

**Nepalese Diploma in Mountain Medicine
2012
Kathmandu and Thame**

Information sheet on Nep DiMM 2012

1. Course duration :
 - Nov 9- Dec 5-8 2012 (4 weeks) ; usually 9am-5pm on most days with some day-offs
2. Course venue:
 - Part A in Kathmandu(1 week) and
 - Part B in Thame, Everest region (3 week, at 3800m)
3. Course language:
 - English
4. Total intake :
 - 20 seats (Roughly 10 Nepali and 10 international candidates)
5. Eligibility:
 - Medical doctors, few seats for experienced nurses, paramedics and final year medical students (will be awarded the diploma once they graduate from Med school)
6. Cost :
 - 4,500 USD for the entire course for international doctors
 - Nrs 60,000 for the entire course for Nepali doctors
 - There can be some scholarship seats to Nepali doctors. Last year we had 3 full and 5 fifty percent scholarship seats. This depends on the sponsorship that we will be able to attract.
7. What does it include?
 - Course fees
 - Accomodation and food for the entire course duration
 - Two way flights/transport to Khumbu or other course site
 - Trekking permits and guides fees
 - National Park entrance fees
 - Basic group climbing gears/equipment
 - Welcome package
 - Registrations and graduation certificates
 - Exam fees
8. Any hidden/additional costs?
 - You will be given a list of personal gears and equipment which you will be expected to buy of your own
 - To give you some time to explore Kathamndu, most of the evenings (after lecture) during Part A KTM (1 week) will be free and you will have to bear your own dinner, but we will have some dinner occasions while in Kathmandu
 - If the flight cancellations to Khumbu region is prolonged beyond 2 days then you will have to bear your own accomodation and food expenses for the prologed days.
9. Where is the course approved from?
 - From UIAA/IKAR/ISMM
 - Supported by Medex UK and UK Diploma in Mtn Med
10. Who are the faculties and instructors?

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- We had more than 20 instructors last year, with many renowned high altitude experts
- Mix of Nepali and international instructors from UK, Germany, Switzerland and respective diplomas
- UIAGM certified mountain guides from Switzerland, UK and Nepal last year

11. Guest speakers?

- Last year we had 2 guest speakers; Dr Jim Milledge and Dr Luanee Freer

12. Curriculum?

- Approved by medical commission of UIAA/IKAR/ISMM
- Covers standard international curriculum adapted mostly from UK Diploma
- Incorporates local health context suitable to Nepalese Himalayas
- Both theory and practical mountain medicine lectures/scenarios/CBDs/
- Practical mountaineering skills of at least 10 days with 3 or 4 days of glacier camping
- More idea on the attached "*Hints to Potential Diplomats*"

13. Safety issues?

- Upon acceptance into the diploma, you will need to produce a personal medical, accident and evacuation insurance including high altitude (details after selection)
- Upon acceptance, you will also need to fill out a detailed medical form and emergency contact details

14. Dietary choices?

- Our hotels and trekking partners serve standard vegetarian and non vegetarian meals

15. What was our overall rating of pilot Diploma 2011?

- Students were asked to complete the anonymous feedback form.
- The overall rating of the course was **4.66 out of 5** (*1 being poor and 5 being excellent*)
- Every student mentioned that they would "*Definitely Recommend*" the course

16. Visa issues for international candidates?

- As the course is of only a month duration, you will have to apply for a tourist visa. Citizens of most of the countries are eligible for an on arrival tourist visa.

17. Want to know more?

- Drop an email to mmsndiploma@gmail.com

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DiMM-Hints to Potential Diplomats

By a Diplomat

Before committing yourself to undertake the Diploma in Mountain Medicine ponder the time demands it will make on your professional and personal life. You will need at least four weeks of holiday/study leave for the residential sections. During the course you will have to complete at least five assignments-before,during and after the course by a set deadline. Less experienced candidates can expect to spend two to three hours per topic to achieve a pass. At some stage you will have to do at least two long essays on subjects of your choice or among the set of topics. These will roughly take a day to complete.

The course syllabus is very varied. It covers the physiology of altitude, trauma, exercise, nutrition and temperature extremes. There are theory and practical sessions on trauma and medical problems. By the end of the course you will be expected to be competent with mountain navigation in the dark in bad weather, to demonstrate familiarity with ice axe and crampons. You will be observed seconding or leading easy climbs on rock and snow and crossing glaciers. You must be conversant with ropework, belays, abseiling, prussiking and crevasse rescue. There will be sessions on mountain medical kits, expedition drugs, medico legal considerations, travel medicine, avalanche rescue, major incident management, group management, radio communications, helicopter use and limitations, care of incountry staff and scene of potential crime management of hill fatalities.

Some of this may sound intimidating but remember that your guides and mentors are available to help you throughout the whole course duration. However experienced you are at the start of the course, expect to be challenged at some stage. The guides and faculty members have been selected for their proven teaching and assessment ability and often for areas of special expertise so if they cannot help you personally they will know another person who can. If you have specific experience don't be modest but use it to help others (including faculty members)...later in the course you may be asking them for a tight rope!

Diplomats who spent too much time skiving off lectures at medical school to go climbing or skiing may struggle with the theory components, those who attended all their medical school course may struggle on some of the hill days.

Diplomats are assessed by formal essays, and lastly by MCQ's, but also throughout all the practical sessions and they are expected to demonstrate a sound medical knowledge with the ability to look after themselves in the mountains. They are expected to blend medical and mountain knowledge so they think mountainmedicine rather than mountaineering and medicine. This necessitates the ability to think laterally "out of the box" incorporating more variable factors than you will ever be presented with in a hospital or GP surgery setting.

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There are many ways to build the skills required. The process should continue even after you have passed the diploma. The most important thing is to get out into the hills on your own &/or with your peers in all weathers and at all times of year. Make your own route finding and leading decisions. Make use of your guides and mentors, they are an educational resource. Background reading is essential. Know the key texts but also enjoy some of the other recommended books and remember mountaineering has a very rich literature and that more relaxing general mountaineering books will also stimulate thought. There are some excellent DVD's now available on winter and alpine skills. Consider group purchasing a copy prior to the relevant courses, it is no coincidence several DVD's "star" the diploma guiding team in the areas we visit.

Work on your weaknesses. If you are a keen rock climber try some long mountain days incorporating navigation to and from the crag over some summits. Finish a route and scramble to the top of the mountain. If you are a sports climber get onto some multipitch routes. If you enjoy scrambling go to your local indoor wall so you can get some insight into sports climbing training injuries or just watch a bouldering competition for insight into the gymnastic aspects of our sport.

If you are a hospital based anaesthetist you may benefit from sitting in on a local travel medicine clinic. If you are a GP registrar consider joining a local BASICS scheme for training in pre hospital trauma care.

Don't put yourself under extra strain on a course by turning up ill equipped. You will be send equipment lists in the precourse details but don't be afraid of asking advice from prior to any expensive purchases.

Make use of friends and family. Throw your children over the stairs (roped) to get them out of a crevasse in the warmth of your own home before you try it will a fellow diplomat on a cold windy glacier. Its harder tying knots with gloves on. Practice knots whilst watching TV. Practice putting crampons on and off in the garage rather than on the lounge carpet. If on a skiing holiday consider a half day practicing avalanche search and rescue.

Enjoy the course, it is fun, you will make good friends, develop new skills however good you were when you started and, who knows, it may get you the job you always wanted.

*(Written by a Diplomat and now faculty member for
advice to potential diplomats to facilitate
understanding of the commitment required.
Modified and adapted as required for Nep DiMM purpose)*