



Continuous Professional Development Support Scheme (CPD-SS)

For NCHDs who are not on a formal training scheme

Guidance Document for NCHDs, Training Bodies & Employers – effective from 8th July 2024



Introduction

This Guidance Document is aimed at non-consultant hospital doctors (NCHDs) working in the public health service who are not on a formal training scheme and focuses specifically on continuing professional development.

Professional Competence Schemes

NCHDs working in the public health service who are registered on the General Division or Supervised Division and who are not on a formal training scheme, are required by law to actively maintain their professional competence in line with the Medical Council's requirements.

To meet these legal requirements, such NCHDs must enrol on a Professional Competence Scheme (PCS) with the relevant Training Body.

The enrolment on PCS and any fees related thereto are entirely a matter for each individual NCHD. NCHDs must be enrolled on a Professional Competence Scheme before they may avail of the continuous professional development support scheme. Enrolment on PCS is with the relevant Training Body.

Continuous Professional Development Support Scheme

The continuous professional development support scheme (CPD-SS) is funded by the HSE to facilitate NCHDs who are not on a formal training scheme to continue to maintain and enhance their clinical knowledge and skills and also to maintain their professional competence in line with Medical Council requirements. NCHDs are required to achieve a minimum of 20 externally validated educational credits per annum.

The CPD-SS has been developed with a view to providing NCHDs who are not on a formal training scheme with a suite of professional educational/training courses & activities. These will assist the NCHD in fulfilling some of the requirements of their Professional Competence Scheme. These credits can be counted towards meeting the NCHD's requirements as stipulated by the Medical Council regarding the maintenance of their professional competence.

A review of the previous Professional Development Programme (PDP) for NCHDs was conducted in 2014/2015 as the programme had been in existence for four years. NDTP received valuable feedback from NCHDs who were either currently enrolled, or had participated on a PDP programme in the past.

Based on the feedback received the CPD-SS replaced the Professional Development Programme with effect from July 2015.

In January 2022 on foot of demand for the Scheme a second enrolment opportunity was introduced to facilitate those NCHDs who take up employment in the Health Service after 30th September each year.

Conditions of Continuous Professional Development Support Scheme

Eligible NCHDs will be able to undertake training & educational activities of up to 20 external credits or 3 days per annum, whichever is greatest. **NCHDs will have access to a range of clinical courses/activities provided by all Irish Training Bodies.** For example an NCHD who is registered with the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland for the CPD-SS may attend a course provided by the College of Anaesthesiologists. Each training body will produce a prospectus with a full list of courses/educational activities for the year September to July, along with dates, details of who the course is suitable for and the number of associated CPD points.

A consolidated prospectus will be produced by the Forum of Postgraduate Training Bodies which will provide details of all CPD-SS courses/activities available across all participating Training Bodies. A prospectus covering September - December 2024 will be produced and circulated to all CPD-SS enrollees in September 2024. A further prospectus covering January - June 2025 will be circulated to all enrollees not later than 30th November 2024.

The CPD-SS only provides for educational/training events undertaken in any of the Irish Training Bodies. To avoid the requirement of eligible NCHDs paying in advance for courses and then applying for a refund and being required to pay for courses in advance and wait a number of weeks for a refund to be processed, an electronic transfer mechanism between HSE-NDTP and the Training Bodies will be established. This will streamline the administration process for Trainees & Training Bodies.

The following conditions apply to this scheme:

- 1) NDTP funded credits may only be used to undertake training activities provided by Irish Training Bodies.
- 2) NCHDs may earn credits with any Irish Training Body or Bodies, not purely the Training Body you are registered with for CPD support scheme.
- 3) The CPD-SS year runs from the second Monday in July each year until the second Sunday in July the following year.
- 4) To avail of this scheme eligible NCHDs must register with the training body for which they have enrolled with for the purposes of Professional Competence.
- 5) There are two enrolment opportunities:
Registration is open from July to September and mid-December to January each year. Applications for registration will only be accepted during this time.

For the 2024-2025 Training Year:

- **1st Registration closes on 30th September 2024**
 - **2nd Registration closes on 31st January 2025**
- 6) If NCHDs do not register on time they will not be eligible for the CPD-SS, and will be required to meet the costs of any course provided under the scheme.
 - 7) There is no rollover of unclaimed credits to the following year - there will be no exceptions to this rule.

- 8) If NCHDs wish to earn additional external credits in the relevant year they may do so however, they will be required to meet the costs of any course provided under the scheme.

Cancellation Policy

If an NCHD enrolls on a course with a training body and wishes to cancel a booking they may do so without penalty up to 10 working days before the course is due to take place. This will facilitate the training body to offer the course place to another NCHD on the waiting list.

NCHDs are provided with a maximum of 20 credits in the CPD year that are funded directly by HSE-NDTP. If an NCHD cancels within 10 working days or does not attend a course they have booked, the CPD credits associated with the cancelled course will be deducted from the maximum 20 credits available to them in the CPD year. Late cancellations or no shows are permitted **once only**, if a second late cancellation or no show occurs the NCHD will be excluded from accessing further courses under the CPD-SS.

Eligibility Criteria

The following eligibility criteria shall apply for enrolment and participation in the CPD-SS:

- 1) The NCHD must be enrolled in the relevant Professional Competence Scheme applicable to their specialty and area of practice as required by law*
- 2) The NCHD must hold the NCHD Contract 2010
- 3) The NCHD must work within the public health service
- 4) The NCHD must **not** be enrolled in an intern training programme under the auspices of an Intern Training Network or a specialist training programme under the auspices of one of the Irish postgraduate training bodies; and
- 5) The NCHD must be registered on the General Division or Supervised Division of the Register of Medical Practitioners maintained by the Medical Council.

***Please be advised all doctors must have paid the annual professional competence subscription for the current year to successfully enrol with the CPD-SS.**

Continuous Professional Development Support Scheme Fees

The HSE's financial support for enrolment on a CPD-SS is a maximum of 20 external credits or three days per annum (whichever is greatest), per eligible NCHD.

Closing Date for Registration for Continuous Professional Development Support Scheme

The enrolment period for the continuous professional development support scheme is as follows:

1st Application closes on 30th September 2024

2nd Application closes on 31st January 2025

Failure to enrol by deadline will result in an NCHD not being eligible for the CPD-SS. NCHDs who wish to attend any of the courses being run by a Training Body will be required to book with the relevant training body.

(Please note that you must enrol on a Professional Competence Scheme before enrolling on the CPD-SS)

Please see Table One for the contact details of the relevant training bodies.

Overview of Process for NCHDs

Step One

Review eligibility criteria defined for continuous professional development support scheme with a view to assessing whether you meet the criteria. ***Any queries regarding your eligibility for these programmes can be directed to the relevant training body.***

Step Two

If eligible, each NCHD must submit a completed registration form to the relevant training body. They must also submit evidence that they are registered for a Professional Competence Scheme (PCS) with their relevant college.

Step Three

NCHD will receive confirmation of enrolment from the training body. A prospectus detailing courses/events available across all training bodies will be provided to the NCHD by mid-August 2024

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. How do I know if I am eligible to enrol on a CPD-SS?

If you can answer YES to ALL of the following questions you are eligible to enrol for a CPD-SS:

1. Are you currently enrolled in a Professional Competence Scheme as required by law?
2. Do you hold the NCHD Contract 2010?
3. Do you work within the public health service?
4. Are you registered on the General Division or Supervised Division of the Register of Medical Practitioners maintained by the Medical Council?

If you have answered **NO** to any of the above questions you are NOT eligible to register for the CPD-SS.

2. What is the difference between the CPD-SS and the Professional Competence Scheme?

All doctors are legally required to maintain their professional competence by enrolling in *Professional Competence Schemes* and following the requirements set by the Medical Council. Schemes are operated by postgraduate training bodies. Schemes are in place for all registered doctors on the Specialist, General and Supervised Division of the Medical Register.

Part of the professional competence requirements of each practitioner is to achieve 20 externally validated CPD credits. Practitioners are also required under professional competence to accrue internal credits and fulfil audit requirements. Full details regarding professional competence schemes can be found on the Medical Council website or through your postgraduate training body.

The CPD-SS is commissioned by the HSE with a view to providing eligible NCHDs with a suite of professional educational courses which will assist the NCHD in fulfilling the 20 external CPD credit requirements of their Professional Competence Schemes.

The enrolment for Professional Competence Schemes and the CPD-SS are separate and independent application processes.

3. I am currently enrolled in a specialist training programme under the auspices of the one of the Irish postgraduate training bodies. Am I eligible for the CPD-SS?

No, doctors who are enrolled in a postgraduate training programme are not eligible for CPD-SS. Doctors actively participating in a specialist training programme are deemed, by such participation, to be meeting their professional competence requirements.

4. I am currently enrolled in an intern training programme under the auspices of an Intern Training Network. Am I eligible for the CPD-SS?

No, doctors who are enrolled on an intern training programme are not eligible for CPD-SS. Doctors actively participating in an intern training programme are deemed, by such participation, to be meeting their professional competence requirements.

5. I haven't registered for Professional Competence yet; can I register for the CPD-SS?

No, in order to register for the CPD-SS you must have enrolled in the relevant Professional Competence Scheme applicable to your specialty. For further information on how to register for Professional Competence please contact either the relevant Postgraduate Training Body (see Table 1) or Medical Council (www.medicalcouncil.ie).

6. If I gain 20 external credits as part of the CPD-SS will I have fulfilled my Professional Competence requirements?

No, the CPD-SS is designed to aid NCHDs in fulfilling the 20 external credits required for Professional Competence. NCHDs are still required to fulfil their internal credits, personal learning targets and audit requirements as part of their Professional Competence requirements.

7. If I miss the deadline can I still apply for the CPD-SS?

No. Eligible NCHDs **must** register for the CPD-SS with the relevant Postgraduate Training Body by the date outlined in the policy, in order to avail of the courses funded under this scheme.

8. Who do I contact to register for Professional Competence?

To register for Professional Competence, contact the Professional Competence department of the relevant postgraduate training body. There is a separate application process for Professional Competence versus CPD-SSs.

9. Who do I contact to register for the CPD-SS?

See table one for a contact list (page 7).

10. Is there a registration form to be completed to enrol onto a CPD-SS?

Yes, contact the CPD-SS department of the relevant training body to access the relevant registration application process or visit the postgraduate training body website.

11. If I submit a registration form for Professional Competence am I automatically registered onto the CPD-SS?

No, the CPD-SS and Professional Competence each have a separate application process which you must complete.

12. Can I attend any course offered by my Postgraduate Training Body if I am enrolled in the CPD-SS?

No, the Postgraduate Training Body will provide you a list of the eligible courses that you can attend as part of the CPD-SS.

13. I am interested in attending a course offered by a Postgraduate Training Body that I am not enrolled with - is this allowed?

Yes, if the course/event is on the list of eligible courses/events that you can attend as part of the CPD-SS. If you wish to attend a course run by a Training Body for which you are not registered, you must contact the CPD support scheme department in that Training Body to enrol. The event organiser will contact the Training Body you are registered with to confirm your eligibility to attend.

Table One

CPD-SS Training Body Contact Details

College of Anaesthesiologists

W: anaesthesia.ie

E: mmandic@coa.ie

T: 01 661 4412

Relevant clinical specialty areas:

- Anaesthesiology
- Pain medicine
- Intensive care medicine

College of Psychiatrists of Ireland

W: irishpsychiatry.ie

E: cpdss@irishpsychiatry.ie

T: 01 634 4371

Relevant clinical specialty areas:

- General Adult Psychiatry
- Child & Adolescent Psychiatry
- Intellectual Disability
- Psychiatry of Old Age
- Forensic Psychiatry
- Liaison Psychiatry

Faculty of Radiologists, RCSI

W: radiology.ie

E: pcs@radiology.ie

T: 01 402 2139

Relevant clinical specialty areas:

- Diagnostic Radiology
- Radiation Oncology

Irish College of Ophthalmologists

W: eyedoctors.ie

E: info@eyedoctors.ie

T: 01 402 2777

Relevant clinical specialty areas:

- Ophthalmology

The Royal College of Physicians of Ireland (RCPI)

Relevant clinical specialty areas:

W: rcpi.ie

E: cpdss@rcpi.ie

T: 01 863 977

Faculty of Paediatrics, RCPI

- Paediatrics

Faculty of Pathology, RCPI

- Chemical Pathology
- Haematology
- Histopathology
- Immunology
- Microbiology
- Neuropathology

**Institute of Obstetricians & Gynaecologists,
RCPI**

- Obstetrics & Gynaecology

**Irish Committee of Higher Medical Training,
RCPI**

- Cardiology
- Dermatology
- Endocrinology & Diabetes
- Gastroenterology
- GIM
- Genito-Urinary Medicine
- Geriatric Medicine
- Infectious Diseases
- Medical Oncology
- Nephrology
- Neurology
- Palliative Medicine
- Rehabilitation Medicine
- Respiratory Medicine
- Rheumatology

Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI)

W: rcsi.ie

E: cpdss@rcsi.ie

T: 01 402 8592

Relevant clinical specialty areas:

- Emergency Medicine
 - Cardiothoracic Surgery
 - General Surgery
 - Neurosurgery
 - Ophthalmic Surgery
 - Oral & Maxillo-Facial Surgery
 - Otolaryngology
 - Paediatric Surgery
 - Plastic Surgery
 - Trauma & Orthopaedic Surgery
 - Urology
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