



PG Certificate Course  
Primary Care Rheumatic  
and Musculoskeletal  
Medicine

- Complete at your own pace, flexible mode of learning
- 6 units, 45+ modules, 3 video lectures
- Covers the introduction, diagnosis, assessment and management of common inflammatory and noninflammatory RMDs
- More than 90 contributors from across the globe

Six months e-learning course with three day hands-on training at Bangalore Baptist Hospital

## Course Directors



**Dr. B G Dharmanand**

Consultant  
Institute Of Rheumatology & Clinical immunology  
Manipal Hospital, Miller's Road, Bangalore  
Immediate Past President,  
Indian Rheumatology Association



**Dr. Kieran Walsh**

Clinical Director at BMJ  
Clinical lead of the medical education and  
clinical decision support products at BMJ,  
including BMJ Best Practice.  
Fellow of the Higher Education Academy,  
Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland,  
Fellow of the Academy of Medical Educators,  
and Adjunct Associate Professor at Monash University.

## Course Curator



**Late Dr. Debashish Danda**

Who served as the  
Director, Professor and Senior Consultant,  
Institute of Rheumatology,  
Arthritis and Auto-immunity  
and also as the  
Dean - Clinical & Interdisciplinary Research  
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## Unit-in-charge



**Dr. Alakendu Ghosh**

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# About the course

Welcome to this new course on **"Primary Care Rheumatic and Musculoskeletal Medicine"**, that will be a simple, feasible and practical primer to Musculoskeletal & Rheumatological illnesses especially written in context of the South Asian population.

## Message from Course Director - Dr. B G Dharmanand

We are pleased to offer this certificate course in 'Primary care Rheumatology' to medical professionals who are interested to learn the basics of Rheumatological diseases. These diseases form a significant percentage of patients reaching primary care doctors. This course aims to build the knowledge gap in this field and also help clinicians to recognise and treat common musculoskeletal disorders and introduce them about the complex autoimmune diseases and the current approach to the diagnosis and management of these rarer diseases. The curriculum is carefully curated and vetted by experts from India and UK. We hope this course will help clinicians to approach Rheumatological diseases rationally.

## Why Rheumatic and Musculoskeletal Diseases (RMDs)

Rheumatic and Musculoskeletal Diseases (RMDs) are a heterogeneous group of ailments that affects both adults & children. As per WHO, these illnesses account for the biggest burden to the community worldwide. They also have significant social & economic impact on the individual, family, workplace, community & the nation.

### **Moreover, recent data on global burden of diseases show that South Asia is the largest reservoir of RMDs.**

Increased life expectancy and more ageing population, lifestyle changes & better awareness amongst people are responsible for increasing prevalence. Again, these illnesses add to the lion's share of people living with disabilities & even lead to higher mortality.

South Asian countries have one of the lowest prevalence of trained rheumatologists in the world. Generally, primary care doctors are the first point of contact & often the long term follow up doctors for patients with RMDs. However, our primary care doctors are not trained to handle RMDs.

## What is the way out?

### **Skilled primary care doctors, a link between patients and rheumatologists**

While one cannot make primary care doctors as shortcut or 'fill-in-the-gap' Rheumatologists, upskilling them with the basic clinical approach to manage RMDs before and between consultations with Rheumatologists is possible. This will also enable the primary care doctors to recognize serious cases and emergencies in RMDs and refer to a Rheumatologist without delay. A rapport between upskilled primary care doctors with the nearby rheumatologists will go a long way towards rational treatment of RMDs in semi urgent and urgent situations in the community. This model will prevent disability by quick action at an early preventable stage and thereby enhance safe and holistic care for the patients.

This short online course with 45+ modules prepared by expert rheumatologists from across South Asia & beyond, will be supplemented with periodic virtual classroom sessions.

We believe this PG certificate course will bridge the gap in musculoskeletal health in the South Asian community.

## About Bangalore Baptist Hospital

Bangalore Baptist Hospital (BBH) is a 450-bed tertiary care teaching hospital with state-of-the-art facilities that strives to serve with compassion. BBH runs the Postgraduate training for doctors in 18 specialties under the Diplomate in National Board and also has a Nursing Institute (Diploma and BSc) and Allied Health Institute.

## About The Royal College of Physicians, London (RCP)

The Royal College of Physicians is a world leader in postgraduate medical education. RCP delivers a wide range of projects aimed at strengthening health systems and improving medical standards across the globe. Their work spans high-, middle- and low-income countries, ranging from clinical skills workshops in rural Nigeria to accreditation work and guideline development in the middle east. RCP also develops and coordinates the globally-recognised MRCP (UK) exams as part of the Federation of the Royal College of Physicians.

# Why take this course?

## Course Highlights

- **Trusted content** - Brought to you by the publisher of The BMJ journal with a legacy since 1840 in providing healthcare knowledge and expertise to healthcare professionals.
- **Course contributors** - The peer reviewed course content is authored by more than 90 subject matter experts from across the globe.
- **Glocal** - International editorial guidelines with local context.
- **Elaborate content coverage** - The curriculum includes common rheumatic and musculoskeletal conditions as follows: **Non-inflammatory conditions** such as back pain, Osteoarthritis, Chronic pain/Fibromyalgia, Soft tissue Rheumatism, Osteoporosis, Hypermobility of joints, Rheumatic manifestations of systemic diseases like Hypothyroidism, Diabetes Mellitus, low Vitamin D state etc. **Inflammatory conditions** such as Rheumatoid Arthritis, Spondyloarthritis (SpA) including Ankylosing Spondylitis, Psoriatic Arthritis, Reactive Arthritis, enteropathic & undifferentiated SpA, Crystal Arthritis like Gout and Infective Arthropathies including Viral & Septic Arthritis. This course also covers **emergencies and serious RMDs** such as connective tissue diseases including Lupus and Vasculitides for a quick recognition to enable immediate treatment & a prompt referral to a rheumatologist.
- **Pedagogy** - Interactive live classroom sessions, text and video based learning, online assessment and 3 days experiential learning at Bangalore Baptist Hospital
- **Certification** - On successful completion of course by BMJ, RCP London, Bangalore Baptist Hospital (minimum passing percentage required is 70%)

## Course Objectives

- Familiarise primary care doctors with common and serious rheumatic diseases in the community
- Upskill primary care doctors by an overview on clinical features, diagnostic & basic management approach to rheumatic musculoskeletal illnesses in the community.
- Train clinicians in the periphery to act as a link between rheumatologist & the patient for interim management issues & not as a replacement for Rheumatologist
- Application of the expertise in primary care rheumatology to protect patients with rheumatic musculoskeletal diseases from quackery & misinformation driven mismanagement, which can prevent long term disability using scientific & economic therapeutic options in modern medicine.
- Knowledge gained by this course should assist primary care doctors in recognising red flag scenarios that need immediate referral to rheumatologist.

## Eligibility criteria

- Candidates must hold an MBBS degree from a recognized institute

## Course fee

- E-learning program INR 50,000 including 18% GST
- E-learning with contact program INR 60,000 including 18% GST

# Course Curriculum

<b>Unit 1</b>	<b>Introduction to Rheumatology</b>
Module 1	Introduction to Rheumatic disorders
Module 2	Anatomy of joints and immune system
Module 3	Pathogenesis of rheumatic diseases
Module 4	Clinical spectrum of rheumatological disorders
Module 5	Approach to common rheumatic diseases
<b>Unit 2</b>	<b>Diagnosis and Assessment of Rheumatic Diseases</b>
Module 1	Classification / Diagnostic criteria
Module 2	History taking & musculoskeletal examination
Module 3	How to diagnose Rheumatic disease - laboratory investigations
Module 4	Imaging in rheumatology
Module 5	Disease assessment
Module 6	Biomarkers
<b>Unit 3</b>	<b>Management of Rheumatic Diseases</b>
Module 1	Rationale and safe use of NSAIDs
Module 2	Conventional synthetic disease-modifying antirheumatic drugs
Module 3	Dos and DON'Ts for Biologicals treated patients
Module 4	Rationale use of steroids
Module 5	Second line immune suppressants -When to refer
Module 6	An overview of Small molecules
Module 7	Vaccinations in Rheumatology
Module 8	Dietary & Lifestyle modifications relevant to rheumatic diseases
Module 9	Patient Education & Psychosocial support in Rheumatology
Module 10	Allied health sciences in Rheumatology (Physiotherapy and Occupational therapy)



# Course Curriculum

<b>Unit 4</b>	<b>Approach to diagnosis and management inflammatory arthropathies</b>
Module 1	Clinical approach to a patient with joint syndromes
Module 2	Rheumatoid arthritis and early arthritis
Module 3	Psoriatic arthritis
Module 4	Spondyloarthritis
Module 5	Osteoarthritis
Module 6	Septic and other infective arthropathies
Module 7	Impact of co-existing infections in rheumatic diseases
Module 8	Pearls for diagnosis and management of gout and other arthropathies
<b>Unit 5</b>	<b>Approach to diagnosis and management of Connective Tissue diseases</b>
Module 1	SLE and antiphospholipid syndrome
Module 2	Sjogren's syndrome
Module 3	Systemic sclerosis (scleroderma)
Module 4	Myositis
Module 5	MCTD, overlaps, and undifferentiated connective tissue disease
<b>Unit 6</b>	<b>Other Rheumatological Conditions</b>
Module 1	The role of vitamin D in health and disease: a brief review
Module 2	Other endocrine/metabolic syndromes with rheumatic manifestations (hypothyroidism and diabetes)
Module 3	Chronic pain syndromes
Module 4	Soft tissue rheumatism
Module 5	Evaluation of low back ache and neck pain
Module 6	Hypermobility disorders
Module 7	Vasculitis in primary care
Module 8	Rheumatological emergencies
Module 9	Outcome measures in rheumatology
Module 10	Pregnancy and lactation with rheumatic diseases
Module 11	Systemic manifestations of rheumatic diseases and rheumatic manifestations of systemic diseases
Module 12	Rheumatic diseases in adolescents and children

# Course Structure

The course comprises 6 units with a total of 45+ modules. After the completion of all the 45+ modules there will be a final evaluation in the form of MCQs [Multiple Choice Questions].

Each month one unit will be unlocked to study and participants can take an assessment post each module. Final evaluation at the end of the course.

## Video lecture:

- Introductory video lecture presented by presented by Dr Danda and Dr Dharmanand providing an overview of the course
- Three video lectures delivered by the course faculty, followed by a live online interactive meeting with the course faculty during the sixth month of the course

## Video Lecture

### 1st video lecture

History taking

Physical examination

Relevant investigations

### 2nd video lecture

Common non-inflammatory rheumatic conditions

Common inflammatory conditions

Commonly used medications in rheumatology

### 3rd video lecture

Connective tissue disorders

Emergencies

Pediatrics

Dates of the virtual interactive session with the faculty will be communicated to the candidates through emails prior to the interactive session.

## Three days hands on training at Bangalore Baptist hospital

### Topics/areas to be covered:

#### Day 1

- Clinical approach to patient with joint pain
- Outpatient clinic - history taking, physical examination
- Relevant investigations
- Pharmacology in rheumatology
- Case work-up

#### Day 2

- Common Inflammatory conditions - RA, PA, AS, Spondyloarthropathies
- Non-inflammatory - OA, Fibromyalgia, Mechanical Backpain, other chronic pain disorders, Osteoporosis

#### Day 3

- Connective Tissue Disorders & Vasculitic conditions
- Emergencies
- Pediatric Rheumatology - JIA, Kawasaki, HS Purpura, SLE, Ssc
- **Examination Format:**  
MCQs, OSCE, Viva

# Course Contributors: Name and Affiliation

Name	Affiliation and institute
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