



K E E L E
UNIVERSITY

**POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMA / MSC
IN RHEUMATOLOGY NURSING**

Course Information

– May 2011 –

CONTENTS

POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMA/MSC IN RHEUMATOLOGY NURSING	1
ENTRY REQUIREMENTS	1
COURSE STRUCTURE.....	1
COURSE DELIVERY	2
THE COURSE TEAM.....	2
MODULES	3
An Introduction To Clinical Effectiveness in Rheumatology Nursing (CLM40021)	3
Physical Assessment in Rheumatology Nursing (CLM40022).....	3
Drug Therapy in Rheumatological Practice (CLM40023).....	3
Psychological and Social Aspects of Care in Rheumatological Practice (CLM40024)	4
Clinical Leadership (CLM40026).....	4
Physical Assessment (CLM40066 OPTIONAL MODULE).....	4
Principles and Practice of Joint and Soft Tissue Injection (PTY40015 OPTIONAL MODULE).....	4
Research (CLM40025)	4
Master's Option (CLM40043).....	5
COURSE FEES	5
CONTACT DETAILS.....	5

Postgraduate Diploma/MSc in Rheumatology Nursing

Over the last decade there has been a major increase in the number of nurses engaged in specialist roles within rheumatology. This development has seen an expansion in the clinical skills used by such practitioners within the rheumatology field. Many rheumatology nurses practising at a specialist/advanced level undertake assessment and review clinics, drug surveillance and counselling clinics, and are involved in patient and multi-disciplinary education programmes. Not surprisingly, these health professionals often express a desire to extend their knowledge base to complement their clinical skills.

The overall aim of the Diploma/MSc in Rheumatology Nursing is to facilitate the development of the skills, knowledge and attitudes relevant to advanced nursing practice in rheumatology. This will include the engagement of rheumatology nurses in aspects of drug therapy, clinical assessment, psycho-social issues and appraisal of research so that they may be able to analyse, reflect on and evaluate clinical practice in these areas, and enhance their own professional capabilities. At the same time the aim is to equip these nurses with the necessary skills to appraise and evaluate research, and to design and undertake their own research projects.

The course's aims and objectives are closely aligned to national developments in Rheumatology nurse specialism, which should prove attractive to employers who are seeking high quality courses for Nurses to be sponsored to attend.

Course participants will already be experienced practitioners in the field of rheumatology. The course will encourage an analytical and questioning approach to the care of people with Rheumatoid Arthritis. It will lead students to evaluate their current practice and to adopt innovative practice, based on critical appraisal of research and development of evidence-based practice developing from such evaluation of research.

Entry Requirements

All candidates will have a Nurse qualification, current registration with the NMC, and significant experience of the nursing management of patients presenting with rheumatological disorders. Candidates will normally have either a degree (at least second class honours) or an equivalent professional qualification such as a postgraduate diploma, and appropriate experience.

Candidates will normally be required to:

- provide a portfolio of their previous experience along with their completed application form
- attend an interview

Course Structure

The course is designed to be undertaken by part time students over a two year period. As participants will be attending from all over the country, the course will run over a number of short intensive blocks, each lasting two to five days. This pattern of teaching is compatible with sponsorship, enabling release from full-time employment to be managed whilst maintaining a full clinical role. It is recommended that provision is made for protected time, outside direct teaching contact time, or paid work, for students' private study.

Successful completion of the taught component will lead to students being awarded a Post-graduate Diploma in Rheumatology Nursing. Subject to successful completion of the taught course element, candidates may proceed to an MSc by means of a dissertation on a piece of research on a topic of the student's choice, arising from issues raised during the course.

Modules can also be undertaken on a 'stand alone' basis for those students not wanting to obtain a Postgraduate Diploma but are seeking to extend their knowledge and skills in a particular area.

Course Delivery

The main academic venue for this course will be the Staffordshire Rheumatology Centre at the Haywood Hospital in Stoke. Courses will be taught through a mixture of lectures, interactive tutorials, problem-based learning, workshops, formal presentations and guided study. Written handouts and visual aids will be used throughout the course. Course preparation and study for assessment requirements will be made explicit throughout.

The Course Team

- Sarah Ryan - is a Consultant Nurse in Rheumatology and is involved in clinical, educational and research activities. Her doctorate work involved exploring patient's perception of control in Rheumatoid Arthritis. Sarah's clinical interests include the management of chronic musculoskeletal pain, patient education and the development of coping skills. Sarah has published widely within rheumatology, editing a book on drug therapy for Rheumatology Nurses and is co-editor with Jackie Hill of a book for Community Nurses managing patients with rheumatological conditions. She is Editor of the journal 'Musculoskeletal Care'.
- Andy Hassell - is a Consultant Rheumatologist and Director of Undergraduate Programmes at Keele University Medical School. He qualified at Manchester University and completed his training in General Medicine at DGH's and teaching hospitals in the North West. His rheumatology training took place in Manchester, Birmingham and Stoke and he held a consultant's post at Cannock prior to taking up his current post in 1997. His clinical interests include the management and outcome of patients with rheumatoid arthritis, the diagnosis and management of reactive arthritis and the management of osteoporosis. He has developed a major interest in education and is responsible for the West Midlands Rheumatology SpR training programme. He was Associate Dean (Education) in the West Midlands Deanery 2002–6, and is currently Chair of the Arthritis Research Campaign (arc) Education Strategy Group.
- Cath Thwaites - is a Lecturer in Rheumatology Nursing in the School of Nursing and Midwifery, Keele University. She is involved with teaching pre- and post-registered nursing students, allied health professionals and medical students. Clinical practice is based in the Outpatient Department at the Haywood Hospital. Previous rheumatology experience includes working as a Ward Sister and Nurse Practitioner in Rheumatology, gaining expertise in both inpatient and outpatient settings. Cath's MSc work has explored the experiences of Rheumatology Nurses running telephone helplines.
- Kay Stevenson - qualified from the Queen Elizabeth School of Physiotherapy in 1988. She worked in Musculoskeletal Physiotherapy in Stoke for several years prior to taking up a position as a Lecturer/Practitioner and subsequently her current post of Honorary Lecturer / Consultant Therapist at Keele University and the University Hospital of North Staffordshire NHS Trust.

Modules

The course content has been developed in the light of feedback (by questionnaire and verbal) from rheumatology nurses practising in the UK.

Year One

Module 1: An Introduction To Clinical Effectiveness in Rheumatology Nursing (CLM40021)

Aim: An essential component of advanced nursing practice is the implementation of evidence based practice. This constitutes one of the cornerstones of clinical effectiveness. Many rheumatology nurses practising at an advanced level have had few opportunities to explore the evidence base underlying their discipline. This module seeks to address this gap and to provide the student with an understanding of how to appraise clinical evidence. This module will form an essential foundation for the rest of the course. Students will develop skills in critical appraisal, in understanding statistical principles and will gain a practical insight into the research process. **15 Credits.**

Structure:

- One 5-day block
- 1 day (Presentations)

Module 2: Physical Assessment in Rheumatology Nursing (CLM40022)

Aim: Many rheumatology nurses are involved in conducting their own clinics for patients with rheumatoid arthritis. This module will provide the student with the knowledge and skills required to undertake a clinical assessment and examination of the shoulder, knee and hand complexes in patients with rheumatological disorders. It will also provide students with the ability to develop management plans based on the clinical findings. **15 Credits.**

Structure:

- One 3-day block + one 2-day block
- 1 day (OSCE)

Module 3: Drug Therapy in Rheumatological Practice (CLM40023)

Aim: This module is aimed at increasing the student's knowledge of anti-rheumatic drugs, their side effects and the basis for their use in clinical practice. It will also develop the skills of the student in the interpretation of results of investigations commonly performed in patients taking anti-rheumatic drugs. **30 Credits.**

Structure:

- Three blocks of 3 days

Year Two

Module 4: Psychological and Social Aspects of Care in Rheumatological Practice (CLM40024)

Aim: This module will examine the effects that rheumatological illness can have on psychological and social functioning. This is a complex multifarious area and the module will address both the wider implications e.g. health policy alongside the specific influences on psycho social well-being e.g. social support. The intention of the module is to enable the student to incorporate theoretical understanding into clinical application. **15 Credits.**

Structure:

- One 5-day block (4-days at Stoke + 1-day private study at home)

Module 5: Clinical Leadership (CLM40026)

Aim: Many Rheumatology Nurses working at an advanced clinical level will be acting as role models, supporting junior colleagues. This module will explore the evidence base that promotes effective clinical leadership whilst developing the student's knowledge and skills to lead a clinical team. **15 Credits.**

Structure:

- One 4-day block (3-days at Stoke + 1-day private study at home)

The student can choose from one of the two optional modules below (6A or 6B). Modules will only run if there are sufficient student numbers.

Module 6A: Physical Assessment (CLM40066 OPTIONAL MODULE)

Aim: Many rheumatology nurses are involved in conducting their own clinics for patients with rheumatoid arthritis. This module will provide the student with the knowledge and skills required to undertake a clinical assessment and examination of the spine, pelvis and feet complexes in patients with rheumatological disorders. It will also provide students with the ability to develop management plans based on the clinical findings. **15 Credits.**

Structure:

- One 3-day block + one 2-day block
- 1 day (OSCE)

Module 6B: Principles and Practice of Joint and Soft Tissue Injection (PTY40015 OPTIONAL MODULE)

Aim: This module aims to develop a critical understanding of the use of injections in the management of joint and soft tissue pathology and to develop professional responsibility towards injection practice. It will provide the student with the knowledge and skills required to administer IA injections. **15 Credits.**

Structure:

- 5 days (over two blocks)

Module 7: Research (CLM40025)

Aim: This module will enable the student to examine the processes involved in designing a research proposal and provide the opportunity to examine outcome measures and their relevance to clinical practice. **15 Credits.**

Structure:

- One 5-day block

Year Three

Master's Option (CLM40043)

15,000 word research project dissertation. (60 credits).

The student will be asked to identify a supervisor locally.

The course will provide several plenary content days at which students will present and discuss their work, the opportunity for one-to-one contact with course tutors (face to face, by 'phone or email) and advice on written work.

Course Fees

Fees for 2011 have not been finalised, but the fees for the current cohort are £3,600 for the 2-year Diploma (students are invoiced twice for £1,800, at the beginning of each year).

An additional fee (currently £925) is required for the Masters option on completion of the Diploma.

Contact Details

For more information, please contact -

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If you are interested in joining the course in 2011, please inform Kath Jones at your earliest opportunity.

