Module: Recognition & Management of the Seriously Ill Child by Chris Mulryan

Code: HLT2043
20 credits at level HE5

Description and Purpose of Module

Being confronted with a seriously ill child is one of the most challenging of situations that any health professional can be faced with. Aside from the obvious emotional strain that caring for a sick child places on the care givers, the assessment and management of these small patients is also particularly complex. Children have different anatomy, physiology and they suffer with a range of different diseases that are not always seen in adulthood. Children and infants are often not able to communicate their history or define their symptom well. Additionally the physical signs of serious illness are often non specific and occasionally deceptive in children making the early recognition of the seriously ill child difficult for those without a robust understanding of paediatrics. Finally the skills that are employed as a part of the management the sick child are more technically difficult to perform on children due to their small size and different anatomy, this problem is further complicated by the thankful infrequency in which these skills are practiced on live patients. It is these factors combined that make the recognition and management of the sick child particularly challenging.

The aim of this module is then to assist individuals who may be called upon to assess and treat sick children with the knowledge and understanding needed to recognise children who are at risk of becoming seriously ill and equip them with a set of core skills that can be employed in the initial management of a child or infant with an established serious illness. In turn it is hoped that students completing this module will have an increased level of confidence when dealing with sick children.

Indicative Syllabus Content

• Paediatric anatomy and physiology, how it differs from that of adults and its clinical relevance
• The patho-physiology of acute illness in children
• Assessment strategies used in the detection and further assessment of potentially sick children
• The physiological markers that indicate the risk / presence of serious illness in children
• The common pathologies that affect children and result in serious illness
• The immune response, sepsis and systemic inflammatory response syndromes
• Circulatory and Respiratory failure in children
• Basic life support of children and infants
• Advanced airway care in children and infants
• Accessing the venous system in children and infants
• Fluid resuscitation
• Pharmacology of medicines used in the initial care of the acutely ill
• Coordination of paediatric advanced life support and team leadership
• The impact of stress and the effects of a child’s death on all concerned
• Issues relating to the safeguarding of children

Learning, Teaching and Assessment

This module is delivered in a blended learning manner. Students studying this module will benefit from a range of interactive on line learning materials which have been specifically designed to assist students gain the knowledge needed to facilitate the early recognition and management of the acutely ill child.

This will then be augmented with time spent in the university where students will have an opportunity to practice a range of clinical skills that are relevant to the assessment and management of the acutely ill child. Then students will have an opportunity to combine their knowledge and skills by taking part in a series of clinical simulations which again have been specifically designed build confidence by exposing students to a range of clinical scenarios which will mirror the most commonly encountered paediatric emergency presentations. A range of key note lectures will also be provided during the student’s time in university which will address topics that underpin the clinical care of a sick child.

In addition to the prescribed learning activities students will also have access to library, resources tutorial support and the Universities clinical skills suite so that they can seek calculation and practice their clinical skills.

Students learning will be summatively assessed in two parts, part one being written test paper to assess the knowledge gained during this module. Part two will be an assessment of the students clinical skills and their ability to integrate knowledge into practice by taking part in an Observed Structured Clinical Examination.

Learning Outcomes and Assessment Criteria

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<tr>
<th>Learning Outcomes when you have successfully completed this module you will:</th>
<th>Assessment Criteria to demonstrate that you have achieved the learning outcome you will:</th>
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| 1. Understand and apply knowledge of paediatric anatomy, physiology, pathology and compensatory mechanisms to the assessment and management of the acutely ill child. | 1. Describe how a child’s anatomy, physiology differs from that of an adult and explain how this leads to altered mechanisms of pathogenesis and compensation
2. Demonstrate an ability to anticipate decompensation and support children though acute illness through homeostatic resuscitation |
| 2. Be familiar with childhood illnesses than can result in acute decompensation | 1. List illnesses that commonly affect children
2. Describe the pathogenesis of illnesses that affect children
3. Specifically describe the development of seious infections in children |
| 1. Outline the reference values of vital signs in children across a range of age groups
2. Describe the signs that indicate a child may be experiencing an episode |
3. Screen children for signs of acute illness

4. Intervene successfully in paediatric emergencies to avert crisis

5. Psychologically support the child, parents and those significant to the child through an episode of acute illness

Assessment

Your achievement of the learning outcomes for this module will be tested as follows:

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Description</td>
<td>1. Written paper of multiple choice questions with a pass mark of 70% correct responses (Pass / Fail)</td>
<td>2. A reflective case study (1000 words)</td>
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<td>Learning Outcomes</td>
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Prerequisite Module(s)

There are no prerequisites for this module.

Barred Combinations

No restrictions apply.

Indicative Reading

Aspects of this list will become out of date with the issue of the 2010 resuscitation guidelines which are forthcoming, students should refer to the 2010 guidelines when they are issued in October to ensure the accuracy of information contained in these texts. This list will be updated in accord with the change in guidelines.
