



JOHANNESBURG
ACADEMIC OFFICE

CMSA

The Colleges of Medicine of South Africa NPC

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April 2017

THE COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS OF SOUTH AFRICA

R E G U L A T I O N S

**FOR ADMISSION TO THE EXAMINATION FOR THE
POST-SPECIALISATION**

SUB-SPECIALTY CERTIFICATE

IN

MEDICAL ONCOLOGY

Cert Medical Oncology(SA)

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1.0 INSTITUTION | The Colleges of Medicine of South Africa |
| 2.0 DIVISION | The College of Physicians of South Africa |
| 3.0 QUALIFICATION TITLE | Certificate in Medical Oncology |
| 4.0 OFFICIAL DESIGNATION | Certificate in Medical Oncology(SA) |
| 5.0 FIELD | 09 (Health Sciences and Social Services) |
| 6.0 SUB-FIELD | Preventive, promotive, curative and rehabilitative |
| 7.0 NQF FIELD | 7 |
| 8.0 PURPOSE OF QUALIFICATION | This qualification forms part of the credentialling process, for medical practitioners, as a sub-specialist medical oncologist. The Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA) stipulates training requirements, including a minimum period of experiential learning. It is usual but not essential for the examination to be taken and passed prior to the completion of the required period of supervised learning specified by the HPCSA ie two years. The aim of this qualification is to meet the needs for formal examination certification, as well as to set standards, nationally, for such a qualification |
| 9.0 PRIOR LEARNING FOR ADMISSION TO THE PROGRAMME LEADING TO THE QUALIFICATION | |
| 9.1 | FCP(SA) or MMed (Int Med) or equivalent qualification acceptable to the Health Professions Council of South Africa for registration as a specialist physician in South Africa |
| 9.2 | Training is valid for a period of three years from the date of completion in a numbered subspecialty training post. Candidates who do not successfully complete the subspecialty examination within the period must motivate with support from their HOD to the College of Physicians for a once off extension. |

10.0.../

10.0 OTHER ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

10.1 Current registration with the Health Professions Council of South Africa as a specialist physician

11.0 EXIT LEVEL OUTCOMES

11.1 Overall learning outcomes

a) Assessment criteria

- Be able to take a comprehensive history and do a complete physical examination on a patient with cancer or a related illness
- Be able to discuss findings, a diagnosis, differential diagnosis and management plan in cancer patients
- Be able to prioritise problems, plan cost-effective and safe investigation and rational management of cancer patients
- Be able to demonstrate insight into preventative strategies and prognosis of cancer patients
- Be able to interpret and integrate the results of relevant special investigations into a differential diagnosis and management plan
- Be able to include aspects of management, pathophysiology, pharmacology, genetics, molecular and cell biology or other relevant areas in which a competent medical oncologist would be expected to be knowledgeable

11.2 Overall learning outcomes

a) Be able to manage all conditions commonly occurring in Medical Oncology

Assessment criteria

- As for 11.1

11.3 Overall learning outcomes

a) Should possess particular competence in managing patients with malignant conditions, as well as in co-ordinating and overseeing the management of patients with multiple medical conditions associated with malignant diseases

Assessment criteria

- As for 11.1

11.4 Overall learning outcomes

a) Be able to judge when to seek the help of other specialists or sub-specialists

Assessment criteria

As for 11.1

11.5 Overall learning outcomes

a) Must be able to act as the patient’s advocate, advisor and guide within the discipline of Medical Oncology

Assessment criteria

As for 11.1

12. CRITICAL CROSS-FIELD AND PERSONAL OUTCOMES

| | <i>OUTCOMES (“BE ABLE TO”)</i> | <i>ASSESSMENT</i> |
|------|--|--------------------------|
| 12.1 | critically appraise the state of current knowledge with respect to important public health issues; | 16.6 |
| 12.2 | work as a team member, wherever this is important for the achievement of health goals; | 16.1 |
| 12.3 | demonstrate good leadership skills where these may be required for the candidate’s future professional work situation; | 16.1 |
| 12.4 | demonstrate good analytical skills; | 16.2, 4, 5, 6 |

| | | |
|-------|--|---------------|
| 12.5 | demonstrate an appropriate level of professional knowledge; | 16.4, 5, 6 |
| 12.6 | make health-related decisions in a rational way; | 16.1, 3 |
| 12.7 | solve health-related problems effectively; | 16.1, 2, 5, 6 |
| 12.8 | communicate effectively using written and oral methods | 16. (all) |
| 12.9 | use science and technology responsibly and ethically; | 16.1, 3, 6 |
| 12.10 | demonstrate good interpretative skills as well as sensitivity for community values | 16. (all) |
| 12.11 | assess one’s own personal strengths and weaknesses; | 16.1, 3 |
| 12.12 | commit to a life of continual professional development; | 16. (all) |
| 12.13 | act consistently within levels of competence and professional norms. | 16.1, 6 |

13.0 CURRICULUM AND SYLLABUS

These are attached as an Appendix.

14.0 CREDITS REQUIRED*

| | <i>Credits</i> | <i>(Weeks)</i> |
|---|----------------|----------------|
| 14.1 Credits for core learning (course work): | 24 | (6) |
| 14.2 Credits for advanced learning: | 120 | (30) |
| 14.3 Credits for supervised training attachments: | 52 | (13) |
| 14.4 Credits for elective learning: | 68 | (17) |
| 14.5 Total credits required: | 264 | (66) |

* *1 credit point equals 10 hours of notional learning. A 40 hour week of notional learning would equal 4 credit points*

15.0 MINIMUM CREDITS REQUIRED AT SPECIFIC LEVELS

15.1 Level 8: 240 (55 weeks)

16.0 ASSESSMENT TO ENSURE THE PURPOSE OF THE QUALIFICATION IS ACHIEVED
(criteria to be satisfied in the order shown below, successful completion of each step being a pre-requisite for the next step)

- 16.1 **Certification**, by head of the candidate’s training department, that at least 66 weeks of learning will have taken place (excluding leave, maternity leave and sick leave), in an approved training post, prior to the date of the written examination 16.4
- 16.2 **Completion of a logbook**, to be submitted at the time of applying for the Certificate in Medical Oncology Examination
- 16.3 **Two written, 3-hour closed book examination papers**, each potentially covering the entire syllabus of medical oncology with about one third applied basic sciences including pharmacology and two thirds clinical oncology

- 16.4 **The format of questions** will include the following:
- **Four questions** each containing 3 sub-questions, candidates to answer all 4 questions to demonstrate integrative skills
- 16.5 **Overall pass mark** 50% with a sub-minimum of 45% mean mark for any individual paper
- 16.6 **Two oral examinations.** Each oral examination will take 45 minutes
The pass mark for the oral examinations will be 50%

17.0 CRITERIA FOR REGISTRATION OF ASSESSORS

There will be a panel of at least four examiners appointed for each biannual cycle of written examinations.

50% or more of these examiners should hold appointments at institutions other than the convening institution, and all should be involved in the setting and marking of the papers

Examiners will be selected by the President of the College and the Convenor in discussion with the South African Society of Medical Oncology. At least half the examiners examining a candidate in any section of the examination should be from an institution other than the candidate's institution at the time of application

Any one examiner may examine the same candidate in different parts of the examination

Training institutions may send observers to any session of the examinations, but at their own expense

18.0 EXAMINERS

- 18.1 **Qualifications required:** All examiners should hold one or more of the following degrees: FCP(SA), MMed (Internal Medicine), or the equivalent and be registered with the HPCSA as a Medical Oncologist
- 18.2 **Experience required:** Normally, examiners should have been registered as Medical Oncology sub-specialists, with the Health Professions Council of South Africa, or its predecessors, for at least 5 years
- 18.3 **Other criteria:** It is recommended that examiners should hold an academic appointment, either part-time or fulltime

All examiners should be listed on a panel of approved examiners which has been approved by the Council of the College of Physicians, and the CMSA

A P P E N D I X A**EXPANDED INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES****1.0 ADMISSION TO THE EXAMINATION**

(To be read in conjunction with the Instructions)

1.1 A candidate may be admitted to the examination having

1.1.1 A specialist qualification to practise internal medicine which is registered or registrable with the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA) ie FCP(SA) or MMed (Int Med)

1.1.2 Normally completed 18 months fulltime post-specialisation training as a sub-specialist trainee in a teaching hospital department or division of medical oncology at the time of applying to enter for the examination. Consideration will be given in special circumstances as required

1.1.3 The CMSA may accept part-time training from sub-specialist trainees. They should have completed 2½ years in a teaching hospital including 1 year fulltime training, provided the candidate submits evidence of prior approval by the Health Professions Council of South Africa of a part-time training programme acceptable for sub-specialist registration. Consideration will also be given in special circumstances as required

1.2 Approval of a logbook (Appendix C)

1.3 The CMSA Senate, through its Examinations and Credentials Committee, will review every application for admission to the examination, and may also consider the professional and ethical standing of the candidate

2.0 ADMISSION TO CERTIFICATE IN MEDICAL ONCOLOGY

2.1 The candidate having passed the examination and having been admitted to the Certificate in Medical Oncology, will be asked to sign a declaration, as under:

I, the undersigned, do solemnly and sincerely declare

that while a member of the CMSA I will at all times do all within my power to promote the objects of the CMSA and uphold the dignity of the CMSA and its members

that I will observe the provisions of the Memorandum and Articles of Association, By-laws, Regulations and Code of Ethics of the CMSA as in force from time to time

that I will obey every lawful summons issued by order of the Senate of the said CMSA, having no reasonable excuse to the contrary

and I make this solemn declaration faithfully promising to adhere to its terms

Signed at this day of

..... 20

Signature

Witness

(who must be a Founder, Associate Founder, Fellow, Member, Diplomate or Commissioner of Oaths)

2.2 A two-thirds majority of members of the CMSA Senate present at the relevant meeting shall be necessary for the award to any candidate of a Certificate in Medical Oncology

2.3 A holder of the Certificate in Medical Oncology shall be entitled to the appropriate form of certificate under the seal of the CMSA

2.4 In the event of a candidate not being awarded the Certificate (after having passed the examination) the examination fee shall be refunded in full

2.5 The first annual subscription is due one year after registration (statements are rendered annually)

APPENDIX B

1.0 SYLLABUS

1.1 Basic Sciences:

- 1.1.1 i) Pathophysiology of cancer disease states including:
- General and relevant pathology and histopathology
 - Relevant clinical pathology, general principles and interpretation of commonly used tests including economic issues
- ii) Principles of genetics, cell biology, structure and function of molecular biology with an emphasis on the cell cycle, cytokines, receptors and signal transduction pathways relevant to cancer
- iii) Principles of applied biochemistry
- iv) Basic sciences of immunology both diagnostic and therapeutic
- v) Oncological Pharmacology:
- Especially pharmacokinetics, pharmacodynamics, mechanisms of drug interactions and side effects, principles of drug trials, cell cycle, cytokine, receptor and signal transduction pathway interactions as well as pharmacoeconomics
- vi) Principles of cancer epidemiology
- vii) A working knowledge of Imaging Techniques and Tests:
- Nuclear Medicine
 - Sonography
 - MRI and related techniques
- viii) Research methodology and statistical evaluation
- 1.1.2 Basic Sciences must be regarded as an applied science to the principles and practise of medical oncology

1.2 Clinical Oncology

Principles and practise of medical oncology both diagnostic and therapeutic, ethical issues in cancer care and health policies; including diseases important in the South African context, cost-effective investigation and treatment

1.3 For guidelines and recommended reading, see Appendix D

APPENDIX C¹

1.0 FORMAT OF THE EXAMINATION

The format of the Cert Medical Oncology(SA) written examination will be the following:

- 1.1 Two (2) written three (3) hour closed book examination papers each potentially covering the entire syllabus of Medical Oncology with about $\frac{1}{4}$ basic sciences including pharmacology and $\frac{3}{4}$ clinical oncology with an emphasis on patient management.
- 1.2 Each paper will have one (1) basic science question and three (3) clinical questions each worth 25 marks.
- 1.3 Four (4) of the eight (8) overall questions (in each paper) will consist of clinical scenarios with a series of questions about the progressive approach to the patient concerned eg
 - 1.3.1 the first question will be about the initial workup of the patient both clinically and molecularly.
 - 1.3.2 The second question will be based on the answers given in the first question and will concern patient management.
 - 1.3.3 The third question would consider an approach to this patient following relapse including clinical and molecular work up followed by
 - 1.3.4 a fourth question on patient management based on these factors. These questions are designed to assess the candidates' thought processes into patient management rather than only being an regurgitation of facts.
- 1.4 The other four (4) questions will each have three (3) sub-questions each worth $8\frac{1}{3}$ marks. These questions will assess the candidates' knowledge of oncology and will include basic science questions covering pharmacology, molecular and cell biology as well as principles of statistics and evidence based medicine.

¹ Full details for the examination provided

A P P E N D I X D

GUIDELINES FOR CANDIDATES AND EXAMINERS

1.0 CANDIDATES

- 1.1 Recognised training centres should have a supervisor for sub-specialist trainees in training. The supervisor should be on the board of examiners and be familiar with the examination and the CMSA regulations
- 1.2 The role of the supervisor should include:
 - Discussion of the regulations for the Certificate in Medical Oncology examination with prospective candidates with an indication of the breadth and depth required for different aspects of the examination
 - Discussion of the methods of assessment used in the examination
 - Informing the candidate of the limitations of his or her hospital as a training institution
- 1.3 On written request written reports on their performance will be made available to unsuccessful candidates after the examinations from the CMSA convenor. These must be such as to allow unsuccessful candidates to learn where they have made mistakes and correct their deficiencies in specific areas

2.0 EXAMINERS

- 2.1 Question papers must be carefully reviewed by the convenor and the other examiners before the examinations. All care will be taken to ensure that the questions are appropriate and free from ambiguities, grammatical errors, errors of vocabulary and spelling errors
- 2.2 Standards used in the oral examination will be the same for each candidate
- 2.3 At least two examiners will examine each candidate in each oral part of the examination. Examiners should ideally play a lesser role in the examination of candidates with whom they have worked closely in the recent past although this may not always be possible
- 2.4 In the oral parts of the examinations, each examiner should submit his or her own independent assessment of each candidate. Discrepancies between the assessments will be discussed at the examiners meeting. The consistency of the examinations as a whole will be assessed
- 2.5 Examiners should familiarise themselves with the basic theoretical considerations involved in examinations

3.0 RECOMMENDED READING

- 3.1 General textbooks in Oncology (eg Cancer, Principles and Practice of Oncology by DeVita, Hellman and Rosenberg) and reviews and seminal articles in leading oncology and medical journals (eg Journal of Clinical Oncology, Cancer, Blood, Annals of Oncology and New England Journal of Medicine)

In addition candidates should be aware of the Proceedings of the recent Conferences in Oncology including American Society of Clinical Oncology, European Society of Medical Oncology, European Conference on Clinical Oncology, South African Society of Medical Oncology and American Society of Hematology
- 3.2 Sets of previous examination papers are available from the Johannesburg CMSA office

A P P E N D I X E

THE EXAMINATION

1.0 THE ORAL EXAMINATIONS

1.1 Candidates

As well as discussion of various oncological scenarios, your examiners may ask you to interpret and integrate the results of relevant special investigations into differential diagnoses and management plans. Your examiners may choose to expand the discussion to aspects of management, pathophysiology, pharmacology, genetics, molecular and cell biology or other relevant areas in which a competent medical oncologist would be expected to be knowledgeable. The standard expected is that of a sub-specialist medical oncologist

1.2 Examiners

The standard is that which is expected of a competent sub-specialist medical oncologist

The percentage system applies. Candidates who achieve less than 50% will fail