

Development Module in Clinical MS: Specialist Level Course Information

Background

In 2009 the MS Trust entered a partnership with Birmingham City University to deliver an accredited MS module for new in post MS specialists in the UK. This development took place in response to demands for an accredited programme from existing MS specialists. It also reflects current NHS developments such as the *Knowledge and Skills Framework*, which place increasing value on recognised qualifications.

Content of the Development Module in Clinical MS links to the *Clinical Management of MS* and the *Knowledge of MS* sections of the Competencies Framework for MS specialist nurses¹. Overall the module aims to provide a strong foundation of MS knowledge upon which additional specialist knowledge can develop.

Course Structure

To complete the module all students are required to:

- Attend a residential week of lectures
- Submit a 3,000 word structured essay to Birmingham City University within six weeks of the end of the residential week.

Residential Component

The residential week of lectures runs twice per annum at the *Priory Conference Centre* in Hitchin, Hertfordshire. Lectures are conducted by leading specialists in the field of MS including: consultants, senior lecturers in neurology, MS specialist nurses, therapists and other health care professionals.

Accommodation

Accommodation is provided at the Priory Conference Centre and all meals (Mon – Fri) are included within the course package. Accommodation is also available, on request, on the Sunday evening prior to the start of the course.

Assessment

The assessment process is designed to enable students to consolidate information taught during the residential week and also to undertake further study in a particular topic area.

Students will be asked to submit one assessment:

- A structured essay - to be submitted **within six weeks** of the end of the residential week
 - Students produce a 3,000 word essay on an educational tool and its rationale. Birmingham City University and the MS Trust Information Service will provide access to support materials for completion of this assignment.

Networking

The residential week provides an excellent opportunity to meet other professionals working at a specialist level in MS, facing similar challenges, and with similar concerns. Many past students have found that there is much to be learnt from listening to other professionals within the group and we limit the number of students to a maximum of 18 to enable this sharing of experiences.

1. Competencies for MS specialist nurses. Letchworth Garden City: MS Trust, United Kingdom Multiple Sclerosis Specialist Nurse Association, Royal College of Nursing, 2003

Student Commitment

All students attending the residential week will be expected to submit the required assessment to Birmingham City University. Withdrawal from the assessment process will only be granted in specific circumstances and the following procedure must be followed:

- ❑ A written request to be withdrawn from the assessment process must be sent to the MS Trust at **least 3 weeks** prior to attendance at the residential course.
- ❑ The written request must clearly outline the reason(s) for not undertaking the assessment.
- ❑ The written request must be signed by both the student and their line manager.

Please Note: It is not possible to withdraw from the assessment process during the three weeks prior to the residential course or at any point after this. By this point students will be formally registered as a student with Birmingham City University, therefore, registration fees will be incurred.

Course Fees: Funding for UK based MS specialist nurses

Course attendance fees are supported by Biogen-Idec, Bayer Schering Health Care, Merck-Serono Pharmaceuticals and Teva Pharmaceuticals as part of the Department of Health Risk Sharing Scheme.

Student registration fees payable to Birmingham City University are kindly supported by Teva Pharmaceuticals.

Course Fees: Funding for health and social care professionals

If you are not a UK based MS specialist nurse, but feel that you would benefit from attending this course, please contact the MS Trust to discuss the availability of places, costs and funding. Priority for places currently goes to MS specialist nurses and therapists, however if places are available, other health and social care professionals who play a key role in the care of people with MS will be welcome to attend. We may also be able to help with ideas for accessing funding to attend.

The module fee is: £1500 + VAT

The Birmingham City University registration fee is: £125.00 VAT – we may be able to assist with payment of this fee once you have confirmed your booking.

Comments from past delegates:

"A dynamic, passionate, inspiring, educated group of lecturers"

"I am leaving with increased enthusiasm and the knowledge that there is a huge amount of quality support out there. It is very reassuring at a daunting time"

"The course gives an excellent programme of education covering every aspect involved in the MS specialist role"

"The aspect I enjoyed most was the completion of the essay, which gave me the chance to explore an area of interest and helped me in preparation for further studies"

"The assessments consolidated the learning from the excellent week, but I also learnt so much more. In a nutshell – hard work, but well worth doing!"

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