyslipidemia
- Identify other vascular areas affected by atherosclerotic vascular disease
- Manage multidrug treatment regimens according to a patient's comorbidities and possible side effects.
- Manage the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of diabetes and its associated cardiovascular complications.
- Actively participate in a multidisciplinary network of physicians and assistant medical personnel in order to treat patients with diabetes adequately according to disease state and complications.
- Be aware of the importance of recognising the continuum that extends from primary prevention to treatment of end organ damage.
- Appreciate the importance of treating asymptomatic patients in order to improve prognosis.
- Recognise the clustering of risk factors that include diabetes in order to formulate a holistic approach to patient management

ASSESSMENT & LEARNING METHODS

- Study Day

Acute Coronary Syndrome (ACS)

Objectives: To be able to perform specialist assessment and treatment of patients with acute coronary syndromes including

- STEMI (ST segment elevation myocardial infarction)
- Non-STEMI
- Unstable angina

To understand indications, techniques, typical acute and long-term problems, limitations, complications, alternatives, and adjunctive pharmacotherapy of PCI

KNOWLEDGE

- Pathophysiology of acute coronary syndromes; Myocardial ischaemia, Atherosclerosis of the epicardial coronary arteries, Events that precipitate ACS, Non-atheromatous CAD
- Dominant clinical features of ACS; Cardiac ischaemic chest pain, examination of CV system in ACS, Silent ischaemia and infarction
- Diagnostic process in unstable angina and non-ST elevation MI - analysis of symptoms and clinical differential diagnosis, 12-lead ECG, Laboratory studies, Imaging modalities
- Diagnostic procedures in AMI - analysis of symptoms and clinical differential diagnosis, 12-lead ECG, Laboratory studies, Imaging modalities
- Potential complications of AMI; Myocardial Ischemia, Arrhythmias and Mechanical complications
- Treatment options for AMI; Pre-hospital and early-hospital adjunctive pharmacological therapy, percutaneous coronary intervention (PCI), Coronary bypass grafting (CABG), early in-hospital.

Percutaneous coronary intervention

- Mechanisms of action of main PCI techniques (balloon angioplasty, stent implantation, rotablation).
- Fundamental characteristics of balloons and stents, including typical lengths and diameters, antiproliferative drug coating.
- Problem of restenosis, acute and subacute stent thrombosis, and appropriately weigh risks and benefits of interventional techniques.
- Recognize the added risk from diabetes and renal impairment;
- Acute and chronic complications of PCI.
- Current differential indications for surgical and interventional revascularization as well as conservative treatment of CAD with respect to anatomy, extent of disease, role of left ventricular function both in the setting of ACS and of chronic CAD.
- Knowledge of adjuvant drug therapy, in particular anticoagulation regimes and platelet-inhibitors (aspirin, thienopyridines, glycoprotein IIb/IIIa inhibitors).

SKILLS

- Appreciate the role of risk factors, the clinical characteristics of coronary occlusion, and subsequent clinical course.
- Interpret biochemical markers of myocardial damage.
- Interpret ECG and imaging techniques to detect and locate ischaemia and/or infarction.
- Understand the importance of monitoring patients with ACS.
- Provide appropriate pharmacological treatment including analgesic, antiplatelet, and antithrombotic and anti-ischaemic therapy.
- Understand indications and contraindications for acute reperfusion treatment and make appropriate decisions.
- Demonstrate proficiency in selecting cardiac catheterisation in the context of ACS.
- Demonstrate proficiency in treating patients with heart failure and cardiogenic shock, including invasive haemodynamic monitoring.
- Demonstrate knowledge of advanced CPR techniques and management of life-threatening arrhythmias.
- Recognise the urgency of organised teamwork required for the optimal management of patients with ACS.
- Recognise the urgency of making rapid decisions regarding patients with ACS, from the time of their arrival in the emergency department until definitive therapy is established (for example minimising door-to-balloon/needle time).
- Appreciate the distress that unexpected and serious illness causes both to the patient and their relatives.
- Recognise when to transfer the patient to another hospital for interventional or surgical revascularisation.
- Contribute to improving public awareness of the significance of chest pain and encouraging early presentation.

Percutaneous coronary intervention

- To appropriately select ACS patients who are candidates for urgent angiography and PCI
- To appropriately select chronic CAD patients who are candidates for angiography and PCI.
- To adapt pharmacotherapy, especially anticoagulation and antiaggregatory medication, before and after PCI to clinical needs.
- To be responsive to potential hazards such as contrast nephropathy, arterial access complications (hematoma), drug compliance issues, drug resistance, non-cardiac diseases or interventions with bleeding risks while the patient is on thienopyridine and aspirin medication.
- Explain risk, benefits and alternatives in a compassionate way to the patient and be responsive to his fears and worries; take patient's wishes, co-morbidities and social situation into account when making medical decisions
- Interact and cooperate professionally with interventional cardiologists, heart surgeons, and supporting medical personnel

ASSESSMENT & LEARNING METHODS

- Study Day

Chronic Ischaemic Heart Disease

Objectives: To be able to perform specialist assessment and treatment of patients with chronic Ischaemic Heart Disease (IHD).

To evaluate patients and interpret the results of diagnostic procedures.

To select and manage appropriate therapies

To be able to perform exercise or pharmacological stress testing alone, or in conjunction with, an imaging modality

KNOWLEDGE

- Epidemiology of chronic IHD and its risk factors
- Molecular and cellular biology of IHD, its pathology and development, and the effects of ischaemia on the cardiac myocyte
- Describe events that precipitate a clinical angina attack
- Outline the prognosis of chronic IHD
- Clinical assessment of known or suspected chronic IHD, including evaluation of chest pain, other symptoms and signs, and diagnostic procedures
- Management of chronic IHD, including lifestyle measures, pharmacological management -
 - disease modifying drugs
 - symptom controlling drugs
- Explain the role and relative merits of medical therapy and revascularisation (percutaneous coronary intervention or coronary artery bypass surgery) in the patient with IHD

Stress Testing

- Basic principles of coronary physiology
- Principles of exercise physiology
- Mechanisms of action of vasodilators and inotropic drugs used for stress testing
- Appreciating the indication of stress testing in other cardiac disorders (including valvular disease, arrhythmias and heart failure)

SKILLS

- Risk stratify individual patients and to select an appropriate management strategy.
- Select, use and interpret non-invasive and invasive diagnostic tools for the evaluation of ischaemia, viability, left ventricular structure and function and coronary anatomy.
- Identify and treat risk factors for chronic IHD.
- Recognise the importance of risk factor management and secondary prevention.
- Consult with specialists such as interventional cardiologists, cardiac surgeons, dieticians and diabetologists in order to devise an appropriate management plan for individual patients
- Be able to interpret the ECG to detect ischaemia and/or arrhythmias
- Managing life-threatening arrhythmias, ischaemia, or other emergency situations, including ACLS, during the test
- Select the appropriate stress modality for a particular patient and interpret according to Bayesian principles taking into account specific strengths and weaknesses of a given test modality in a given patient (e.g., frequent false positive stress ECG in women)

ASSESSMENT & LEARNING METHODS

- Study day

Myocardial Disease

Objectives: To be able to perform specialist assessment and treatment of patients with cardiomyopathy, myocarditis and pericardial disease.

KNOWLEDGE

- Epidemiology of dilated, hypertrophic, restrictive, infiltrative cardiomyopathies and obliterative endomyocardial disease
- Pathophysiology including genetics, clinical features and diagnostic criteria of cardiomyopathies
- Medical and invasive (surgical, electrophysiological and interventional) management of cardiomyopathies: indications, contraindications, possible adverse effects
- Prognostic factors

Myocarditis

- Myocarditis and its aetiology
- Clinical features, pathology and diagnostic criteria of infective and non-infective myocarditis, in particular the typical features of different forms of myocarditis on magnetic resonance imaging
- Treatment of patients with myocarditis and its complications

SKILLS

- Interpret diagnostic data (ECG, ambulatory ECG, Echo, exercise testing, chest X-ray, cardiac catheterisation, coronary angiography, magnetic resonance and radionuclide imaging, endomyocardial biopsy, genetic assessment)
- Select appropriate treatment and support modalities (medical, interventional, surgical, ICD/CRT, assist devices, balloon pumping or other treatment)
- Assess individual prognosis in relation to the need for transplantation.
- Evaluate patients for endomyocardial biopsy recognizing diagnostic yield and potential risk of this procedure.
- Establish cooperation with medical professionals in other specialties (immunology, bacteriology, genetics, cardiac surgery, interventional cardiology, imaging) for timely differential diagnosis of myocardial disease and further treatment
- Counsel patients with cardiomyopathies and their relatives about associated risks

ASSESSMENT & LEARNING METHODS

- Study Day

Pericardial Disease

Objectives: To be able to perform specialist assessment and treatment of patients with pericardial diseases

KNOWLEDGE

- Classify and define
 - Acute pericarditis (infective, idiopathic or neoplastic)
 - Chronic pericarditis
 - Constrictive pericarditis
- Describe for each the epidemiology, pathophysiology, and aetiology (including infective, inflammatory and neoplastic disorders)
- Relevant investigations: non-invasive and invasive.
- Differential diagnosis of constrictive pericarditis from restrictive cardiomyopathy
- Management of pericarditis
- Related complications; pericardial effusion, cardiac tamponade and constriction

SKILLS

- Demonstrates knowledge of the ECG abnormalities in acute pericarditis
- Select and use the different non-invasive imaging modalities: echo, CMR, CT as well as invasive pressure measurements to diagnose pericardial disease.
- Evaluate haemodynamic status;
- Determine the aetiology of pericardial effusion
- Clinically differentiate pericarditis from myocardial ischaemia.
- Assist in and ideally perform pericardiocentesis on appropriately selected patients
- Consider pericardial diseases within the differential diagnosis of a patient presenting with cardiovascular disease
- Be aware of the different diagnostic and therapeutic strategies required for each individual case
- To work closely with radiologists, cardiac surgeons and oncologists.

ASSESSMENT & LEARNING METHODS

- Study Day

Cardiac Tumours

Objectives: To be able to perform specialist assessment and treatment of patients with cardiac tumours

KNOWLEDGE

Given this is rare it is recommended that basic knowledge only is essential

- Epidemiology, pathophysiology, pathology and clinical manifestations of primary cardiac tumours and metastatic cardiac tumours, including lymphoma
- Effect of tumour size and location
- Clinical features including
 - Impairment of cardiac function
 - Systemic manifestations
 - Systemic and pulmonary emboli
 - Signs of physical obstruction to blood flow (e.g. atrial myxoma)
 - Pericardial involvement-constriction and tamponade
- Appropriate diagnostic procedures
 - echocardiography, computed tomography, magnetic resonance imaging
- Operative management (tumour removal, heart transplantation, palliative management)

SKILLS

- Select and use appropriate imaging modalities
- Consider a differential diagnosis of primary or secondary neoplastic involvement of the heart
- Recognise other cardiac masses including thrombi or vegetations
- Collaborate effectively with cardiovascular surgeons and with other specialists dealing with neoplastic disease
- Understand the importance of support and counselling for the patient and family

ASSESSMENT & LEARNING METHODS

- Study Day

Valvular Heart Disease

Objectives: To be able to perform a specialist assessment and treatment of patients with the following valvular pathologies:

- Aortic stenosis
- Aortic regurgitation
- Mitral valve stenosis
- Mitral valve regurgitation
- Tricuspid stenosis
- Tricuspid regurgitation
- Pulmonary valve disease

To be able to perform follow up after valve surgery or percutaneous intervention, including immediate post-operative care and long-term management of patients with prosthetic valves

KNOWLEDGE

- Pathology and pathophysiology
- Natural history and progression.
- Strengths and limitations of diagnostic techniques, in particular echocardiography, and recognising the value of additional techniques such as magnetic resonance imaging or an invasive hemodynamics in cases of discrepant findings
- Indications, benefits, and risks of medical therapy, and surgical or percutaneous interventions
- Indications for and management of anticoagulation
- Role of concomitant coronary heart disease in valvular heart disease and its impact on surgical management
- Post-operative care
- Postoperative pathophysiology
- Postoperative management of anticoagulants, diuretics and other drugs, prophylaxis against infective endocarditis, management of pregnancy and non-cardiac surgery in the patient with prosthetic valves

SKILLS

- Select the appropriate use of invasive or non-invasive diagnostic techniques
- Interpret results of diagnostic procedures
- Be able to decide when to indicate surgery
- Co-operate with cardiovascular surgeons, interventional cardiologists, and radiologists
- Recognise importance of patient education, with respect to the natural history of valvular heart disease, management of anticoagulation, prophylaxis of bacterial endocarditis and choice of valve prosthesis when appropriate
- Convey to the patient the importance of monitoring of symptoms and signs of valvular heart disease and of periodic follow-up by the cardiologist
- Recognise and manage the complications which may occur in patients with prosthetic valves or after valvular interventions
- Co-operate with cardiac surgeons and anaesthetists
- Recognise the appropriate frequency of follow up with specific reference to the clinical condition following surgery or intervention.

ASSESSMENT & LEARNING METHODS

- Study Day

Infective Endocarditis

Objectives: Assess, diagnose and treat patients with infective endocarditis (of native and prosthetic valves as well as due to indwelling devices such as pacemakers and catheters)

KNOWLEDGE

- Epidemiology, pathology, pathogenesis and microbiology of infective endocarditis
- Clinical features
- Laboratory investigations including microbiological results. Use of cardiac imaging and the importance of transoesophageal echocardiography to detect complications such as abscesses
- Selection and management of antibiotic therapy
- Role of valve surgery in patients with endocarditis
- Management of complications
- High-risk patients and situations
- Indications for antibiotic prophylaxis

SKILLS

- Select the appropriate use of laboratory investigations and diagnostic procedures, in particular echocardiography
- Select appropriate antibiotic regimen
- Determine the need for, and timing of surgery
- Manage complications
- Prescribe appropriate antibiotic agents for prophylaxis
- Develop a multidisciplinary approach with cardiac surgeons, and microbiologists for diagnosis and management
- Recognise the importance of patient and physician education on prophylaxis

ASSESSMENT & LEARNING METHODS

- Study Day

Heart Failure (HF)

Objectives: To recognise the impact of heart failure on morbidity and mortality in the local and general population

To be able to recognise the different underlying causes of heart failure

To be able to perform specialist assessment and treatment of patients with heart failure

KNOWLEDGE

- Epidemiology, pathophysiology and prognosis of heart failure
- Recognise complications
- International classifications of functional limitation (for example NYHA classes)
- Diagnostic procedures in the patient with known or suspected HF including Natriuretic peptides, Echo, ECG, ambulatory ECG, stress testing, cardiac catheterisation
- Medical management of acute and chronic HF (neurohumoral blockade)
- Device management of HF: Cardiac Resynchronisation Therapy, ICD
- Role of cardiac surgery including transplantation
- Role of exercise training programs in HF patients
- Multidisciplinary care, including home based nursing in HF
- Complications of HF patients
- Appropriate follow up of HF-patients
- Volemic status and the evaluation of renal function and electrolytes in HF patient
- Indications and contraindications for heart transplantation
- Follow up of patients following heart transplantation

SKILLS

- Select and use diagnostic techniques to differentiate the underlying causes of HF
- Deliver lifestyle advice and home based treatment strategy to patients
- Risk stratify HF patients and select appropriate drug and other therapies (Implantable Cardiac Defibrillator (ICD), Cardiac Resynchronisation therapy (CRT), surgery)
- Evaluate HF patients during follow up and appropriately and continuously adjust the treatment plan.
- Emphasise the importance of lifestyle, exercise and weight loss. Help patients to understand the need for long-term complex drug therapy
- Appreciate the importance of rehabilitation
- Develop and sustain supportive relationships with patients with chronic heart failure
- Teach patients, relatives and special nurses in HF treatment.
- Recognise the advantages and limitations of specific heart failure therapies
- Explain, negotiate and overcome the barriers to compliance with heart failure treatments
- Recognise the importance of supportive and palliative care in the heart failure population

ASSESSMENT & LEARNING METHODS

- Study Day

Pulmonary Arterial Hypertension

Objectives: To be able to diagnose pulmonary arterial hypertension (PAH)

To be able to provide optimal management for patients with PAH

To be able to distinguish between the different causes of pulmonary hypertension

KNOWLEDGE

- Pulmonary hypertension and its functional classification
- Epidemiology of PAH (incidence, prevalence, aetiology, genetics, high-risk groups)
- Pathology and pathophysiology of PAH
- Clinical features and diagnostic criteria of PAH
- Identify prognostic markers
- Management of PAH (medical, surgical and interventional including balloon atrial septostomy, indications, contraindications and possible adverse effects)

SKILLS

- Recognise clinical signs suggestive of PAH
- Differentiate between pulmonary hypertension and other diseases with similar symptoms
- Perform and interpret accurate medical assessment (using laboratory analyses including arterial blood gases, cardiac biomarkers; pulmonary function test, ECG, Echocardiography, cardiopulmonary stress-testing, ventilation-perfusion lung scan, spiral CT, magnetic resonance imaging, cardiac catheterisation and pulmonary angiography, lung biopsy)
- Prescribe appropriate medical or invasive (surgical or interventional) management
- Evaluate clinical and haemodynamic prognostic markers
- Establish cooperation with family physicians and other health care professionals for early recognition of primary pulmonary hypertension;
- Effectively collaborate with other medical specialists (family medicine, thoracic surgery, invasive cardiology, imaging) for differential diagnosis of pulmonary hypertension and timely referral to surgical treatment
- Provide genetic counselling to families affected by familial PAH
- Maintain long-term involvement of patients and their family members in supportive activities for healthy life-style adherence and treatment compliance
- Appreciate the increased prevalence of PAH in other medical conditions, such as scleroderma
- Refer to Specialists in PAH when appropriate

ASSESSMENT & LEARNING METHODS

- Study Day

Rehabilitation and Exercise Physiology

Objectives: To be able to provide appropriate rehabilitation and secondary prevention services to patients with cardiovascular disease, specifically acute coronary syndromes, after revascularisation, with stable angina pectoris, patients with high cardiovascular risk, heart failure, diabetes, and others
To be able to evaluate the cardiovascular risk and the exercise capacity of the patients
To be able to evaluate “athletes heart” characteristics

KNOWLEDGE

- Rehabilitation and secondary prevention as integrated components of cardiac care
- Target populations and risk stratification of patients
- Baseline assessment, exercise testing, exercise training, patient education, lifestyle intervention, risk factor management, psychosocial and vocational support
- Exercise and sports physiology, and benefits of exercise training, recognize safety issues
- Psychological aspects of rehabilitation
- specific population challenges
- Describe programmes for specific populations in appropriate settings

SKILLS

- Perform and interpret risk stratification, using and/or performing namely the CPX or the conventional exercise test, the echocardiogram or other tests as indicated
- Prescribe exercise programmes, in terms of mode, intensity, duration and progression, and other lifestyle interventions
- Prescribe cardiovascular preventive medications according to best practice guidelines
- Recognize “athlete’s heart” characteristics (ECG, echo) and use the ESC recommendation for eligibility.
- Recognise rehabilitation and secondary prevention as an integrated component of cardiac care
- Recognise the importance of rehabilitation and secondary prevention for professional (work), personal (including driving, travelling, leisure and sex) and social life among patients with heart disease
- Recognise the interplay of physical and psychological aspects of heart disease
- Recognise the importance of patients and partners/families education
- Recognise the role of other professionals including nurse specialists, physiotherapists, psychologists, dieticians and general practitioners in rehabilitation and secondary prevention
- Recognise the role of sports in Cardiology

ASSESSMENT & LEARNING METHODS

- Study Day

Arrhythmias

Objectives: To be able to assess and treat patients with arrhythmias

- **Electrophysiology:** To have a good understanding of diagnostic and therapeutic electrophysiology in relation to patients with arrhythmias
- **Pacing:** To be able to assess patients for pacing. Be able to pace patients independently and safely
- **Implantable Cardioverter Defibrillator:** (ICD) To be able to assess patients who require ICD implantation

KNOWLEDGE

- Classification and definition:
 - Bradycardias
 - Tachycardias
 - Supraventricular arrhythmias
 - Ventricular arrhythmias
- Epidemiology, pathophysiology, genetics, diagnosis and clinical features of arrhythmias
- Prognosis including risk evaluation
- Principles of electrocardiography and electrophysiology and relevant findings in different arrhythmias, including high risk features in the resting ECG such as long QT, short QT, and Brugada syndrome
- Pharmacology of antiarrhythmic drug therapy
- Principles of invasive and device management of arrhythmias, including
 - catheter ablation
 - Pacemaker therapy (temporary and permanent)
 - ICD therapy
 - Surgical therapy

SKILLS

- Be competent in cardio-pulmonary resuscitation
- Classify arrhythmias by standard electrocardiogram
- Manage acute arrhythmias with drugs and cardioversion
- Prescribe appropriate preventative pharmacological therapy
- Perform and interpret electrocardiographic monitoring.
- Interpret electrophysiological study
- Refer patients for catheter ablation and perform follow-up after catheter ablation
- Pacing & ICD
- Appropriately select and refer patients for biventricular pacing
- Manage the follow up of patients with pacemakers including interrogation and programming of the device
- Appreciate the anxiety suffered by patients with arrhythmias and with some methods of management, e.g. catheter ablation, pacing and ICD
- Appreciate the importance of coexisting structural heart diseases, including coronary artery disease in relation to the outcome and management of arrhythmias
- Appreciate the limitations and potential risks of anti-arrhythmic drug therapy
- Use history, examination and cardiac imaging to determine which patients require an ICD.

ASSESSMENT & LEARNING METHODS

- Study Day
- Document cases
 - Insert temporary pacing electrodes
 - Implantation of permanent single chamber
 - Dual chamber pacemakers

Atrial Fibrillation

Objectives: To be able to carry out specialist assessment and treatment of patients with Atrial Fibrillation (AF).

KNOWLEDGE

- Epidemiology, prognosis, and pathophysiology of atrial fibrillation
- Classify atrial fibrillation
- Diagnosis, clinical features and impact on quality of life
- Associated conditions
- Diagnostic procedures:
 - Minimum evaluation
 - Additional Investigation
- Embolic complications
- Management:
 - anticoagulant therapy
 - rhythm vs. rate control
 - conversion to sinus rhythm
 - prevention of recurrences
 - control of ventricular rate
 - pacemaker-defibrillator therapy
 - catheter ablation
 - surgery

SKILLS

- Perform or interpret:
 - electrocardiogram
 - echocardiogram
 - transoesophageal echocardiography
 - prolonged ECG monitoring (e.g. Holter monitoring) - exercise testing

Management

- Develop appropriate anti-thrombotic strategies for prevention of ischemic stroke and systemic embolism
- Select patients appropriately for cardioversion and perform competently: pharmacological electrical
- Perform rhythm control therapy: pharmacological
- Perform rate control therapy: pharmacological
- Select and refer patients for
 - electrophysiological studies
 - atrial catheter ablation
 - surgical ablation
 - pacemaker and defibrillator implantation
 - AV junction ablation and pacing
- Appreciate the anxiety patients suffer with AF, particularly in case of certain methods of management, e.g. catheter ablation and pacing
- Recognise the importance of coexisting structural heart diseases for the outcome and management of AF
- Appreciate the limitations and potential risks of antiarrhythmic drug therapy of AF
- Appreciate the importance of anticoagulant therapy
- Appreciate the palliative nature and potential adverse effects of nonpharmacological therapies
- Appreciate newer methods for treating Atrial Fibrillation and how to refer patients for specialist treatment when appropriate, such as percutaneous or surgical ablation.

ASSESSMENT & LEARNING METHODS

- Study Day

Syncope

Objectives: To define syncope

To differentiate syncope from the other causes of loss of consciousness

To assess and treat of patients with syncope

KNOWLEDGE

- Epidemiology and pathophysiology and prevalence of different causes of syncope
- Causes of loss of consciousness (e.g. Neurally-mediated reflex syncope, Stokes Adams attack, orthostatic hypotension)
- Prognosis
- Diagnostic evaluation
 - Strategy of evaluation
 - Initial evaluation (history, physical)
 - examination, baseline ECG)
 - Echocardiogram
 - Exercise stress testing
 - Tilt testing
 - Electrocardiographic monitoring (Long term ECG, external and implantable loop recorders)
 - Electrophysiological testing
- Treatments: device based or pharmacological for
 - Neurally-mediated (reflex) syncope
 - Orthostatic hypotension
 - Cardiac arrhythmias as primary cause
 - Structural cardiac or cardiopulmonary disease

SKILLS

Diagnosis

- Perform or interpret:
 - electrocardiogram
 - echocardiogram
 - carotid sinus massage
 - tilt testing
 - electrocardiographic monitoring (Long term ECG, external and implantable loop recorder)
 - electrophysiological test
 - exercise stress testing
 - cardiac catheterization and coronary angiography
- Perform risk stratification

Treatment

- Select appropriate treatment:
 - Education and reassurance
 - Physical manoeuvres
 - Drug therapy
 - Device implantation
- Appreciate the impact of syncope on the patients' lifestyle
- Appreciate that syncope is a transient symptom and not a disease
- Consult with other specialists
- Recognise the diagnostic criteria for the causes of syncope
- Recognise appropriate investigations in the various subgroups of patients with syncope
- Recognise how patients with syncope should be risk stratified
- Appreciate how patients with syncope should be hospitalized.
- Recognise treatments that are likely to be effective in preventing syncopal recurrences

Diagnosis

- Appreciate that the diagnosis of syncope is often presumptive
- Appreciate that the diagnostic value (sensitivity and specificity) of tests for syncope is imperfect
- Appreciate that observations during the event are of key importance
- Appreciate that the diagnostic yield of the tests depends on their appropriateness of their selection (pretest probability)

Therapy

- Recognise that most patients do not need any specific treatment apart from education and reassurance
- Recognise that drug therapies are often ineffective
- Recognise the risk-benefit and the cost efficacy of pacemaker, ICD and catheter ablation therapy

ASSESSMENT & LEARNING METHODS

- Study Day

Sudden Cardiac Death (SCD) and Resuscitation

Objectives: Sudden Cardiac Death: To manage patients with threatened or aborted SCD, including risk stratification, investigation and treatment

Resuscitation: To be able to carry out basic and advanced cardiac life support

KNOWLEDGE

Sudden Cardiac Death

- Definition of SCD, epidemiology, aetiology, pathology, pathophysiology and clinical presentation of the different conditions which may lead to SCD
- Principles of acute management of patients with SCD
- Principles of diagnostic work up and risk stratification of survivors; in particular, recognize ECG signs indicative of high SCD risk (e.g., long QT, short QT, Brugada syndrome etc.) and know how to further evaluate patients with these signs and their families
- Appropriate long-term therapeutic options
- Current recommendations for secondary prevention of SCD (e.g., indications for preventive ICD implantation in patients with ischemic cardiomyopathy)
- Identify, risk stratify and manage individuals at elevated risk, including family members of SCD patients

Resuscitation

- Explain the methods and guidelines of basic and advanced life support including airway management, appropriate drug use, defibrillation and pacing

SKILLS

Sudden Cardiac Death

- Perform resuscitation (see below)
- Interpret prodromal symptoms, underlying causes and prognosis of a SCD-Survivor
- Perform and interpret risk stratification using the following techniques (Holter-ECG, LV function, Echo, Cath, EP, heart rate variability)
- Follow up SCD-Survivors

Resuscitation

- Identify the cause of collapse
- Perform BLS (CPR) and ACLS including different skills.
- Lead and coordinate the actions of an ACLS-Team
- Teach basic life support (BLS)

Sudden Cardiac Death

- Recognise the urgency of the management of cardiac arrest,
- Recognise the importance of prodromal symptoms.
- Appreciate patient and family anxieties
- Appreciate the importance of patient education and secondary prevention
- Understand the medical, psychological, and social problems arising in patients with end-stage heart failure and frequent ICD activation

Resuscitation

- Appreciate the importance of working in a team with laypersons, paramedics and other medical personnel during resuscitation (BLS and ACLS).
- Understand the importance of regular audit of the basic and advanced life support programme

ASSESSMENT & LEARNING METHODS

- Study Day
- ACLS

The Cardiac Consult

Objectives: Peri-operative cardiac consult for non-cardiac surgery

- To select appropriate preoperative imaging techniques from the following four imaging modalities for cardiac risk evaluation.
 - Resting/stress echocardiography
 - Resting/stress nuclear perfusion imaging
 - Cardiac computed tomography (CT)
 - Cardiovascular magnetic resonance (CMR)
- To integrate information regarding the estimated effects of surgical stress during operation.
- To integrate information on the long-term impact of cardiac disease on outcome in patients should they live long enough to enjoy the benefits of surgery.
- Cardiac consult in the patient with ischaemic neurologic symptoms:
 - Search for potential sources of cardiac embolism, and advise proper management
 - Search for other cardiovascular manifestations of atherosclerosis, in particular coronary heart disease and peripheral arterial disease, and advise proper management

KNOWLEDGE

- Understand that preoperative tests should only be done if they will influence perioperative or long-term cardiac treatment and risk management, without delaying surgery if test results will not change management
- Imaging techniques to assess
- Left ventricular ejection fraction at rest
- Valve abnormalities (stenosis/insufficiency)
- Calculation of valve stenosis gradient.
- Estimation of valvular regurgitation fraction.
- Coronary artery disease, new wall motion abnormalities during stress. The severity, extent and ischemic heart rate threshold during stress testing.
- Intraoperative cardiac monitoring for volume and ischemia status.
- Non-invasive coronary angiogram
- Understand the mechanism, likelihood, and potential treatment options of cardiac and aortic sources of embolism
- Frequency of concomitant coronary and other arterial disease in the presence of ischemic neurologic disease
- Realize the frequency of cardiac symptoms, problems and considerations in other diseases, (e.g. pulmonary disease, connective tissue disorders) and be able to provide proper management advice

SKILLS

- Consider heart valve replacement in patients with severe stenosis prior to surgery.
- Consider coronary revascularization in selected patients with extensive stress induced ischemia prior to surgery.
- Consider immediate coronary revascularization in patients with intraoperative hemodynamic instability,
- ST-segment changes and new wall motion abnormalities.
- Communicate to patients the implications of the results of preoperative tests on perioperative management. Indicate the potential complications of delaying the index surgical procedure and the benefit of additional (invasive) cardiac therapy.
- Communicate with other specialties involved in perioperative care (anesthesiologist, surgeon, and intensivist) to individualize patient care.
- Recognize strengths and limitations of each imaging modality.
- Use echocardiography, including transoesophageal echocardiography, and other techniques to search for potential sources of embolism
- Propose a diagnostic work-up of the patient for other atherosclerotic manifestations, and devise proper therapy and risk management
- Appreciate that potential sources of embolism are frequently of low probability (in particular, patent foramen ovale) and commonly co-exist
- Understand the importance of diagnosing and treating co-existing cardiovascular atherosclerotic disease
- Anticipate cardiovascular problems accompanying primarily non-cardiac diseases
- Cooperate closely with other disciplines and offer prompt support for their needs and questions

ASSESSMENT & LEARNING METHODS

- Mini-CEX

Documentation of Minimum Requirements for Training

- These are the minimum number of cases you are asked to document as part of your training. It is recommended you seek opportunities to attain a higher level of exposure as part of your self-directed learning and development of expertise.
- You should expect the demands of your post to exceed the minimum required number of cases documented for training.
- If you are having difficulty meeting a particular requirement, please contact your specialty coordinator

Curriculum Requirement	Required/ Desirable	Minimum Requirement	Reporting Period	Form Name
Section 1 - Training Plan				
Personal Goals Plan (Copy of agreed Training Plan for your current training year signed by both Trainee & Trainer)	Required	1	Training Post	Personal Goals Form
On Call Rota	Required	1	Training Post	Clinical Activities
Section 2 - Training Activities				
Outpatient Clinics				
Cardiology	Required	90	Training Programme	Clinics
Sub-Specialty	Desirable	3	Training Programme	
Ward Rounds/Consultations	Required	100	Training Programme	Clinical Activities
Emergencies/Complicated Cases				
(Diagnosis of nature of problem and its presentation, emergency case for investigation)	Desirable	20	Training Programme	Cases
Procedures/Practical Skills/Surgical Skills				
Exercise ECGs (minimum supervise and analyse 80 per year)	Required	240	Training Programme	Procedures, Skills & DOPS
Holter ECGs 2	Required	100	Training Programme	
Basic Echocardiography	Required	75	Training Programme	
Basic Electrophysiology	Desirable	1	Training Programme	
Observe Basic PTCA	Desirable	20	Training Programme	
Basic Cardiac Pacing	Desirable	10	Training Programme	
Coronary Angiography	Desirable	75	Training Programme	
Right heart catheterisations	Desirable	5	Training Programme	
Defib /BiVent implants	Desirable	10	Training Programme	
Investigations of adult with congenital HD	Desirable	1	Training Programme	
CT Angiography	Desirable	30	Training Programme	

Additional/Special Experience Gained	Desirable	1	Training Programme	Clinical Activities
Relatively Unusual Cases	Required	5	Training Programme	Cases
Chronic Cases/Long term care	Desirable	60	Training Programme	Cases
ICU/CCU Cases	Required	60	Training Programme	Cases
Section 3 - Educational Activities			Training Programme	
Mandatory Courses				Teaching Attendance
ACLS	Required	1	Training Programme	
Ethics Foundations	Required	1	Training Programme	
Ethics for general medicine specialties	Required	1	Training Programme	
Health Research – An Introduction	Required	1	Training Programme	
HST Leadership in Clinical Practice	Required	1	Training Programme	
Mastering Communications	Required	1	Training Programme	
Performing Audit	Required	1	Training Programme	
Radiation Protection Course (In hospital)	Required	1	Training Programme	
Wellness Matters	Desirable	1	Training Programme	
Non – Mandatory Courses	Desirable	1	Training Programme	Teaching Attendance
Study Days	Required	9	Training Programme	Teaching Attendance
National/International meetings	Desirable	2	Training Programme	Additional Professional Experience
In-house activities			Training Programme	Attendance at hospital based learning
Grand Rounds	Required	10	Training Programme	
Cardiology Meeting	Required	60	Training Programme	
Journal Club	Required	2	Training Programme	
MDT Meetings	Required	20	Training Programme	
Seminar/ Lecture	Required	2	Training Programme	
Examinations				
MRCPI Exam or equivalent	Desirable	1	Training Programme	Examinations
Delivery of Teaching minimum 1 formal teaching session per month from each category: Lecture Tutorial Bed side Teaching	Required	10	Training Programme	Delivery of Teaching
Research Activities	Desirable	1	Training Programme	Research Activities

Audit Activities (1 per year to either start or complete, Quality Improvement (QI) projects can be uploaded against audit)	Required	1	Year of Training	Audit & QI
Publications	Desirable	1	Training Programme	Additional Professional Experience
Presentations	Desirable	1	Training Programme	Additional Professional Experience
National/International meetings	Desirable	1	Training Programme	Additional Professional Experience
Committee Attendance	Desirable	1	Training Programme	Additional Professional Experience
Additional Qualifications	Desirable	1	Training Programme	Additional Professional Experience
Section 4 - Assessments				
CBD	Required	1	Year of Training	Case Based Discussion
DOPS				Procedures, Skills & DOPS
Stress Test	Required	1	Training Programme	
Transthoracic Echo	Desirable	1	Training Programme	
Cardiac Catheterisation	Desirable	1	Training Programme	
Mini-CEX (At least two Mini-CEX assessments)	Required	2	Year of Training	Mini CEX
Quarterly Assessments/End-of-Post Assessments	Required	4	Year of Training	Quarterly Assessments/End-of-Post Assessments
End of year evaluation	Required	1	Year of Training	End of year evaluation