

Neck and Upper Back Pain & Disability Module

- *the second module of the Certificate in Musculoskeletal Medicine*

Aims

This module aims to outline an efficient and careful approach to the assessment and management of patients with cervical and thoracic spinal pain seen in a General Practice, Pain Medicine or Rehabilitation setting. It aims to teach the clinical features that offer the best route to a specific diagnosis and will discuss current management options. It aims to cover the key elements of history taking and examination by providing registrants with the opportunity to practice examination tests on each other under supervision. Tests will include movement assessment, palpation of key surface anatomy landmarks in the spine and special tests to make an accurate diagnosis. There will be also be discussion of the benefits and limitations of spinal investigations and general and condition-specific management strategies for use in general practice. Small group case discussions and personal feedback on examination techniques will be used to enhance learning.

Learning Outcomes

1. Develop a systems based approach aimed at avoiding missed clinical features in the assessment of neck and upper back complaints that may lead to misdiagnosis and inappropriate/unnecessary investigations and/or management
2. Utilise evidence-informed history taking methods for patients with neck and upper back complaints
3. Conduct a reliable and valid physical examination of patients with neck and upper back complaints
4. Utilise investigations for neck and upper back pain judiciously and interpret the results in light of existing evidence about them.
5. Outline clinical reasoning skills utilised in the diagnosis of neck and upper back complaints
6. Effectively and appropriately manage patients with neck and upper back complaints, including the provision of evidence based advice

Module Components and Enrolment

The module comprises a prereading component requiring approximately 6 hours and including an open book multiple choice examination for completion and submission prior to the workshop. The prereading document covers the following topics:

- Introduction
- Biomechanics of the cervicothoracic unit
- Pain referral patterns
- Mechanical (somatic) pain
- Cervical radiculopathy – natural history, diagnosis, differential diagnosis and therapy
- Myofascial pain syndrome and trigger points
- Red flags
- Non-red flags, including inflammatory conditions
- Examination of cervical spine
- Thoracic spine conditions, natural history and examination
- Radiology of cervical spine
- Yellow flags for cervical spine including those for whiplash, work-related neck pain and neck pain in primary care
- Patient satisfaction
- Therapy
 - Pharmacological, including article on expect failure and pursue success
 - CBT
 - Education
 - Collars
 - Traction
 - Exercise
 - Manual therapy including mobilisation cervical and thoracic spines, manipulation of thoracic spine and an algorithm for treatment
 - Posture and ergonomics
 - Facet and medial branch blocks and radiofrequency neurotomy
 - Trigger point injections
 - Prolotherapy
 - Perineural injection treatment

Workshop

Date & Time	Saturday 16 November, 2019, 8.30 am – 5.00 pm
Venue	General Practice Training Queensland, 1/32 Billabong St, Stafford, Brisbane
Tutors	Dr Michael Yelland – GP & Musculoskeletal Medicine Practitioner, Brisbane - Associate Professor, School of Medicine, Griffith University Dr Geoff Harding – Musculoskeletal Medicine Practitioner, Brisbane Dr Bruce Jones - Musculoskeletal Medicine Practitioner, Brisbane Dr Ramona Chryssidis - Musculoskeletal Medicine Practitioner, Adelaide Dr Jennie Wright – GP & Musculoskeletal Medicine Practitioner, Adelaide
Module cost:	GPs - \$590; AAMM members - \$490; Registrars - \$390; Repeat modules - \$290
Registration	Visit https://aamm.org.au/courses-conference/ for further details and to register or contact Kim Ramillon at aamm.cert@gmail.com or phone (07) 3870 2250
Workshop Timing	Teaching/learning time exclusive of meal breaks- 7 hours and 30 mins Total time in hands-on, discussion and participation activities for participants – 6 hours and 50 minutes Meal breaks – 1 hour

Provisional Schedule for Workshop on 16 November, 2019

TOPIC	ELEMENTS	LEARNING METHOD	TIME ALLOCATION
1.Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housekeeping including allocation to small groups for remainder of workshop • Outline of learning objectives and schedule for the day • Emphasise requirement to examine each other 	Presentation by convenor	8.30 – 8.50 am (20 minutes)
2. History	<p>Targeted history for</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neck pain • Neck pain + upper limb pain • Neck pain +upper limb pain + neurological symptoms • Upper back pain <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Red flags • Yellow flags/psychosocial assessment – questions and questionnaires • Assessment of disability/loss of function - questions and questionnaires • Present and past treatments and responses to them • Past investigations/blocks • Occupation/hobbies/sports 	Interactive discussion of cases and prereading	8.50 – 10.00 am (70 minutes)
Morning tea			10.00- 10.15 am (15 minutes)
3. Examination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inspection • Gross range of movements +/- overpressure • Provocative tests (eg quadrant and Spurlings tests • Brachial plexus tension test • Neurological – power/reflexes/sensation • Palpation- tissue texture change/spinous processes/paraspinal tissues/muscle/trigger points • Discussion of clusters of signs seen with <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neck pain • Neck pain + upper limb pain • Neck pain +upper limb pain + neurological symptoms • Upper back pain • red flags and yellow flags • Debrief on positive findings in participants after completion of examinations 	Limited demonstration Followed by practice of examination techniques on each other with review by tutors. Discussion of signs found on participants.	10.15 am – 11.45 am (90 minutes)

TOPIC	ELEMENTS	LEARNING METHOD	TIME ALLOCATION
4. Investigation and clinical reasoning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits vs risks • Tailoring investigations for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neck pain • Neck pain + upper limb pain • Neck pain +upper limb pain + neurological symptoms • Upper back pain <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • red flags • Interpretation of results in context • Xray vs CT vs MRI vs other – West Australian guidelines • Blood tests • Workcover and medicolegal aspects • Use of injections as an investigation after briefing patient about them • Reaching a working diagnosis based on history, examination +/- investigations 	Interactive discussion of prereading applied to cases discussed earlier.	11.45 – 12.30 pm (45 minutes)
Lunch			12.30 – 1.00 pm (30 minutes)
5.Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education • Manual techniques - teach indirect and direct rotational mobilization, post-isometric relaxation with stretching • Exercises 5-6 targeted exercises. What not to do • Medication • Injections <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Types ○ Indications ○ Muscle trigger points ○ Occipital nerve block • Others 	Interactive discussion of prereading Demonstration and practice of manual techniques on each other Trial of exercises Demonstration and practice of injections using capped needles.	1.00 - 3.00 pm and 3.15 - 4.00 pm (165 minutes)
Afternoon tea			3.00 – 3.15 pm (15 minutes)

TOPIC	ELEMENTS	LEARNING METHOD	TIME ALLOCATION
6. Follow-up and monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Illustrations of simple tools that can be used efficiently in general practice • Discussion of timing of follow-up 		4.00 – 4.10 pm (10 minutes)
7. Case discussions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cases provided by participants and tutors • Case details revealed progressively with questions to encourage participants to apply their knowledge and skills about low back pain 	Interactive discussion of cases.	4.10 – 4.40 pm (30 minutes)
8. Review of the workshop and next steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key learning points in each section • Outline of post workshop activities and ALM and certificate requirements • Future modules and learning opportunities • Completion of evaluation forms 	Presentation by convenor Completion of evaluation forms by participants	20 minutes including 10 minutes completion of evaluation forms

Timing

Proposed timeframe – 8.30 am to 5 pm (8 ½ hours) comprised of

- Teaching/learning time - 7 hours and 30 mins
- Meal breaks – 1 hour
- Overrun time – nil

Total time in hands-on, discussion and participation activities for participants - 4 hours and 5 mins