

5.1.10 Postgraduate Diploma in Rural Medicine

Specific admission requirements

- A bachelor's degree (e.g. MBChB or equivalent)
- Qualification as a medical practitioner, with at least two years' post-qualification practical experience as a medical intern or in an equivalent position.
- Proof of registration with the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA) or proof of the ability to meet the requirements of the HPCSA.

You must apply in writing for admission, accompanied by a Curriculum Vitae and a motivation letter, which should include details of your clinical competency and experience, and your interest in rural health in Africa, as well as any involvement in leadership and management issues. Selected applicants may be invited to an interview. Community service doctors are eligible to enrol in the programme.

Programme description

The programme is intended to provide clinicians wishing to work in rural district hospitals in South Africa and elsewhere in Africa with the necessary knowledge, skills and approaches for practice in these contexts. After completing the programme, you will have the clinical skills to manage a range of patients at a rural district hospital with limited specialist support, be able to work with the local healthcare team and contribute to effective healthcare delivery systems, understand appropriate public health interventions, participate in community-oriented primary healthcare and use reflective practice to enable continuous development as a rural health practitioner.

This postgraduate diploma programme is presented by the Division for Rural Health (Ukwanda) in the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences of Stellenbosch University.

Duration

The programme extends over a minimum of 18 months.

Programme content

You must pass all four modules.

FIRST YEAR

Clinical Skills for District Hospitals (6 to 12 months)	775(55)
Major Infectious Disease Challenges (first semester)	775(15)
Delivering Healthcare in Rural Communities (second semester)	775(25)

SECOND YEAR

Clinical Governance in District Health Services (first semester)	775(25)
--	---------

The programme has one contact session per year.

The major clinical module, Clinical Skills for District Hospitals, focuses on high-risk areas (the emergency

centre, the labour ward, and the operating theatre). To fulfil the clinical requirements, the module is presented in the first year of the programme as a six- to twelve-month programme at a regional or rural district hospital where there is appropriate supervision by experienced practitioners accredited by the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences of Stellenbosch University.

The remaining three modules are offered as blended learning, which includes e-learning, guided self-study, assignments, logbook entries, self-reflection tasks and formal seminars, with practical application and work-integrated learning in a rural context. The Major Infectious Disease Challenges module runs concurrently with the Clinical Skills for District Hospitals module in the first semester of the first year of the programme in either a regional or a rural district hospital. Thereafter, you must spend a minimum of one year at a rural district hospital where the Delivering Healthcare in Rural Communities and Clinical Governance in District Health Services modules are offered during the final twelve months of the programme.

Assessment and examination

The assessment of each module will depend on its learning content, which includes the following:

- Clinical Skills for District Hospitals: competency assessment, logbook entries and reports by the accredited supervising doctor.
- Major Infectious Disease Challenges: online tests consisting of multiple-choice questions.
- Delivering Healthcare in Rural Communities: participation in online discussion groups, a synoptic report on local healthcare needs and services, and a report on community-oriented primary care interventions.
- Clinical Governance in District Health Services: participation in online discussion groups, preparing a proposal for a quality improvement project, reporting on your quality improvement project and a reflective report on learning.

The pass mark is 50% and a mark of 75% is required to pass with distinction.

If you wish to obtain credits for any competencies, in particular for the clinical domains in the module Clinical Skills for district hospitals, you must demonstrate your competence in the specified areas through an appropriate assessment.

Enquiries

Programme convenor: Prof I Couper
Tel.: 021 938 9186 Email: icouper@sun.ac.za

Programme administrator: Mrs L Meyer
Tel.: 021 938 9873 Email: lindsaym@sun.ac.za

Postgraduate programmes

For more specific information on the Faculty's postgraduate programmes, consult the University's webpage on Postgraduate Studies (<http://www.sun.ac.za/english/pgstudies/>) or the various departmental websites.

1. Programme offering

The following postgraduate diploma and degree programmes are presented by the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences:

Postgraduate Diplomas	Abbreviation
Postgraduate Diploma in Addiction Care	PG Dip (Addiction Care)
Postgraduate Diploma in Disability and Rehabilitation Studies	PG Dip (Disability and Rehabilitation Studies)
Postgraduate Diploma in Family Medicine	PG Dip (Family Medicine)
Postgraduate Diploma in Health Care Management	PG Dip (Health Care Management)
Postgraduate Diploma in Health Research Ethics	PG Dip (Health Research Ethics)
Postgraduate Diploma in Infectious Diseases	PG Dip (Infectious Diseases)
Postgraduate Diploma in Medical Toxicology	PG Dip (Medical Toxicology)
Postgraduate Diploma in Medicines Development	PG Dip (Medicines Development)
Postgraduate Diploma in Occupational Medicine	PG Dip (Occupational Medicine)
Postgraduate Diploma in Rural Medicine	PG Dip (Rural Medicine)
Postgraduate Diploma in Specialist Nursing/Midwifery	PG Dip (Specialist Nursing/Midwifery)
Honours Degrees	Abbreviation
Bachelor of Science Honours	BScHons
Master's Degrees	Abbreviation
Master of Addiction Care	MAddiction Care
Master of Audiology	MAud
Master of Global Surgery	MGlobalSurg
Master of Human Rehabilitation Studies	MHumRehab
Master of Medicine	MMed
Master of Nursing	MNurs
Master of Occupational Therapy	MOccTher
Master of Pathology	MPath
Master of Philosophy	MPhil
Master of Physiotherapy	MPhysio
Master of Public Health Nutrition	MNutr in Public Health
Master of Science	MSc
Master of Speech-Language Therapy	MSpeech
Master of Therapeutic Nutrition	MTherNutr
Doctoral Degrees	Abbreviation
Doctor of Philosophy	PhD
Doctor of Science	DSc

2. Commencement of postgraduate studies

As postgraduate student you must register for your particular programme at the start of the academic year. The only programmes that still take on students at the start of the second semester are MMed programmes. If you are accepted for an MMed programme, you will be able to register at the start of the second semester. You can submit a request for exclusion from this rule to the Vice-Dean: Learning and Teaching, with special motivation.

3. Recognition of prior learning and credit accumulation and transfer (RPL&CAT)

Consult the RPL&CAT guidelines of the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences for more information on the procedures and guidelines regarding the recognition of prior learning and credit accumulation and transfer in the Faculty. These guidelines are available at www.sun.ac.za/tygststudentadmin under "Policies and Guidelines".

4. Class fees

From 2010 class fees for all structured M degree programmes will be levied per module. Until further notice the class fees for MMed programmes will be levied per annum, as in the past, with the exception of the class fees for the MMed (Fam Med) programme which will be levied per module.

The class fees for the research modules within the structured M degree programmes will be spread over two years (70% of the class fees in the first year of registration and 30% in the second year) to prevent you from having to pay the full amount for two consecutive years. If you complete your research module within one year of study, you will therefore pay only 70% of the class fees for the specific module. But if you fail to complete the research module within the prescribed two years, you will pay, as of the third year of study, the full amount for the module.

If you register for a research master's degree, you must pay the full amount in the first year of study with a continuation levy in the second and third year. However, in the fourth and following years of study the continuation levy will double.

Disclaimer:

The content above comes from the 2025 Medicine and Health Sciences Yearbook. Make sure to consult the full **Medicine and Health Sciences Yearbook** to see this extract in context and to check if there have been any changes. Take special note of additional information in the yearbook under section **1. Programme offering**.