



Australian Association of Musculoskeletal Medicine

## ***Assessment and Management of Low Back Pain***

- ***the first 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 lumbar and sacral spinal pain seen in a general practice setting. It aims to teach the clinical features that offer the best route to a specific diagnosis and to teach practical 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 also be discussion of the benefits and limitations of spinal investigations and demonstration and practice of general and condition-specific management strategies for use in general practice. Small group case discussions and personal feedback on the approach to history, examination, investigation and management techniques will be used to enhance learning.

### **Learning Outcomes**

1. Apply a systems based approach to assessment of low back complaints minimize misdiagnosis and unnecessary investigations and to improve management
2. Utilise evidence-informed history taking methods for patients with back complaints
3. Utilise reliable and valid physical examination tests with patients with back complaints
4. Utilise investigations for low back pain judiciously and interpret the results in light of existing evidence about them.
5. Effectively and appropriately manage patients with low back complaints

## 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

### Prereading on low back pain

- Importance
- Differential diagnosis and natural history
- Referred pain patterns
- History taking including for red and yellow flag conditions
- Physical examination
- Responsible use of investigations
- Assessment of pain and disability
- Clinical reasoning
- Management
  - o Education
  - o Pharmacological therapy
  - o Nonpharmacological therapies
  - o Posture, ergonomics and body pain
  - o Treatment of radiculopathy
  - o Manual therapy
  - o Trigger point therapy
  - o Prolotherapy injections
  - o Perineural injection treatment

### Workshop

Workshop day	Saturday 3 August, 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 Paul Cleary – Lecturer, Faculty of Medicine, University of Queensland. Dr Chris Homan - Musculoskeletal Medicine Practitioner, Brisbane

Dr Ramona Chryssidis - Musculoskeletal Medicine Practitioner, Adelaide

Dr Mike Ellis – GP & Musculoskeletal Medicine Practitioner, Sydney

Module cost GPs- \$590; AAMM members- \$490; Registrars - \$390; Repeat modules- \$290

Contact person Kim Ramillon at [aamm.cert@gmail.com](mailto:aamm.cert@gmail.com) or phone 0475 091 625 for bookings or visit <https://aamm.org.au/courses-conference/> for further details

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

- 15 minutes for morning tea
- 30 minutes for lunch
- 15 minutes for afternoon tea

### **Assessment of Competency**

- 15 MCQs based on the prereading to be performed as part of the predisposing activity and submitted before the workshop
- Adequate participation in small group work
- Adequate physical examination skills assessed at the workshop

## Detailed Workshop Schedule

TOPIC	ELEMENTS	LEARNING METHOD	TIME ALLOCATION
Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Housekeeping including allocation to small groups for remainder of workshop</li> <li>Outline of learning objectives and schedule for the day</li> <li>Emphasise requirement to examine each other</li> </ul>	Presentation by convenor	8.30 – 8.50 am (20 minutes)
History	Targeted history for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Low back pain</li> <li>Low back + lower limb pain</li> <li>Low back + lower limb pain + neurological symptoms</li> <li>Red flags</li> <li>Yellow flags/psychosocial assessment – questions and questionnaires</li> <li>Assessment of disability/loss of function - questions and questionnaires</li> <li>Present and past treatments and responses to them</li> <li>Past investigations/blocks</li> <li>Occupation/hobbies/sports</li> </ul>	Interactive discussion of cases and prereading	8.50 – 10.00 am (70 minutes)
Morning tea			10.00- 10.15 am (15 minutes)
Examination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inspection</li> <li>Gross range of movements +/- overpressure</li> <li>Provocative tests (eg quadrant tests/SIJ stress tests)</li> <li>Slump test/Femoral Nerve stretch Test/Straight Leg Raising Test</li> <li>Neurological – power/reflexes/sensatiion</li> <li>Palpation- tissue texture change/spinous processes/paraspinal tissues/SIJs/muscle/trigger points</li> <li>Discussion of clusters of signs seen with               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>low back pain</li> <li>low back + lower limb pain</li> <li>low back + lower limb pain + neurological symptoms</li> <li>red flags</li> <li>yellow flags</li> </ul> </li> <li>Debrief on positive findings in participants after completion of examinations</li> </ul>	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
Investigation and clinical reasoning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Benefits vs risks</li> <li>• Tailoring investigations to specific presentations               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• low back pain</li> <li>• low back + lower limb pain</li> <li>• low back + lower limb pain + neurological symptoms</li> </ul> </li> <li>• red flags</li> <li>• Interpretation of results in context</li> <li>• Xray vs CT vs MRI vs other – West Australian guidelines</li> <li>• Blood tests</li> <li>• Workcover and medicolegal aspects</li> <li>• Use of injections as an investigation after briefing patient about them</li> <li>• Reaching a working diagnosis based on history, examination +/- investigations</li> </ul>	Interactive discussion of prereading applied to cases discussed earlier.	11.45 – 12.20 pm (35 minutes)
Lunch			12.20 – 12.50 pm (30 minutes)
Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education</li> <li>• Manual techniques - teach postero-anterior and indirect rotational mobilization, post-isometric relaxation with stretching</li> <li>• Exercises 5-6 targeted exercises. What not to do</li> <li>• Medication</li> <li>• Injections               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Types</li> <li>○ Indications</li> <li>○ Focus on muscle trigger points</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Others</li> </ul>	Interactive discussion of prereading Demonstration and practice of manual techniques on each other Trial of exercises Demonstration and practice of injections using capped needles.	12.50 - 3.00 pm and 3.15 - 4.00 pm (175 minutes)
Afternoon tea			3.00 – 3.15 pm (15 minutes)

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