



Six Months PG Certificate Course  
Primary Care Rheumatic  
and Musculoskeletal  
Medicine

Five days contact program  
at BSMMU, Dhaka

- Complete at your own pace. 1-2 hours study per week, flexible mode of learning
- 6 units, 45+ modules, 3 video lectures
- Covers the introduction, diagnosis, assessment and management of common inflammatory and non-Inflammatory RMDs
- More than 90 contributors from across the globe



# About BMJ, RCP & BSMMU

## About BMJ

BMJ started out over 180 years ago as a medical journal, publishing our first research paper. Now, as a global brand with a worldwide audience, we help medical organisations and clinicians tackle today's most critical healthcare challenges. Today, our expertise extends to medical education, clinical decision support and quality improvement to enhance day to day decision- making and healthcare delivery. However, our core objective remains unchanged. We continue to support medical professionals and organisations in improving the delivery of healthcare. We do this by publishing new academic research, providing professional development solutions and creating clinical decision support tools.

## About The Royal College of Physicians

The Royal College of Physicians is a world leader in postgraduate medical education. We deliver a wide range of projects aimed at strengthening health systems and improving medical standards across the globe. Our 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. We also develop and coordinate the globally-recognised MRCP (UK) exams as part of the Federation of the Royal College of Physicians.

## About BSMMU

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU) is the premier Postgraduate Medical Institution of the country. It bears the heritage to Institute of Postgraduate Medical Research (IPGMR) which was established in December 1965. In the year 1998 the Government converted IPGMR into a Medical University for expanding the facilities for higher medical education and research in the country. It has an enviable reputation for providing high quality postgraduate education in different specialties. The university has strong link with other professional bodies at home and abroad. The university is expanding rapidly and at present, the university has many departments equipped with modern technology for service, teaching and research. Besides education, the university plays the vital role of promoting research activities in various discipline of medicine. Since its inception, the university has also been delivering general and specialized clinical service as a tertiary level healthcare center.





# Course Directors



## Dr. Debashish Danda

Professor and Founder of the Department  
Clinical Immunology and Rheumatology  
Christian Medical College and Hospital, Vellore, India  
President, Asia Pacific League of Associations  
for Rheumatology (APLAR) [2021-2023]  
Chair, ILAR (2023)  
Convenor, APLAR vasculitis special interest group & IRAVAS  
(Indian Rheumatology Association vasculitis special interest group)



## 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, a Fellow of the  
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## Dr Minhaj Rahim Choudhury

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## Dr. Syed Atiqul Haq

Course Coordinator  
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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.

### 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 & 5 days of physical contact program at BSMMU, Dhaka.

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



# 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.
- **Global** - International editorial guidelines with local context.
- **Elaborate content coverage** - Course 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, contact program and online assessment
- **Certification** - On successful completion of course by BMJ & BSMMU Dhaka (minimum passing percentage required is 70%)
- **Contact Program** - Five days contact program at BSMMU, Dhaka

## 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

- Six Months of e learning with 5 days of contact program, total course fee is B'deshi Taka 65000.

# Course Curriculum

Unit 1	Introduction to Rheumatology
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
Unit 2	Diagnosis and Assessment of Rheumatic Diseases
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
Unit 3	Management of Rheumatic Diseases
Module 1	Rationale and safe use of NSAIDs
Module 2	DMARDs
Module 3	Dos and DONTs 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

Unit 4	Approach to diagnosis and management inflammatory arthropathies
Module 1	Clinical approach to a patient with joint syndromes
Module 2	RA 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
Unit 5	Approach to diagnosis and management of Connective Tissue diseases
Module 1	SLE & Antiphospholipid syndrome
Module 2	Sjogren syndrome
Module 3	Scleroderma and Myositis
Module 4	MCTD, overlaps and undifferentiated connective tissue disease
Unit 6	Other Rheumatological Conditions
Module 1	Metabolic disorders in rheumatology - Osteoporosis and Hypovitaminosis D
Module 2	Other endocrine/metabolic syndromes with rheumatic manifestations (Focus on Hypothyroidism & Diabetes)
Module 3	Chronic pain syndromes
Module 4	Soft tissue rheumatism
Module 5	Back pain and Neck pain
Module 6	Hypermobility disorders
Module 7	Rare and complex presentation of rheumatic diseases - Vasculitis in primary care
Module 8	Rheumatological emergencies
Module 9	Assessment of outcome measures
Module 10	Children with rheumatological problem
Module 11	Rheumatic diseases of adolescents & girl children
Module 12	Pregnancy and lactation with Rheumatic diseases
Module 13	Systemic manifestations of rheumatic diseases & Rheumatic manifestations of systemic diseases



# Course Structure

The course comprises 6 units with a total of 45+ modules. After the completion of all the 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. There will be a 5 days of contact programme and final evaluation at the end of the course.

## Video lecture:

- Introductory video lecture presented by Dr Danda providing an overview of the course
- Three video lectures by course faculty. **Face-to-face interaction** with course faculty at the contact program centre.

## 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

## Contact Program Topics

- Lab investigations, Imaging
- Joint examination
- Common Inflammatory conditions - RA, PA, AS, Spondyloarthropathies
- Non-inflammatory - OA, Fibromyalgia, Mechanical back pain, other chronic pain disorders, Osteoporosis
- Connective Tissue Disorders & Vasculitic conditions
- Emergencies in rheumatology & Pediatric Rheumatology - JIA, Kawasaki, HS Purpura, SLE, SSC
- Exit Examination (Last Day)
- **Examination Format:**  
MCQs and Viva

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





# Course Contributors: Name and Affiliation

Name	Affiliation and institute
Dr Alakendu Ghosh	Professor and Founder Head of the Department, Department of Clinical Immunology & Rheumatology, IPGME & R, SSKM Hospital, Kolkata, West Bengal, India
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