



# INTERNATIONAL POST GRADUATE DIPLOMA IN FAMILY MEDICINE



**Christian Medical College Vellore India  
Loma Linda University USA and  
International Christian Medical and Dental Association**

**2026**

## 1. PREAMBLE:

The International Postgraduate Diploma in Family Medicine (I-PGDFM) aims to train and certify doctors with postgraduate training in family medicine in the developing world, equipping them professionally and spiritually to serve their country and the underprivileged. The I-PGDFM is an accredited distance education initiative by ICMDA, the Distance Education Unit of Christian Medical College (CMC), Vellore, India, and Loma Linda University (LLU), USA.

The two-year blended learning curriculum is designed to hone distinct family physician attitudes, skills, and knowledge that qualify the physician to provide continuing, comprehensive medical and preventive care to families and communities. The course's '**refer less, resolve more**' motto, with its historical roots in family practice, is a step towards a cost-effective, patient-centred, problem-oriented, evidence-based, global healthcare delivery system.

## 2. COURSE OBJECTIVES:

**A graduate of the course should be able to perform the following functions with a high level of integrity, commitment, and competency:**

- ❖ Develop a strong base in the **core Family Medicine principles** - like whole-person care, patient-centeredness, focus on the family, continuity of care, comprehensive care, clinical competence, making a deeper diagnosis, etc.
- ❖ Diagnose and effectively **help persons with common diseases** occurring in all age groups across a wide spectrum of disciplines, including Medicine, Surgery, Paediatrics, Obstetrics and Gynecology, Orthopedics, Dermatology, ENT, Psychiatry, Urology, Emergency Medicine, and Ophthalmology.
- ❖ Promptly and competently treat **common emergencies** that present to a general outpatient set-up, and refer patients safely after initial stabilisation.
- ❖ Detect at an early stage **life, limb, and vision-threatening potential emergencies** so that urgent, correct treatment and prompt, safe referral to the tertiary care hospital can be made.
- ❖ Develop a broad-based, **comprehensive approach to health problems** affecting all age groups.
- ❖ Discuss the relevant and **up-to-date basic science, etiopathogenesis of diseases** in the context of diseases presenting in undifferentiated forms, or in the background of chronic diseases.
- ❖ Use a **syndromic algorithmic or integrated problem-oriented approach** to the management of health problems without the use of sophisticated investigations.
- ❖ Incorporate the role of **cost-effective wholistic management**.
- ❖ Develop an **ethical and compassionate approach** to patients under their care.

- ❖ Practice **competent, collaborative consultation skills** with a focused patient-centred clinical history-taking and proper physical examination in a specific clinical setting.
- ❖ **Network with other specialists** so that they can continue the care of patients undergoing sophisticated tertiary-level care between appointments.
- ❖ Implement recognised protocols for **health promotion** in all age groups.
- ❖ Organize and promote **rehabilitation** for differently abled persons.
- ❖ Participate in **community health programs**, especially those that are components of national health policies.
- ❖ Participate in **community-oriented primary care (COPC)** work.
- ❖ Be motivated to **improvise and problem-solve in resource-poor settings**.
- ❖ Generate **enthusiasm and efficiency in the health team** to provide high-quality, appropriate, ethical, and comprehensive care.
- ❖ Ensure a **therapeutic environment** for patients and relatives to enhance appropriate confidence in the health system and the health care professionals.
- ❖ Competent in **medical record-keeping and data management**.
- ❖ Develop as **teachers** who can communicate and train team members, community members, and others in the medical fraternity.

### 3. NO OF SEATS: 50 per year

### 4. COURSE DURATION:

This is a two-year blended learning course comprising distance learning (online and offline) and onsite, face-to-face, hands-on components. The online learning components are asynchronous and synchronous.

### 5. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:

The following are the requirements to be able to register for this course

- ❖ The I-PGDFM is open to international doctors serving in low and middle-income countries.
- ❖ Candidates should possess a basic physician license approved by their respective country to practice allopathic medicine.
- ❖ The online course materials, lectures, and contact sessions will be in English. Candidates are required to read, write, and speak English to a proficient level.
- ❖ Regular access to the internet with sufficient bandwidth to download relevant course material and upload assignments.

## 6. COURSE COMPONENTS:

The course components consist of:

1. Self-Learning Modules (SLMs) – for updating the knowledge, attitudes, and skills base.
2. Contact Programs (online and onsite) – for developing knowledge, attitude, skills, especially consultation skills and core clinical skills (during the face-to-face onsite contact programs).
3. Online assignments to be worked through and submitted as stipulated.
4. Project work (as two wholistic patient write-ups) to be completed during the course.
5. Formative and Summative assessments

### 6.1 Self-Learning Modules (SLMs)

The core knowledge component of the course is delivered in the form of 100 self-learning modules. The modules are written in a self-learning and interactive format, making them interesting and easy to read. The study material has been designed to inculcate the practice of self-studying and the practical application of this theoretical knowledge. Numerous patient presentations based on common clinical scenarios have been designed to enable this learning.

### 6.2 Contact Programs (CPs)

The contact programs in the course will be offered in a hybrid format. This will consist of monthly online sessions and a yearly on-site contact program at designated hospitals that serve as contact centres.

The **face-to-face, onsite contact programs** (CPs) form a very important part of the course components. There will be two weeks of back-to-back contact programs during the course period of two years. These face-to-face, onsite CPs help ensure hands-on clinical skills development and the integration and application of the core content of the course. Learning occurs through group discussions, patient presentations and discussions, clinical skills demonstrations and hands-on practice, and interactive lectures and group activities. There are 50 core clinical skills that a Family Physician is expected to master in this course. These onsite CPs will be conducted in the contact centres listed below.

In addition to the onsite CPs, there are the **monthly online contact programs** (CPs), which are scheduled as monthly Zoom meetings. These programs allow learners to learn through interactive lectures, patient discussions, and group discussions.

## 6.3 Assignments

Each submodule in the study material has an assignment with multiple-choice questions (MCQs). These assignments are to be submitted periodically via the online learning platform as partial fulfillment of the course requirements. Dates for the submission of assignments will be provided well in advance. **Submissions need to be on time; failing which, a student will not be eligible to write the final exams.** The assignments and the project work are integral components of the formative assessments in the course.

## 6.4 Project Work

The candidates are required to complete their project work, which involves the writing of **two wholistic patient write-ups**, following the guidelines provided for the same. Details about these two important patient write-ups will be provided after the learner is enrolled in the course.

## 6.5 Formative and Summative Assessments

The course assessment is done in two parts: (1) **formative assessment** (throughout the course) and (2) **summative assessment** (at the end of each year's work). *The formative and summative assessments have equal weightage in the final assessment.*

### SUMMATIVE Assessments:

- **First Year Theory Exam** – will be conducted after completing the year-1 curriculum (online).
- **Second Year Theory Exam** – will be conducted after completing the year-2 curriculum (online).
- **Practical Exam 1** - at the end of week 1, onsite contact program
- **Practical Exam 2** - at the end of week 2, onsite contact program

### FORMATIVE Assessments:

- **Reflective Log Books** will contain daily reflections recorded during the on-site CPs. The focus will be on the day's learning and how this will impact one's future clinical practice.
- **Clinical Skills Log Books** contain the guidelines and checklists for the clinical skills taught and practised during the course.
- **Assignments** at the end of each module are carefully designed in various styles to assess the candidate's ability to integrate skills, attitudes, and values with theoretical knowledge and help consolidate learning.
- **Project Work** includes the two **wholistic patient write-ups**, according to the guidelines given. The specific submission dates will be provided for both of these activities.

## 7. CRITERIA FOR THE AWARD OF THE I-PGDFM COURSE CERTIFICATE:

A candidate should fulfil the following criteria for the successful completion of the course:

### Course completion requirements include:

- Submission of assignments
- Attendance in the monthly Zoom sessions (online CP)
- Attendance in the on-site contact program at the assigned contact centre.
- Submission of completed project work
- Year 1 & Year 2 examinations
- Week 1 & Week 2 practical examinations

Pass grades for course completion:

≥ 50% Marks in the Summative Assessment	≥ 50% Marks in the Formative Assessment	90% attendance is mandatory for onsite contact programs; and 90% for online contact programs
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## 8. COURSE FEES:

Application fees: \$ 10 USD

Tuition fees: \$ 4000 USD per year

Travel and accommodation expenses for the on-site contact programs will have to be borne by the student separately.

Scholarships are available at request.

## 9. CONTACT CENTERS:

- Christian Medical College Vellore, India
- The Evangelical Mission Hospital (Al-Germaniyya), Aswan, Egypt
- Mengo Hospital, Uganda
- Mercy Medical Center, Cambodia
- Bowen University Teaching Hospital, Nigeria

## 10. CONTACT INFORMATION:

**FOR ANY CLARIFICATION,  
PLEASE CONTACT THE DISTANCE EDUCATION UNIT OFFICE**

E-mail: [ipgdfm@cmcdistedu.org](mailto:ipgdfm@cmcdistedu.org)

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