

Acute Rheumatic Fever and Rheumatic Heart Disease: An Introduction

Overview

Acute Rheumatic Fever is an autoimmune response to an untreated group A streptococcal infection, that causes heart valve damage known as RHD. ARF and RHD are most common in children and young adults. RHD is a debilitating and often fatal disease.

This session provides an overview for clinicians about ARF and RHD, consistent with the newly released 2020 Australian Guideline for the prevention, diagnosis, and management of acute rheumatic fever and rheumatic heart disease (3rd edition).

Relevance

Acute Rheumatic Fever and Rheumatic Heart Disease are preventable diseases disproportionately affecting Indigenous Australians. Many clinicians are unaware that, despite being largely eliminated from developed countries, Australia still has one of the highest rates in the world of acute rheumatic fever (ARF) and rheumatic heart disease (RHD) among its Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population.

Purpose

The purpose of this video learning activity is to provide information to both paediatric and adult nurses on the management of Acute Rheumatic Fever & Rheumatic Heart Disease.

Learning Outcomes

In this session, you will:

- Recognise the signs and symptoms of acute rheumatic fever
- Understand elements of best practice treatment of ARF and RHD
- Locate information on best practice approaches to the prevention, diagnosis, and management of ARF and RHD
- Identify jurisdictional RHD control programs

Who is this for?

This course is most relevant to both paediatric and adult nurses working in areas that service Indigenous Australians.

Speaker

Diana commenced as the Senior Nurse Advisor at RHD Australia in January 2018. Her role is development and dissemination of education and resources, for clinicians, patients, families and communities about acute rheumatic fever and rheumatic heart disease.

Her nursing career started at Princess Margaret Hospital for Children, Perth, in the early 1980s and continued in paediatric acute and primary care in regional and remote areas of Australia for the next 15 years.

After a short stint overseas, her practice diversified into perioperative nursing and clinical education and has held education positions at Central Queensland University, Mater Hospital, Brisbane and now at Menzies School of Health Research.

Diana's nursing training is supported by a post-registration degree in nursing, honors in clinical leadership, cert 4 in training and assessment, post-grad cert in perioperative nursing, and a master's degree in public health and tropical medicine.

