



September 2023

R E G U L A T I O N S

FOR ADMISSION TO THE DIPLOMA IN ALLERGOLOGY

OF THE COLLEGE OF FAMILY PHYSICIANS OF SOUTH AFRICA

Dip Allerg(SA)

1.0 Background and motivation for this diploma:

Allergic disorders affect 20-30% of the population who present with conditions such as asthma, allergic rhinitis, atopic dermatitis, insect allergy, food allergy and occupational allergy. The prevalence of these disorders is rising. Many medical practitioners have to manage patients with allergic conditions on a regular basis and are interested in gaining additional knowledge of the subject. In many areas patients have no access to doctors with expertise on allergies. There is thus an urgent need to train more practitioners in the field of allergology.

2.0 Educational Aim/Purpose/Goal of this Diploma in terms of:

2.1 *Increase capacity/competence of practitioners*

- 2.1.1 The knowledge and application of basic sciences appropriate to the practise of allergology in South Africa.
- 2.1.2 The acquisition of problem-solving skills in the practise of allergology.
- 2.1.3 The ability to request and interpret appropriate, cost-effective special investigations relevant to the practise of allergology.
- 2.1.4 The ability to recognise patients with allergic problems requiring specialist attention.

2.2 *Improving patient and community care*

The diploma aims to increase the availability of medical practitioners skilled in managing patients with allergic conditions. On completion of the Diploma, the practitioner will have the ability to manage most of the patients with allergic problems encountered in the community (public and private sector) and district hospitals in South Africa.

3.0 Target Group/s for this diploma

Allergic disorders affect multiple systems, so that no single speciality can offer comprehensive care. The Diploma is aimed at specialists and generalists who have a special interest in achieving additional competence in allergy management but is not intended to be a subspecialist qualification. A diplomate needs to have some extra competencies and be able to run an (non-specialist) allergy service as well as support and teach those around her.

4.0 Admission as a Candidate**4.1 Registration requirements**

The candidate must be registered or registrable with the Health Professions Council of South Africa as a medical practitioner.

4.2 Basic Qualification required

The candidate must hold a registrable primary medical qualification, must have completed his/her internship, and have at least six months additional clinical experience before being admitted to take the examination for the Diploma.

4.3 Credit points required

Three hundred 300 points need to be recorded in the logbook. Such accumulation of points may only commence when registration requirements have been met.

4.4 Logbook

A completed logbook must accompany the application to enter the examination. All instruction, experience and training must be entered into the logbook which must contain certified evidence of compliance with the requirements for education and training (paragraph 4.5). The logbook must be signed by the persons providing the training/ education. The logbook should be completed over a period not exceeding 3 years.

4.5 Education and Training Criteria**4.5.1 Supervised training**

The candidate will be required to attend allergy-related clinics at teaching hospitals or CMSA-approved allergy clinics (including clinics in private practice) for a minimum total of 20 hours at 5 credit points per hour (100 points). During this practical training, the candidate should receive instruction in lung function testing, skin prick testing, spacer technique, peak flow testing, epipen ® training, food challenges, wet wraps and immunotherapy, documented in the logbook.

A maximum of 100 points may be obtained in this category.

4.5.2 Unsupervised experience

Full or part-time general/primary care/non-specialist practice or experience in non CMSA-approved hospitals which includes seeing patients with allergic disorders at the rate of 1 point per hour, to be claimed by affidavit in the logbook.

A maximum of 50 points may be awarded in this category.

4.5.3 Theoretical education/training – coursework, lectures, symposia, congresses, publications

4.5.3.1 Attendance at allergy congresses, postgraduate courses, CME meetings or allergy journal clubs: 5 points per hour.

4.5.3.2 A presentation at an allergy congress or CME meeting will be credited with 20 points.

4.5.3.3 Articles in accredited journals will be credited with 20 points per publication.

Credit points in this section will be recognised if recorded in the logbook available for this purpose from the CMSA, certified by the presenter or organiser of the symposium, congress or meeting, and declared as correct by the candidate.

A minimum of 100 points may be obtained in the category theoretical education/training.

5.0 Guidelines to syllabus

See Appendices 1 & 2.

6.0 Preparation for Examination

See Appendix 3.

Portfolio of learning

Compilation of a portfolio of learning is required of candidates with a minimum of 60% portfolio assessment tool (PAT) mark prerequisite for exam entrance.

7.0 Examination**7.1 Overall standard expected**

Level of competence equivalent to that required of a generalist working at a district hospital and specialists who wish to achieve additional competence in allergy.

7.2 Written examination**7.2.1 Structure**

The written part of the examination will comprise 2 papers

Question paper 1: Question paper: 2 hours

Structured short questions (which may have subsections or one-word answers)

Question paper 2: Multiple Choice Question paper 2 hours. A-type (single best answer) multiple-choice questions

7.2.2 Objectives of the written examinations

To test knowledge of clinical conditions, diagnosis and assessment and management of allergies, diagnostic reasoning and basic sciences.

7.3 Clinical examination**7.3.1 Structure**

Composition of focused and integrated skill consultation stations where candidates must take a history and examine patients.

7.3.2 Objectives of the clinical examination

To assess the candidate's ability to elicit and interpret an allergy history, to perform a clinical examination, to diagnose the allergy problem, to utilise appropriate investigative technology (in vivo and in vitro), and, with the background knowledge of the disease and knowledge of therapeutic options and pitfalls, to prepare a plan of management.

7.3.3 Assessment

Assessment will be by a standardised assessment tool (see appendix 5) and be graded out of 100.

7.3.4 Final grade.

The final grade will be calculated by adding the portfolio assessment tool mark (20%), written examinations paper 1 and paper 2 (40%) and clinical examination (40%).

7.3.5 Final Pass mark

A candidate must obtain an average of 50% overall after achieving a 50% mark in both the written and clinical examinations

8.0 ADMISSION AS A DIPLOMATE

8.1 The candidate having passed the examination and having been admitted as a Diplomate to the College of Family Practitioners of South Africa, will be asked to sign a declaration, as below:

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)

8.2 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 Diploma

8.3 A Diplomate shall be entitled to the appropriate form of certificate under the seal of the CMSA

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

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

A P P E N D I X 1**GUIDELINES FOR CANDIDATES FOR THE DIPLOMA IN ALLERGOLOGY(SA)****SYLLABUS FOR THE EXAMINATION: see details below**

- 1.0 The candidate will be required to have working knowledge of Human anatomy, physiology and immunology, considered in relation to allergology.
- 2.0 The candidate will be required to have working knowledge of common allergens and aerobiology.
- 3.0 The candidate will be required to have working knowledge of the pharmacology of drugs that may be used for treating allergic conditions, including their mechanisms of action and potential drug interactions. A knowledge of immunotherapy is also required.
- 4.0 The candidate will be required to have a working knowledge of the diagnosis, treatment and management of the common as well as rarer diseases caused by allergy that are potentially fatal (such as e.g., anaphylaxis and hereditary angioedema) and others.
- 5.0 The candidate will be expected to have a working knowledge of the various diagnostic modalities utilised in allergology (such as e.g. such as in vivo and in vitro tests).

A P P E N D I X 2

CONTENT GUIDELINES: SYLLABUS FOR THE DIPLOMA IN ALLERGOLOGY

A. BASIC SCIENCE

IMMUNOLOGY

The candidate will be required to have working knowledge of:

- the immune system
- The types of immune response
- The mediators of hypersensitivity and inflammation/cytokines
- The markers of allergic inflammation

2. ANATOMY AND PHYSIOLOGY

The candidate will be required to have working knowledge of:

- Upper airway structure and physiology
- Lung structure and physiology
- Structure and function of the skin
- Structure and function of the gastrointestinal tract

3. ALLERGOLOGY

The candidate will be required to have working knowledge of:

- Genetics of allergy
- Allergens (including occupational allergens), non-specific irritants and pollutants
- Aerobiology and common inhalant allergens in South Africa
- Food allergens
- Latex allergy
- Immunotherapy

4. THERAPEUTICS

- Pharmacology:

The candidate will be required to have working knowledge of:

- Glucocorticosteroids: mechanisms of action and therapeutic use in allergy
- β_2 adrenergic drugs
- Theophylline
- Antihistamines
- Anticholinergic drugs
- Cromones
- Leukotriene receptor antagonists

- Drug interactions
- Complementary therapy
- Environmental control and specific allergen avoidance techniques
- Immunotherapy
- Allergy and sport
- Pharmaco-economics and cost-effective therapy

B. CLINICAL SCIENCE

The candidate will be required to have working knowledge of:

- Asthma – definition, pathogenesis, epidemiology, natural history, diagnosis and treatment
- Asthma and other allergic conditions in infancy and childhood
- Exercise-induced asthma
- Occupational asthma
- Asthma in pregnancy
- Allergic and non-allergic rhinitis
- Co-morbid conditions of rhinitis
- Special situations in allergic rhinitis – pregnancy, occupational
- Atopic dermatitis
- Urticaria and angioedema
- Contact dermatitis
- Ocular allergy
- Insect allergy
- Anaphylaxis
- Food allergy and intolerance
- Drug allergy
- Latex allergy
- Oral allergy syndrome
- Prevention of allergy
- Effect of allergies on children (e.g. may present as ADHD)

C. DIAGNOSTIC MODALITIES

The candidate will be required to have working knowledge of:

- The allergic history
- Examination
- Skin prick testing
- In vitro testing
- Nasal smears
- Food challenge tests
- Drug challenge tests
- Lung function tests
- Unproven diagnostic tests

D. EDUCATIONAL STRATEGIES

The candidate will be required to have working knowledge of:

- Prediction and prevention of allergy
- Prevention programmes
- National Asthma Education Programme (NAEP)

E. BASIC EPIDEMIOLOGY

The candidate will be required to have working knowledge of:

- Epidemiological trends in allergy

A P P E N D I X 3

PREPARATION FOR THE EXAMINATION

Reading recommendations. Where appropriate the latest additions of:

- ABC of Allergy (BMJ)
- ALLSA Handbook of Allergy
- Allergy and asthma journals (list and articles available from ALLSA Resource Centre)
- Current Allergy and Clinical Immunology (ALLSA Journal)
- Manual of Allergy and Immunology, Glenn J Lawlor, Thomas J Fischer, (Eds). A Little Brown Spiral Manual
- Middleton E, Reed CE, Ellis EF (Eds), Allergy Principles and Practice, Mosby.
- Primer of Allergy (JAMA)
- T. Mabelane. Basics of Allergy in Primary Care. Jacana

A P P E N D I X 4**CMSA-RECOGNISED HOSPITALS FOR DIPLOMA IN ALLERGOLOGY(SA)
TRAINING**

Allergology training in fulfilment of the DIPLOMA IN ALLERGOLOGY(SA) examination regulations may be undertaken in allergology training posts under the supervision of university departments in teaching hospital complexes, as well as in teaching hospital equivalents or in university satellite departments of non-teaching hospitals.

The College of Family Physicians will assess the suitability of hospital and private practice clinics for accreditation purposes. Teaching hospital allergy clinics run by specialists trained in Allergology locally or overseas, receive automatic accreditation, as would lung function and other laboratories at such institutions.

Enquiries concerning acceptability of posts should be addressed to:

The Academic Registrar
CMSA
Private Bag X23
BRAAMFONTEIN
2017

A P P E N D I X 5

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR DIPLOMA EXAMINERS AND CONVENORS

GUIDELINES FOR EXAMINERS:

1. When setting the examination, examiners should guard against placing undue emphasis on aspects which are esoteric, uncommon or of minimal clinical significance.
2. Examination questions should be appropriate to the average candidates' stage of training and experience.
3. Examiners should be reasonable when setting written questions about new drugs or techniques, particularly if they are not significantly related to clinical practice.
4. Ambiguity must be avoided and the average candidate should have a clear understanding of what is required in the answer.
5. After each examination, the examiners should meet and discuss the examination and any problems arising from any aspect of the examination.

GUIDELINES FOR CONVENORS:

The Overall Convenor should ensure that:

1. There is no unnecessary duplication between different examiners or different examinations
2. Questions are fair and not ambiguous
3. Questions cover an overall spread of the subject
4. Translations are accurate and abbreviations are avoided

A P P E N D I X 6

Standardised assessment tool

JOHANNESBURG
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