Advanced Assessment of the Newborn for Midwives
Module Code NURM104

Credits / Level of Study 30 credits / Level 7

Module Aims
This module aims to prepare midwives to undertake the complete physical examination of the healthy newborn, between 37-42 completed gestational weeks. The rationale for the neonatal examination conducted within the first 24 hours and days after delivery will be to detect any signs of acute illness or abnormalities, to allow prompt diagnosis and intervention without which many of the acute conditions which afflict newborn babies can lead to serious consequences.

The expanding role of the midwife as the lead professional is constantly changing requires midwives to develop new skills and competencies, which necessitate appropriate education. This module seeks to develop such skills, underpinned by a sound knowledge base to support clinical practice. New skills will enhance independent and autonomous practice whilst improving continuity of care and facilitate more timely discharge of babies from the postnatal area, reducing paediatric workload. In addition such a role will enable birth at home to be easily facilitated where the GP has not been contacted to provide neonatal examination.

Learning Outcomes
By the end of the module the student should be able to:

- Assess the physiological adaptation of each system in the fetus-neonate and relate these to a competent examination of the newborn and critically evaluate the relevant research studies to underpin best practice in the care of the newborn and demonstrate systematic newborn assessment and physical examinations within clinical settings.

- Critically evaluate the evidence and research base of new approaches to judgement and decision-making in relation to risk factors in the care of the newborn, applying skills of systematic and holistic assessment of undifferentiated newborn problems to make accurate differential diagnoses, develop safe management plans and appropriate referrals.

- Analyse and evaluate contemporary issues in the field of neonatology using appropriate evidence to determine the involvement of the multidisciplinary team, through referral to a paediatrician and the need for any urgent intervention through locally agreed channels.

Pre-requisites of Study
None

Delivery of Module
Teaching will be by interactive lectures/discussions/seminar presentations and practical experience.

Students will be enrolled through VLE for blended learning using e-learning technology.

Assessment
1) A portfolio of evidence to demonstrate a record of learning in and through practice which should demonstrate the achievement of the module learning outcomes. It will take nine months to complete the practice component.

a) The midwife will negotiate locally with a paediatrician/ midwife assessor to practice forty (40) newborn clinical assessments as follows:

- observe a minimum of 5 examinations of the newborn
- Initial first 10 examinations to be supervised by a paediatrician/ midwife assessor
- 15th, 20th, 25th, 30th and 35th examinations to be observed and signed by a paediatrician to comment on progress
- 39 formative examinations in total with approximately 2-3 examinations per week
- 1 final summative examination to be assessed and signed by the consultant paediatrician at the end of the module

Pass/Fail will be awarded for practical assessments.

b) A workbook is provided to complement the theoretical component. Each student is expected to work through a series of questions in the workbook, designed to facilitate active learning. The midwife will develop appropriate levels of understanding in relation to both normal and abnormal physiology.

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C) 5 Reading Logs expected and these must be well structured and adequately demonstrate how the content is relevant to practice. Good analysis must be demonstrated, identifying methodological issues etc.

D) Reflections must be sensitive, analytic and integrated to current practice. One or two are sufficient to demonstrate progression from the first examination of the newborn to the final assessment carried out. Identifying a reflective model on which to base the structure of this section must be included.

A total of 7000 words for b, c and d section.

2) A case study
   This essay will focus on the following elements and will require:
   - Critical analyses of the full physical examination of the newborn, including history and findings relating this to evidence based practice
   - Parent education as a teaching activity throughout the examination
   - Identification of professional implications for this extended role in midwifery practice
   - Advanced assessment underpinned by an identified assessment tool/s or framework/s and differential diagnosis devised to develop management plans and make appropriate referral
   - Theoretical marking grid at level 7

Word Count: 3,000 words