

Views from 2 successful candidates for DPM and FPM

DPM

"I prepared for the pain diploma exam using various different sources. Firstly I went to any study evening or meeting that the pain faculty arranged. I of course also went to the revision course a month prior to the exam which was really helpful.

Regards books I used the essentials of pain medicine and the ANZCA acute pain management: scientific guide. (This can be downloaded for free online and is great) I also use any Bja education articles on related topics and guidelines from IASP.

The clinical experience that helped me pass the exam came mostly from my time doing pain in the base hospital with my supervisor of training, who taught me more on clinical examination of the patient and various other assessment tools. I learned a lot there."

FPM

"The best preparation for the exam is high volumes of pain clinics, ward rounds and interventions with regular feedback from other pain team members. I found it very useful discussing my differential diagnosis, reviewing investigations (especially MRI and CT scans), and the evidence for different treatment options with my Consultants. The Fellowship exam is a practical clinical exam and this experience is essential for a good performance."

This clinic experience should be supported with the relevant clinical knowledge. The best resources are as follows,

Books

Evidence based interventional pain practice: According to Clinical Diagnoses (Van Zundert): easy to read and very accessible.

ANZCA Acute Pain Guidelines

Pain Management (Waldman): More info but still easy to read.

Textbook of Pain (Wall and Melzack): Very heavy, more for reference.

Guidelines and Reviews (on the relevant websites)

Cochrane (Pain and Palliative Care Section)

NICE

BPS (British Pain Society)

International Headache Society guidelines

Journals

BJA Education - reviews of pain topics

Pain (IASP Biennial Reviews) - most recent 2016

Neuromodulation - journal guidelines and reviews on neurostimulation and intrathecal therapy

Websites

IASP: good review articles, definitions, and guidelines: <http://www.iasp-pain.org/Pain:ClinicalUpdates?navItemNumber=571>

British Pain Society: guidelines. <https://www.britishpainsociety.org/british-pain-society-publications/professional-publications/>

The exam preparation course run by the Faculty (around one month pre-exam) offers a very important opportunity for revision on the core topics and viva practice.