



International Clinical Fellowship in Care of the Older Person

Curriculum 2026/2027

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International Clinical Fellowship

Care of the Older Person

This document outlines the curriculum in Care of the Older Person.

It is broken down into three sections:

- Overarching Clinical Competence Markers
- Curriculum – Care of the Older Person
- Fellowship Assessments

To master the core competencies in this subject and successfully complete the International Clinical Fellowship in Care of the Older Person you will be expected to acquire and demonstrate knowledge, skills and attitudes in the following clinical areas.

Programme Learning Outcomes:

- Appreciate that medical professionalism is a core element of being a good Family Physician and that good medical practice is based on a relationship of trust between doctors and society, in which Family Physicians are expected to meet the highest standards of professional practice and behaviour.
- Demonstrate a higher level of understanding of the role of the Family Physician in the delivery of care to older persons and be competent in the provision of this service.
- Demonstrate a higher level of understanding of the role of the Family Physician in the delivery of a full health programme in Care of the Older Person and be competent in the provision of this service.
- Understand and implement the systems of care for prevention of illness with particular reference to lifestyle factors, cardiovascular risk assessment and immunisation.
- Demonstrate the ability to apply cognitive screening and appropriate referral.

Overarching Clinical Competence Markers

Clinical Context

This essential feature is about understanding your own context as a doctor and how it may influence the quality of your care. Important factors are the environment in which you work, including your working conditions, community and culture, financial and regulatory frameworks.

As a Family Physician specialising in Care of the Older Person you must:

- Adapt your practice to recognise the importance of autonomy and preservation of independence.
- Develop an understanding of the importance of chronic disease and frailty, including prevention and impact.
- Be aware of your responsibility to your patients, recognising both their individual rights and needs and those of their families and carers.

Clinical Attitudes

This essential feature is about your professional capabilities, values, feelings and ethics and the impact these may have on your patient care.

As a Family Physician specialising in Care of the Older Person you must:

- Ensure that you incorporate exemplary consulting skills in the everyday management of your patients and their families.
- Seek to support patient autonomy for your patients.
- Adopt an approach to patients that is appropriate to their cultural and personal context.
- Recognise your attitudes to treating older patients and ensure that you treat all patients with respect for their dignity and rights.
- Exemplify a sensitive approach to patients and their families.

Scientific

This essential feature is about the need to adopt a critical and evidence based approach to your work, maintaining this through lifelong learning.

As a Family Physician specialising in Care of the Older Person you must:

- Be capable of accessing the best evidence about clinical management and prescribing.
- Ensure that your daily practice is based on best and most up to date evidence.
- Use significant event meetings and audit as tools on which to reflect on your clinical practice.
- Reflect on case-based discussions around care of the older person and utilise these in the identification of your learning needs.

Curriculum – Care of the Older Person

Primary Care Management

This area of competence is about how you manage your contact with patients, dealing competently with any and all problems that are presented to you.

A Family Physician specialising in Care of the Older Person must:

- Demonstrate a clear understanding of the role of the Family Physician in the provision of holistic care to older patients.
- Demonstrate a clear understanding of the role of the Family Physician in the management of emergency and routine presentations.
- Communicate clearly to the patient the importance of positive health behaviours, including: smoking cessation, physical activity and nutrition.
- Complete with confidence routine assessments including cognition, function and capacity.
- Recognize the role of the Family Physician in the management of chronic disease e.g. chronic kidney disease, diabetes or hypertension.
- Provide safe, effective and compassionate care to older people with terminal illness.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the management of common illnesses impacting older people.
- Complete with confidence the relevant, scheduled check-ups.
- Recognise the role of the Family Practitioner in the diagnosis and management of mental health problems such as depression.

Person-Centred Care

This area of competence is about understanding and relating to the context of your patients as individuals and developing the ability to work in partnership with them.

A Family Physician specialising in Care of the Older Person must:

- Demonstrate skill in developing a therapeutic relationship with the patient with a view to achieving the best possible health outcomes.
- Demonstrate the ability to communicate with the patient and their family in an open, collaborative and non-judgemental manner.
- Offer and utilise chaperone as appropriate.

Specific Problem-Solving Skills

This area of competence is about the context-specific aspects of Family Medicine, dealing with early and undifferentiated illness and the skills you need to tolerate uncertainty, and intervene as needed.

A Family Physician specialising in Care of the Older Person must:

- Recognize the role of the Family Physician in routine holistic care, lifestyle counselling, promotion of immunisations, and in managing emergency presentations.
- Understand the principles of integrated care for older people and rehabilitation
- Have an in-depth knowledge of national immunisation policy.
- Understand frailty.
- Combine available evidence to manage the presentation of urinary tract infections in older persons to family medicine.
- Manage multimorbidity and polypharmacy in older persons.
- Consider deprescribing where appropriate.
- Understand available screening and prevention interventions.
- Diagnose and appropriately manage neurological disorders in older people.
- Diagnose nutritional issues including malnutrition, and interventions including oral nutritional supplementation and referral.
- Dysphagia and aspiration pneumonia.
- Recognise sarcopenia.

- Diagnose, manage and prevent syncope and falls.
- Diagnose and manage osteoporosis.
- Understand rheumatological diseases of ageing.
- Support positive ageing and enhanced quality of life.
- Understanding the importance of mental health and the older person.
- Diagnosis and management of cognitive decline and dementia.
- Supporting patients to live well at home, where appropriate.
- Understand Long Term Care Provision in Older People and consider the relevance to the country where you normally work.
- Behavioural Psychological Sequelae of Dementia.
- Understand Nursing Home care in Ireland.
- Engage with families and carers, including communication and family meetings and knowledge of the supports available.
- Management of acute confusion and delirium
- Management of common skin presentations in the older adult.
- Demonstration of Safeguarding.
- Assessment of Driving and capacity.
- End-of-life care in Dementia and Frailty
- Planning and Communication at End of Life
- The Functional Capacity Assessment

Comprehensive Approach

- This area of competence is about how you as a Family Physician must be able to manage co-morbidity, co-ordinating care of acute illness, chronic illness, health promotion and disease prevention in the Primary Care setting.
- A Family Physician specialising in Care of the Older Person must:
- Understand the obstacles to older patients in seeking health care.
- Manage common medical presentations including hypertension and diabetes as well as low mood and depression.

- Understand the obstacles to disclosure and supports available to an older person who is experiencing mental health problems and social problems including elder abuse.
- Improve efficiency of appropriate data recording.
- Demonstrate effective integration of the Primary Care Team in the care of the older persons.
- Work effectively as a member of the Primary Care Team in the promotion of optimum health for patients.

Community Orientation

This area of competence is about the physical environment of your practice population, and the need to understand the interrelationship between health and social care, and the tensions that may exist between individual wants and needs and the needs of the wider community.

A Family Physician specialising in Care of the Older Person must:

- Recognise the role that socioeconomic conditions play in relation to health.
- Identify the effect of psychological stresses on physical health.
- Show continual desire to address health inequalities and to improve the delivery of care to the community.

Holistic Care

This area of competence is about your ability to understand and respect the values, culture, family structure and beliefs of your patients, and understand the ways in which these will affect the experience and management of illness and health.

A Family Physician specialising in Care of the Older Person must:

- Understand the unique way that elderly patients may present with medical conditions, e.g. delirium secondary to a urinary tract infection.
- Know how to screen for and manage psychological conditions associated with the different stages of life.
- Adopt a supportive and non-judgmental role for all patients regardless of their lifestyle choices.
- Demonstrate the ability to assist those experiencing challenges in making lifestyle changes.

- Discuss the important role of family, carers and support people in supporting the older person, advise caregivers on the importance of maintaining their own health.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the supports available to older persons and their families.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the importance of mental health

Assessment

Awarding of this Fellowship will be dependent upon the candidate demonstrating mastery of all of the above Learning Outcomes. This will be measured using the following competency based formative and summative assessment modalities throughout the course of the fellowship.

- ITER (In Training Evaluation Report)
- PIP-C (Performance in Practice – Consultation)
- CBD (Case Based Discussion)
- Audit
- These will be monitored through the individual Portfolio.

Award

Irish College of GPs International Clinical Fellowship in Care of the Older Person