



International Diploma in Older Adults' Mental Health





The Royal College of Psychiatrists (RCPsych) works to secure the best outcomes for people with mental illness, learning difficulties and developmental disorders by promoting excellent mental health services, training mental health professionals, promoting quality and research, setting standards and being the voice of psychiatry globally.

We are a professional medical and educational body responsible for supporting psychiatrists throughout their careers from training through to retirement.

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As Dean, my overarching vision is to explicitly link the Royal College of Psychiatrists' education offer with patient outcomes.

This important global initiative will help us build and develop a skilled workforce in the critical area of old age psychiatry.

Prof Subodh Dave, Dean

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This global programme in its second year represents our continued commitment to advancing the profile and awareness of older adults mental health.

It aims to improve the knowledge and skills of psychiatrists and foster a shared commitment to improve the care to our older adult populations across diverse cultures and health care systems.

Dr Mohan Bhat, Chair of Old Age Psychiatry Faculty

About the programme

The world's population is ageing fast. The WHO report that, between 2015 and 2050, the proportion of the world's population over 60 years will nearly double from 12% to 22%. By 2050, two-thirds of the world's population over 60 years will live in low- and middle-income countries.

Governments face major challenges to ensure their health and social systems are prepared for this demographic shift. Consequently, there is a fast-growing need for healthcare professionals to have relevant, up-to-date training and knowledge within older adults' mental health.

The RCPsych International Diploma in Older Adults' Mental Health is a knowledge enhancement programme, designed for doctors outside the UK wishing to upskill or refresh their understanding of how the most common mental disorders in older adults present and are managed.

This course is module-based, delivered over 12 months and is designed to be practical and clinically focused.

The programme will allow learners to broaden their understanding of the clinical and service-related complexities of working within older adults' mental health.

In addition, learners can contribute to, and benefit from, a growing international community of practice for psychiatry of older people, sharing the skills and knowledge to develop services for older people within their own clinical practice.

Key Information

Commitment	1 year, part-time. 42 weeks, at least 3 to 4 hours a week
Format	100% online
Fees	£6,000



Who is the programme aimed at?

Doctors outside the UK including:

- Psychiatrists
- Other doctors with significant experience of working in the field of mental health (e.g. family practitioners). We recommend contacting the RCPsych prior to applying to discuss the expected level of knowledge.

The diploma is aimed primarily at those with no specialist training in old age psychiatry.



What will you gain from the programme?

- Confidence in the assessment and diagnosis of mental disorders presenting in older adults.
- Ability to effectively and safely prescribe medications used within older adults' mental health.
- Understanding of the clinical and service-related complexities of working within older adults' mental health.
- Skills and resources to develop services for older people within your own clinical practice.
- An approach to understanding older adults' mental health from a global perspective and an appreciation of the challenges in the delivery of high-quality healthcare in diverse socioeconomic settings.
- On successful completion of the course, candidates will be awarded the Royal College of Psychiatrists' International Diploma in Older Adults' Mental Health.





Programme benefits



Access to a community of experts in older adults' mental health.

Our faculty has been selected based on their subject expertise and experience to ensure the highest standards of educational excellence.



Participants from across the globe. Study together, learning from each other's experiences and challenges.



Easy-to-use learning platform. The course is delivered using the RCPsych web-based platform, which offers a modern and flexible learning experience to students with access to all the learning resources at any time.



Skills acquisition, employability and career progression in fields related to older adults' mental health.



Flexibility around work and home commitments and accessibility of content at a time and pace that suits each learner.



Support of a dedicated course administrative team.



Programme entry requirements

- Primary medical qualification from a recognised medical institution. Please visit the [World Directory of Medical Schools](#).
- Three years' experience working as a psychiatrist, or other doctor with significant experience of working in the field of mental health.
- Professional medical registration with your local regulatory body.
- Recommended English language proficiency equivalent to [IELTS Level 6](#).
- Professional experience in older adults' mental health or aspiration to practice in older adults' mental health.

If you would like advice about requirements before applying, please contact us.





How will the programme be delivered?

This interactive programme will be delivered fully online through a model which blends self-directed learning with tutor-led group learning including:

- eLearning modules
- tutor moderated discussion forums, emphasising peer-to-peer knowledge and experience sharing
- regular webinars so learners can interact with experts in the field
- interactive case-based learning
- formative exercises and assignments including written reflections encouraging participants to engage critically and apply the learning to their experience and practice in their own healthcare systems
- access to an extensive online library
- individualised feedback points during the programme
- a summative piece of written work at the end of the course.



What is expected of learners?

To successfully complete the programme, you will be expected to:

- spend approximately 15 hours per module (at least 3 to 4 hours a week) on your studies
- attend fortnightly live sessions and actively participate in discussions
- regularly login and participate in the course
- complete a written reflective activity at the end of each module
- participate in discussion forums throughout the course
- produce a written piece of summative work at the end of the course.





What does the programme cover?

This course contains a series of modules, covering major topics in older adults' mental health, including:

Assessment in
older adults

Principles of **prescribing and
psychopharmacology** in
older adults

Early to late stage dementia
and **non-pharmacological
approaches** to management

Delirium

Mood and anxiety
disorders

**Psychotic
disorders**

Neuropsychiatric
disorders



Feedback from 2024/25 course participants

“The diploma was so worth the fee and the knowledge acquired through it was invaluable. Thanks to everyone on the team for the flawless delivery of such a complex endeavour.”

“This course was a rewarding and impactful learning experience.”

“The diploma has been both intellectually stimulating and professionally transformative for me.”

“The diploma had the right balance of teaching, knowledge sharing and participation. The in-depth self-directed teaching materials in each module was very useful.”

“It was a wonderful opportunity to learn from experts in the field, to boost my confidence in taking on this valuable and rewarding work and to advocate for older adults where I work and live.”

“The course not only taught me the theory but also challenged me to apply it within my own context, where resources are minimal, mental health stigma is high, and specialist old age psychiatry services are absent.”

“I have greatly enjoyed the diploma course. It has exceeded my hopes and expectations around updating my knowledge base and confidence in all areas of my practice that involve older adults.”



Register your interest at
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<https://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/international>



**International
Diploma**
*in Older Adults'
Mental Health*

