



DIPLOMA IN MOUNTAIN MEDICINE

Many countries offer regular courses in mountain medicine. The medical commissions (Medcom) of UIAA and ICAR, together with the International Society for Mountain Medicine (ISMM) established minimal requirements for these courses in August 1997 (Interlaken, Switzerland). Many course organisers adopted these standards and the Diploma in Mountain Medicine (DiMM) has become a widely respected qualification. The regulations have been updated to reflect developments in mountain medicine, internet communications and to ensure that the high standard of the DiMM is maintained. The member organisations approved the changes in the regulations on the 3rd of October 2007 at a joint meeting in Aviemore, Scotland.

Organisers of mountain medicine courses can apply to endorse their courses with the labels of UIAA Medcom, ICAR Medcom and ISMM by sending their course curriculum to Dr David Hillebrandt (dh@hillebrandt.org.uk) or John Ellerton (ellerton@enterprise.net). Applications must be made in English. New course organisers are encouraged to discuss with, and/or invite, members of the UIAA Medcom, ICAR Medcom and ISMM to observe their courses. After approval, the course organisers can award the *UIAA/ICAR/ISMM International Diploma/Certificate in Mountain Medicine* to appropriate participants that successfully complete the course and assessment. For new courses, approval is for two years; when the course is re-approved, approval is for four years

Courses can be organised for medical doctors (including medical students near graduation) and/or registered nurses or paramedics. Participants should be interested and/or experienced in mountaineering, and have current (< 5 years) training in basic life support. The course can be divided into different parts appropriate for the organising country (e.g. summer, winter; basic, specialty etc.) but must include the *common course* syllabus. This must have a minimal study time (lectures, workshops and practical work) of 100 hours. Course organisers can determine who can attend the course and the speciality offered. In addition, course organisers may seek University status for the course. All courses should have some form of valid theory assessment and demonstration of practical skill with a fail potential. On successful completion, the course organiser can award the following qualifications:

Type of student	Course	Qualification
Medically qualified doctor	Common course	UIAA/ICAR/ISMM Diploma in Mountain Medicine
Medically qualified doctor registered in their country of origin to practise emergency medicine	Common course & rescue speciality course	UIAA/ICAR/ISMM Diploma in Mountain Medicine and title 'Mountain Emergency Doctor'
Nurse or paramedic	Common course	UIAA/ICAR/ISMM Certificate in Mountain Medicine
Nurse or paramedic registered in their country of origin to practise emergency medicine	Common course & rescue speciality course	UIAA/ICAR/ISMM Certificate in Mountain Medicine and title 'Mountain Emergency nurse or paramedic'

Curricula

COMMON COURSE:

Basics of:	Minimal time (hrs)	Instructors:	Training:
Altitude	3	high altitude experienced doctor	theory
Hypothermia	4	experienced doctor	theory
Avalanche	4	experienced doctor + mountain guide or avalanche/ski patroller	theory + practical
Frostbite	2	experienced doctor	theory
Submersion and immersion in water	1	experienced doctor	theory
Heat and solar radiation	1	experienced doctor	theory
Survival in the mountains/ exhaustion	4	experienced doctor	theory + workshop
Children and mountains	1	experienced doctor (paediatrician)	theory
Practical traumatology	4	experienced doctor	workshop
Weather	1	mountain guide or meteorologist	theory
Rescue techniques (introduction)	1	experienced mountain rescue doctor, team member and/or mountain guide	theory
Rescue techniques (practical)	2	experienced mountain rescue doctor, team member and/or mountain guide	practical
Mountaineering techniques in summer and winter, and personal mountaineering equipment	18	mountain guides	practical
Information about:			
Nutrition	1	experienced doctor or nutritionist	theory
Exercise physiology	1	physiologist or experienced doctor	theory
Travel Medicine	1	experienced doctor	theory
Navigation in the mountains	4	mountain guide	workshop + practical
Personal first aid kit	1	experienced doctor	theory
Legal aspects	0.5	experienced lawyer or doctor with medico-legal experience	theory
Stress management	1	experienced doctor	theory
Pre-existing clinical conditions	3	experienced doctor	theory
Analgesia in the field	1	experienced doctor	theory
International mountaineering organisations	0.5		theory
Additional subjects selected by the course organiser	40		theory, workshop + practical
Total:	100 hrs		

SPECIALTY COURSE: EXPEDITION AND WILDERNESS MEDICINE

This course is designed for persons going on treks and expeditions with the anticipation that they will be providing medical support.

Basics of:	Minimal time (hrs)	Instructors:	Training:
Altitude	4	experienced expedition doctor	theory and workshop
Cold	3	experienced expedition doctor	theory + workshop
Travel Medicine	4	doctor specialized in tropical or travel medicine, or experienced doctor	theory
Traumatology	4	experienced expedition doctor	workshop
Improvised rescue techniques	4	experienced expedition doctor or IFMGA guide	workshop
Survival techniques in high altitude and personal equipment for high altitude mountaineering	10	mountain guide experienced in high altitude climbing	workshop and practical
Expedition medical kit	1	experienced expedition doctor	workshop
Team building	2	experienced team leader	workshop
Common expedition problems	8	experienced expedition doctor or leader	workshop
Total :	40 hrs		

SPECIALTY COURSE: RESCUE

This course is designed for doctors (and if the course organiser wishes, registered nurses and paramedics) who are (or becoming) members of an organised rescue system. They should have been trained in Advanced Life Support and be experienced in mountaineering to an appropriate standard. Curriculum A focuses on medical aspects of terrestrial mountain rescue and is the prerequisite for the attainment of the Diploma. The Add-on Module 'Air Rescue' (Curriculum B) is recommended for air rescue operations in mountainous terrain and should at least attain the minimum standards and regulations of the region or nation.

Curriculum A (Terrestrial Mountain Rescue)	Minimal time (hrs)	Instructors:	Training:
Rescue techniques in organised rescues	19	qualified, experienced mountain guides and rescue doctors	theory + workshop + practical
Helicopter rescue techniques	6	experienced helicopter persons	theory
Mountain rescue in airborne sports	2	experienced mountain rescue doctor	theory + workshop
Canyoning rescue	2	experienced doctor and canyon guide	theory + workshop + practical
Hypothermia, avalanches and frostbite	8	experienced doctor and mountain guide or experienced ski patroller	theory + workshop + practical
Cave rescues	2	experienced caving doctor	theory + workshop
Risk management	1	experienced doctor	theory
Team building	2	experienced team leader	workshop
Common expedition problems	8	experienced expedition doctor or leader	workshop
	40 hrs		

Curriculum B (Air Rescue)			
Helicopter rescue	16	experienced helicopter persons and air rescue doctors	theory + practical
Total:	16 hrs		

Administrative team

The administrative team is made up of representatives elected by the member organisations. The minimum number of persons is three. It will conduct its work by email and be accountable to the member organisations. A representative with a *conflict of interest* must inform other members of the team of the conflict. Decisions are made by consensus. The administrative team does not have the authority to alter the regulations. Its role is to approve courses by assessing the curriculum and assessment methods, and to keep a record of courses (so that enquiries can be directed to course organisers). The current (2007) team are: David Hillebrandt, Urs Hefti (urshefti@bluewin.ch) and Patrick Peters (patrickpeters@dokter.lu) for the UIAA Medcom; Hermann Brugger (brugger.med@pass.dnet.it), John Ellerton and Bruce Brink (avadog@telus.net)/David Watson (heliotrupe3@shaw.ca) for ICAR Medcom; and Jim Milledge (jim@medex.org.uk) for ISMM.

This document was originally produced by Urs Wiget and Bruno Durrer (January 1998); it subsequently revised by David Hillebrandt (DH) (April 2004) and DH and John Ellerton (September 2007)