CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE IN PRIMARY CARE

Module Code: GPN05
Credit Weighting: 10 ECTS
Contact Hours: 11 (plus allow 2-3 hours per week x 10 weeks distance learning)
Timing: Trimester 2 (January – March)
Module Leader: Dr. Eva Flynn, Discipline of General Practice, NUI Galway

Module Description
This module aims to provide general practitioners and community-based nurses with up-to-date, relevant knowledge to support their care of patients with cardiovascular disease (CVD). It will cover the main subdivisions of CVD problems as diagnosed and managed in a primary care setting. In addition to providing evidence-based information on management, this module provides an opportunity for practitioners to discuss complex issues through the online discussion board and at the workshops.

Learning Outcomes
At the end of this module practitioners will be able to:
- Describe and manage the common CVD conditions
- Explain the use of ambulatory and home blood pressure monitoring in managing hypertension
- Outline a systematic approach to the diagnosis and follow-up of heart failure in the community
- Differentiate angina from other causes of chest pain
- Use the HeartScore programme to define CVD risk for patients with hyperlipidaemia
- Decide which patients with hyperlipidaemia or arrhythmia need urgent admission or referral
- Diagnose and treat new cases of atrial fibrillation
- Differentiate between different heart murmurs and explain their clinical significance
- Plan the follow-up of patients who have had surgery for valvular heart disease
- Interpret an ECG
- Evaluate the scope and limitations of treating CVD in primary care
- Explain the investigation and management of CVD in a secondary care setting
- Facilitate behavioural change in patients, with an emphasis on the management of CVD.

Module Content
This module has five distance learning units (2 weeks each) supported by two workshop days.
1. Common CV Conditions I - Hypertension and Chronic Heart Failure
2. Common CV Conditions II - Ischaemic Heart Disease and Hyperlipidaemia
3. Common CV Conditions III - Arrhythmias and Valve Disease
4. Cardiovascular investigations: indications and interpretation
5. Lifestyle modification: targets and techniques

The workshops will include:
- Cardiac laboratory investigations
- ECG interpretation
- Examination techniques
- Behaviour modification

Teaching and Learning Strategies
Online distance learning and face-to-face workshops.

Assessment Strategy
45%: continuous assessment (E-tivities and online participation)
55%: practice-based assignment on completion of module (choice of clinical audit or essay).