

Free Online Course on Perioperative Medicine from FutureLearn, UCL Launches



FutureLearn, the leading social learning company, in partnership with University College London (UCL), has launched a new online course, [Perioperative Medicine in Action](#), which is endorsed by the Royal College of Anaesthetists.

Perioperative medicine is an emerging multidisciplinary specialty aiming to improve outcomes for high-risk surgical patients, some of whom die or experience prolonged complications after surgery. A group of anaesthetists working at UCL and University College London Hospitals (UCLH) believe that many of these complications and deaths are avoidable. They've therefore developed a free online course to educate the broader perioperative team about the emerging multidisciplinary approach known as perioperative medicine.

Abigail Whiteman, consultant in anaesthesia and perioperative medicine at UCL, told *ICU Management & Practice* in an email that the course's aim is to introduce the key concepts behind perioperative medicine to a global audience. "Ultimately we, the UCL faculty, hope to take a step towards improving surgical outcomes and reducing healthcare costs around the world. The course showcases many UCL/UCLH research achievements within this field and the course makes this work more widely available and accessible, as well as promoting other examples of good practice from around the country and globally."

Whiteman added: "There is a huge unmet treatable burden of surgical disease within Low and Middle Income Countries. The Lancet Commission for Global Surgery (2015) outlines the three delays or barriers to accessing surgical care in these countries: delay in seeking care, delay in reaching care and delay in receiving care. In the first week of the course, members of our expert faculty outline and discuss how the same principles that underpin perioperative medicine could be used to address these three delays. This will be very relevant to all health professionals from less well resourced countries."

Sharon Drake, Director of Clinical Quality and Research at the Royal College of Anaesthetists, commented: "This course represents an innovative approach to clinical education. As a College, we are committed to finding new ways to improve the care we provide patients. We have appointed perioperative medicine leads in more than 170 hospitals to improve the integration of care and develop improved patient pathways. This new course will ensure the multidisciplinary team are aware of the benefits of perioperative medicine to their patients."

Who Should Take This Course

This course is for all interested healthcare professionals, including anaesthetists, surgeons, physicians, pre-assessment nurses, surgical ward nurses, operating department staff, medical managers and medical students, and anyone with a general interest in perioperative medicine. The course is designed to inspire learners to make changes in their workplace and practice and share those changes to help form this emerging field with others in the profession.

Course Aims

By the end of the course, learners will be able to:

- Justify better, more holistic care for high risk surgical patients, to improve outcomes and reduce healthcare costs.
- Demonstrate the need for protocolised care pathways and evaluate the success of the enhanced recovery programmes in reducing variance in practice.
- Engage with risk assessment tools to characterise and quantify the risk of an individual undergoing a particular procedure.
- Describe the major challenges in delivering perioperative medicine for the elderly.
- Discuss the current economic pressure on healthcare systems and how perioperative medicine can be used to reduce these pressures.

As with all FutureLearn courses, the course can be taken for free or there is the option to upgrade to receive additional benefits.

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