Professional Diploma in
Geriatric Medicine
Online

CURRICULUM

ROYAL
COLLEGE OF
PHYSICIANS
OF IRELAND

iheed
Cambridge Education Group

Contents

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

The program emphasizes a patient-centered approach to clinical decision making in medicine for the older person. It provides a supportive, richly informative, and accessible educational opportunity for healthcare professionals wishing to upskill or refresh their understanding of how common geriatric conditions present and are managed.

The programme aims to develop clinically focused diagnostic skills through the use of interactive patient cases. It allows for opportunities to practice and develop diagnostic skills in a highly engaging format. It enhances the skills required to identify important clinical features to develop a diagnosis and formulate effective management plans for patients.

This programme brings together senior clinicians to review a wide range of issues affecting older people and covers clinical and non-clinical challenges faced as the global population ages. The expanding role of the multidisciplinary team and the importance of expert communication and teamwork between clinicians across clinical sites and settings is emphasised throughout this programme.

The duration of the Diploma in Medicine for the Older Person is 9 months and learners will engage with online learning material, review video lectures, access readings, ask questions, and complete assignments online as well as attend live virtual classroom activities for discussions, activities, and seminars.

Minimum Intended Programme Learning outcomes

On successful completion of this programme, learners will be able to:

- Apply current international evidence and best-practice principles in the treatment and management of concurrent physical and cognitive conditions in acute, primary care and community care settings, employing both multi and intra-disciplinary models of care

- Explain the management of chronic diseases in the older person

- Communicate effectively with the older patient and their families

- Identify risks and consequences of falls and syncope

- Explain the diagnosis and management/care pathways of stroke and other neurological disorders

- Describe the common psychiatric and behavioural issues that present in older age

- Explain rehabilitation, end of life care, palliative medicine, safeguarding against abuse and the legal aspects of caring for older people

- Design an Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI) age friendly healthcare system

MODULE 1
INTRODUCTION TO AGING AND FRAILTY

Module Aims & Objectives:

This module provides detailed knowledge of the impact of an aging society on global health and professional principles underpinning appropriate care of the older person. It also provides detailed knowledge of the impact of the aging process which make older people susceptible to frailty and multi-morbidity and appropriate management of their needs.

On successful completion of the module, learners will demonstrate expertise in core areas of care of the older person. Through tutor-led instruction, self-paced online content, peer-to-peer engagement and robust assessment it aims to enable learners to make appropriate, evidence-based, patient centred, clinical decisions within the scope of their professional practice.

Minimum Intended Module Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this programme, learners will be able to:

1. Evaluate the impact of an increasingly aging population on global health and outline core concepts in care of the older person within the context of the "Geriatric 5Ms".

2. Apply the principles of quality improvement to the care of the older person.

3. Consider the medicolegal aspects of care for the older person which might apply within their own geographical healthcare setting.

4. Apply an integrated approach to the care of the older person and adapt the comprehensive geriatric assessment (CGA) based on differing healthcare setting requirements and the needs of the older person.

5. Classify gait disorders and define the approach to the investigation and management of falls

6. Apply current knowledge of diagnostics and treatments to assess and optimize bone health in the older person.

7. Assess frailty using the Rockwood Frailty Score or equivalents and examine the role of CGA in the management of frail older adults.

8. Outline a structured approach to assessing older adults with urinary or fecal incontinence.

Module Assessment:

Video Assessment: **Formative**

Examination: **100%**

MODULE 2
NEUROLOGICAL & PSYCHIATRIC DISORDERS

Module Aims & Objectives:

The module provides learners with detailed knowledge of neurological and psychiatric conditions, including those requiring long-term management. On successful completion of the module, learners will demonstrate expertise in core areas of care of the older person.

Through tutor-led instruction, self-paced online content, peer-to-peer engagement and robust assessment it aims to enable learners to make appropriate, evidence-based, patient centred, clinical decisions within the scope of their professional practice.

Minimum Intended Module Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this programme, learners will be able to:

1. Demonstrate the ability to assess a patient's history and perform an examination of the older person specific to both neurological and cognitive domains.

2. Recognize the importance of delirium as a potential medical emergency that is managed through rapid screening and assessment, prompt investigation and management.

3. Recognize dementia syndromes and NCSD and differentiate between anxiety/depression vs dementia and delirium vs dementia.

4. Diagnose, assess, and manage acute stroke and stroke mimics, within a multidisciplinary team and describe early, goal-directed stroke rehabilitation.

5. Apply current guidelines to diagnose and manage Parkinson's disease and other movement disorders, and implement strategies to prevent deterioration of Parkinson's and movement disorders symptoms.

6. Use a structured framework to differentiate between seizure and syncope and to investigate and manage patients presenting these conditions appropriately.

Module Assessment:

Video assessment: **20%**

Examination: **80%**

MODULE 3
REHABILITATION AND COMMUNITY CARE

Module Aims & Objectives:

The module enables learners to analyse the physical, psychological, social and environmental aspects of rehabilitation and community-based care.

On successful completion of the module, learners will demonstrate expertise in core areas of care of the older person.

Through tutor-led instruction, self-paced online content, peer-to-peer engagement and robust assessment it aims to enable learners to make appropriate, evidence-based, patient centred, clinical decisions within the scope of their professional practice.

Minimum Intended Module Learning Outcomes

1. Apply the principles of de-prescribing and understand the utility of tools such as prioritisation toolkits.

2. Evaluate the assisted living technology devices commonly available and in use.

3. Describe common presentations to the older person multidisciplinary team, including initial assessment and management of cognition.

4. Analyse the role of nutrition and food demands of older persons.

5. Evaluate evidence of the prevalence, burden and management of oropharyngeal dysphagia and its malnutrition consequences.

6. Evaluate the strengths and limitations of advanced care planning and collaboratively create rehabilitation, long term care and palliative goals with patients, their caregivers and the inter-professional team.

Module Assessment:

Video Assessment: **20%**

Examination: **80%**

PROGRAMME STRUCTURE

MODULE	MODULE TITLE	TOPICS	ASSESSMENT	WEIGHTING*
1	**Aging and frailty**	1. Aging and the individual. 2. Aging, society, and the healthcare system (IHI). 3. Quality improvement. 4. Ethics and medicolegal aspects of care of the older person. 5. Integrated care including CGA. 6. Gait disorders and falls. 7. Bone health. 8. Frailty screening and multi-morbidity. 9. Incontinence.	**Examination**	**100%**
2	**Neurocognitive and psychiatric disorders**	10. Brain health assessment including neurological examination. 11. Delirium. 12. Dementia. 13. Stroke - presentations and acute assessment. 14. Stroke - complications and secondary prevention. 15. Parkinson's disease and Parkinsonism. 16. Depression, anxiety, psychosis and NCSD in later life. 17. Seizures and epilepsy in older adults. 18. Syncope and Vertigo.	**Video Assessment and Examination**	**100%**
3	**Rehabilitation and community care**	19. Polypharmacy and pharmacokinetics. 20. Medication review. 21. Nutrition assessment and management in the community. 22. Supporting people with dementia in the community. 23. Assistive Living Technology. 24. Rehabilitation. 25. Long term care. 26. Palliative care. 27. Care planning.	**Video Assessment and Examination**	**100%**

MODULE 1 CONTENT, ORGANISATION AND STRUCTURE

Introduction to the aging individual, frailty, multimorbidity and the regulatory and legal aspects that affect care of older people

SECTION	TOPICS	ENABLED LEARNING OUTCOMES
1	**Aging and the individual**	• Describe the physical and psychological effects of normal aging for the individual. • Distinguish between normal aging and pathological decline in function and cognition. • Examine the concept of frailty and distinguish between frail and non-frail adults. • Discuss the need to have a holistic, multidisciplinary view of the older person using a standardized framework such as the 5Ms. • Discuss the communication skills required of healthcare professionals involved with care of the older person.
2	**Aging, society, and the healthcare system**	• Evaluate the impact of an increasingly aging population on global health. • Explain how age-associated illnesses and frailty lead to increased need for health and social care systems. • Describe how health and social care systems need to adapt to meet the needs of older people. • Identify and compare older adult care settings and services and discover potential barriers to healthcare access. • Outline the unique role of healthcare professionals working with older people. • Analyse the role and importance of the multidisciplinary team in the care of the elderly and understand how MDT meetings can be optimized.
3	**Quality improvement**	• Describe the domains of quality in healthcare. • Explain what is meant by quality improvement in healthcare. • Apply the principles of quality improvement to care of the older person. • Evaluate how quality of care can be improved through healthcare systems. • Explain how elements in the healthcare system interact and how that can impact healthcare quality. • Describe the common tools and methodologies used in quality improvement projects.

MODULE 1 CONTENT, ORGANISATION AND STRUCTURE

Introduction to the aging individual, frailty, multimorbidity and the regulatory and legal aspects that affect care of older people

SECTION	TOPICS	ENABLED LEARNING OUTCOMES
4	**Ethics and medicolegal aspects of care of the older person**	• Explain the general ethical principles underlying clinical practice and the medicolegal aspects of care. • Explain the intersection between ethics, law, professional standards, culture, and evidence-based practice. • Describe the major medicolegal issues in the care of older people. • Demonstrate an understanding of informed consent. • Deconstruct the different approaches to decision making capacity, including approaches such as guardianship, decision making support, and best interest decision making. • Summarize the key points around confidentiality. • Differentiate between end-of-life issues, including "do not attempt resuscitation," palliative care, and advance healthcare directives. • Provide information to peers about the legal system around these issues in your own context.
5	**Integrated care and comprehensive geriatric assessment**	• Examine the concept of integrated care in organizing and managing health services for older adults. • Distinguish between multidisciplinary and transdisciplinary or interdisciplinary teams. • Determine pathways or processes that would improve the patient journey by reducing their number of healthcare contacts. • Outline the components of the CGA and discuss the value of each component within the context of the IHI age-friendly healthcare system. • Adapt the comprehensive geriatric assessment (CGA) for your healthcare setting. • Map a patient journey across all the healthcare settings the frail older person must navigate to meet their need and identify opportunities to smooth transition of care across each setting.
6	**Gait disorders and falls**	• Describe the complex interaction involved in falls including hazards, functional status and disease processes. • Apply individualized, multifactorial risk assessment and intervention to patients at risk of falls. • Describe the gait cycle and main features of gait, relating them to the physiological systems involved. • Investigate gait disorders using a clinically oriented approach and apply appropriate interventions. • Explain the pathophysiology of osteoporosis and apply relevant treatment. • Explain issues around drug treatment, including monitoring, duration of treatment, and future drug possibilities.

MODULE 1 CONTENT, ORGANISATION AND STRUCTURE

Introduction to the aging individual, frailty, multimorbidity and the regulatory and legal aspects that affect care of older people

SECTION	TOPICS	ENABLED LEARNING OUTCOMES
7	**Bone health**	• Compare relevant investigations into bone health including comprehensive bone health histories, fracture risk assessment tools, and bone mineral density measurement.
8	**Frailty screening and multi-morbidity**	• Define frailty, multimorbidity, and chronic disease in the context of older adults and their interactions with healthcare systems. • Analyze models for understanding frailty and demonstrate application of the clinical frailty scale. • Assess the role of CGA in the management of older people undergoing orthopedic procedures and treatment for cardiovascular disease and cancer. • Evaluate how CGA is used to bring about improved outcomes for older people.
9	**Incontinence**	• Demonstrate an evidence-based approach to evaluating and outline a structured approach to assessing older adults with incontinence. • Apply a patient-centered approach to manage incontinence.

MODULE 2 CONTENT, ORGANISATION AND STRUCTURE
Neurocognitive and psychiatric disorders

SECTION	TOPICS	ENABLED LEARNING OUTCOMES
1	**Brain health assessment including neurological examination**	• Explain how to take a history of the older person that is specifically attuned to the neurological and cognitive domains. • Describe how to perform a neurological examination of an older person. • Apply commonly used cognitive assessment tools. • Differentiate examination findings in Parkinson's disease, multiple sclerosis, and peripheral neuropathy.
2	**Delirium**	• Describe the epidemiology of delirium. • Identify the common causative factors of delirium in older people. • Screen and assess for delirium. • Devise a management plan for a person with delirium.
3	**Dementia**	• Identify the incidence, prevalence, and economic and social impact of dementia. • Describe the pathophysiology and presentation of common dementias. • Plan the investigation and management of older people presenting with cognitive concerns. • Assess the cognitive spectrum of older people. • Describe how to disclose a dementia diagnosis and how to provide post-diagnostic support. • Identify the risk factors associated with dementia. • Explain how to minimize the risks of dementia.
4	**Stroke - presentations and acute assessments**	• Differentiate between stroke, transient ischemic attack (TIA), and conditions that can mimic stroke. • Assess severity of stroke using the National Institute of Health Stroke Scale (NIHSS). • Order appropriate brain imaging to differentiate ischemic and hemorrhagic stroke.
5	**Stroke - complications and secondary prevention**	• Decide if IV thrombolysis or endovascular therapy is indicated within recommended time window of 30 minutes after arrival in hospital. • Prevent post-stroke complications on the acute stroke unit. • Explore patient priorities regarding goals of care, including end of life, acute stroke therapies, rehabilitation, discharge destination, and nutrition.

SECTION	TOPICS	ENABLED LEARNING OUTCOMES
6	**Parkinson's disease and Parkinsonism**	• Formulate differential diagnoses for symptoms of Parkinson's disease and parkinsonism. • Interpret relevant investigation to differentiate between idiopathic Parkinson's disease, other causes of parkinsonism, and other movement disorders. • Select appropriate initial pharmacological therapy for idiopathic Parkinson's disease and counsel patients on potential side effects. • Educate patients, their caregivers and members of the inter-professional team on common causes of deteriorating symptoms of parkinsonism. • Implement strategies to prevent deterioration of parkinsonism symptoms in healthcare settings.
7	**Depression, anxiety, psychosis and NCSD in later life**	• Discuss the prevalence of mental disorders in later life. • Analyze the barriers to seeking help in older adults and identify key factors which may limit recognition of mental disorders in older adults. • Screen for, diagnose, and manage late-life depression. • Recognize and manage late onset psychosis. • Recognize behavioral and psychological symptoms of dementia and identify the key impacts of NCSD on the person with dementia and their carers. • Describe non-pharmacological interventions for NCSD. • Identify the pitfalls of psychotropic prescribing in older adults.
8	**Seizures and epilepsy in older adults**	• Discuss the etiology and management of seizures in the older person. • Differentiate between seizure and syncope presentations.
9	**Syncope and vertigo**	• Describe the classification and mechanisms of syncope. • Discuss the appropriate investigations and risk stratification as per the latest European Society of Cardiology (ESC) guidelines. • Provide an overview of treatment options in syncope according to classification. • Diagnose patients presenting with vertigo based on history.

SECTION	TOPICS	ENABLED LEARNING OUTCOMES
1	**Polypharmacy and pharmacokinetics**	• Explain the factors that influence polypharmacy. • Differentiate between appropriate and inappropriate polypharmacy. • Describe the pharmacokinetic and pharmacodynamics changes that influence how drugs are handled in the older person.
2	**Medication review**	• Explain the role of prioritization toolkits in practice. • Identify high-risk medication including medication with a high anticholinergic burden. • Outline the principles of medication reconciliation and optimization. • Identify deprescribing opportunities in patient care.
3	**Nutrition assessment and management in the community**	• dentify factors impacting on the nutritional status of older people. • Appraise best practices in the assessment and management of nutrition in the older person. • Describe how to assess dysphagia in older persons. • Explain how to manage an older person with dysphagia. • Evaluate the most important aspects for healthy eating guidelines for the older person to avoid malnutrition. • Describe the role of the clinician in providing nutrition support within institutional and community care settings.
4	**Supporting people with dementia in the community**	• Describe how cognitive impairment concerns can be addressed in the community. • Discuss how people with dementia can be supported in the community. • Summarize key points related to the legal aspects of driving. • Recognize and assess for cognitive impairments that may impact on driving ability. • Deliver the news to an older person who is no longer able to drive.
5	**Assistive Living Technology**	• Categorize the types of assistive technologies available to support older people and people living with dementia. • Identify opportunities where assistive technologies can support and compensate prospective users. • Recognize the value of shared decision-making and person-centered care when considering assistive technologies. • Apply a multifactorial, individualized approach to assessment of patients with a view to matching them with appropriate assistive technologies. • Describe the potential ethical dilemmas involved in the use of assistive technologies. • Factor in the differentiation between real risks vs. perceived risks in relation to telecare and monitoring assistive technologies. • Support patients to access assistive technology services.

SECTION	TOPICS	ENABLED LEARNING OUTCOMES
6	**Rehabilitation**	• Evaluate the physical, psychological, social, and environmental aspects of rehabilitation and community-based care. • Describe common presentations to the older person multidisciplinary team (MDT), including initial assessment and management of morbidities. • Appraise the problems inherent in identifying realistic goals and how common conflicts in goal setting can arise within the sphere of rehabilitation services. • Evaluate the principles and guidelines of systems of classification, frameworks, tools, and other resources for measuring disease severity, independence, performance, capacity, and functionality. • Recognize appropriate settings for and various options surrounding the delivery of rehabilitation services and recommend resources and clinical tips to patients. • Evaluate a rehabilitation service's key performance indicators (KPIs) and development goals.
7	**Long term care**	• Discuss the purpose and content of legislation governing long-term care in your own context, specifically in relation to capacity and consent, autonomy, and safeguarding. • Identify seven types of abuse, recognize signs of older person abuse, and outline how to manage a case of elder abuse in a residential setting. • Define autonomy and justify its importance in terms of residents in long-term care. • Describe the processes required to complete the assessment application for long-term care. • Outline the approach to funding and providing long-term care in your own context.
8	**Palliative care**	• Describe how the principles of palliative care relate to the care of older people.
9	**Care planning**	• Discuss various approaches to care planning, including advance care planning, anticipatory care planning, and case management. • Examine the potential benefits and limitations of approaches to care planning. • Describe the components of care planning. • Evaluate approaches to care planning in the context of specific patient cases. • Outline an approach to advance care planning in one area of your healthcare system. • Illustrate an approach to care planning through a case from your own practice, mapping a patient journey across all the healthcare settings the frail older person must navigate to meet their need.

Who is iheed?

iheed is leading the way in delivering high-quality **online medical education**. Built by doctors and healthcare professionals, we have **over 30,000 users** across the globe, and believe that effective, accessible medical education is the key to providing better health outcomes worldwide. **iheed** is a division of Cambridge Education Group.

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Any questions?

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