Development of Multiple Sclerosis care and management for specialists module

Course Information

Background:
In 2009 the MS Trust entered into a partnership with Birmingham City University to deliver an accredited MS module for new in post MS specialists and other professionals who specialise in supporting people with MS. The course runs for a week and covers a host of clinical and professional issues relevant to those undertaking a specialist role. This came about in response to requests from existing MS specialists for an accredited learning programme. It also reflects the NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework which places increasing value on recognised qualifications. The module aims to provide a strong foundation of MS knowledge upon which additional specialist knowledge can develop.

Who is the course designed for?
New in post MS specialist nurses, therapists and other health professionals who specialise in supporting people with MS. The course is aimed at those who are working at Band 6 and above. We recommend that you have been in post between three-six months before coming on the course.

Residential Course:
The residential week is held twice a year (in March and October) at the Cromwell Hotel in Stevenage, Hertfordshire. A mix of lectures and workshops take place during the week, led by leading specialists in the field of MS including neurologists, senior lecturers, MS specialist nurses, specialist therapists and other health care professionals.

Accommodation is provided at the Cromwell Hotel as part of the course package. Accommodation is also available on Sunday evening prior to the start of the course, if required.

Assignment:
To enable students to consolidate information taught during the residential week and to undertake further study in a particular topic area, there is the option to complete an assignment which enables you to gain 20 credits at either Degree or Masters level. The assignment is a piece of academic writing (3000 word essay) which assesses your understanding of MS, your specialist role in meeting the needs of people with MS (within the sphere of the topic chosen) and your ability to synthesise and critically review the evidence which underpins all this. The structure of the assignment depends on the level chosen; further details will be provided prior to starting the course. You have approximately 3 months after completing the course to submit the 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 find there is much to be learnt from listening to others within the group; we therefore limit numbers to enable this sharing of experiences.

Course fees:
The module fee is: £1500 + VAT
The University registration fee is: £265 + VAT

Funding for UK based MS specialist nurses:
The MS Trust are committed to offer a fixed number of fully funded places to those working in a MS Specialist Nurse role. Nurses who are working in other roles (ie MS Support Nurse, MS Infusion Nurse) should contact the MS Trust for advice about funding.

Funding for allied health professionals:
Substantial bursaries are available for other nurses, allied health professionals and other health professionals interested in improving their knowledge and skills in MS care.

1. Competencies for MS specialist nurses. Letchworth Garden City: MS Trust, United Kingdom Multiple Sclerosis Specialist Nurse Association, Royal College of Nursing, 2003
If you feel you would benefit from attending this course, please contact the Health Professionals Programme Team at the MS Trust by phone 01462 476704 or email education@mstrust.org.uk to discuss further.

Comments from previous 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."

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

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

"Fantastic course, would recommend to any HCP involved in the care of MS patients."

"You’ve put together a wonderful package. Everyone says “You’ll love the Hitchin course” and they’re right. Such passionate teachers make it an enthusiastic environment and you can hear the buzz around the room when they’re finished."

"This course has been excellent for me. I am a novice in MS and this has greatly improved my underpinning knowledge about MS. Extremely informative on every aspect of MS. Thank you."

Student Commitment
If you opt to enrol with Birmingham City University, withdrawal from the process will only be granted in specific circumstances and the following procedure must be followed:

- A written request to be withdrawn from the assignment process must be sent to the MS Trust at least 1 month prior to attending the course.
- The written request must clearly outline the reason(s) for not undertaking the assignment.
- The written request must be signed by the delegate and their line manager.

Bursary/MS Trust funded place

- If you received a bursary or MS Trust funded place and leave your post within 6 months of completing the course we will seek compensation from you/your employer to recover a proportion of the costs incurred. Each case will be looked at on an individual basis. Please ensure your employer is aware of this.
- Once registered with the university, you will be held personally responsible for repayment of the registration fee (£265 + VAT) if you fail to submit your assignment without a valid reason for making a claim for extenuating circumstances.