

INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL GRADUATE TRAINING INITIATIVE

NATIONAL FRAMEWORK DOCUMENT

**Adopted by the HSE &
The Forum of Irish
Postgraduate Medical
Training Bodies
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Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

**FORUM OF IRISH POSTGRADUATE
MEDICAL TRAINING BODIES**

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SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The International Medical Graduate (IMG) Training Initiative provides one possible route for overseas doctors wishing to undergo structured postgraduate medical training within the public health service in Ireland. The IMG Training Initiative enables suitably qualified overseas postgraduate medical trainees to undertake a fixed period of active training in clinical services in Ireland.

The purpose of the IMG Training Initiative is to enable overseas trainees to gain access to clinical experiences and training that they cannot get in their own country, with a view to enhancing and improving the individual's medical training and learning and in the medium to long term, the health services in their own countries.

This initiative will facilitate participants to access a structured period of training and experience as developed by an Irish postgraduate medical training body to specifically meet the clinical needs of participants as defined by their home country's health service. The period of clinical training that will be provided under the IMG Training Initiative is ordinarily 24 months, after which the overseas doctors will be expected to return to their country of origin. The Initiative is aimed primarily at doctors from countries with less developed health sectors and is not intended to lead to settlement in Ireland.

Training under this Initiative can be provided in clinical departments approved for postgraduate specialist training in Ireland as long as the training position is incorporated into an IMG training programme that is tailored to meet the IMG appointee's educational and training objectives and takes into account the needs of the health service in the doctor's home country.



The purpose of the IMG Training Initiative is to provide a defined medical education and training package which has been developed by an Irish postgraduate medical training body to meet the clinical needs of participants as defined by their home country's health service.

1.2 GOVERNANCE OF IMG INITIATIVE

The IMG Training Initiative was launched in June 2013 and is overseen and governed by the Health Service Executive (HSE) and the postgraduate medical training bodies in Ireland on a collaborative basis through the Forum of Irish Postgraduate Medical Training Bodies.

The IMG Training Initiative is managed and governed at a national level by a committee comprised of agreed representatives from the HSE and the Forum of Irish Postgraduate Training Bodies in Ireland. The implementation of the IMG Training Initiative requires both the HSE and the Irish postgraduate training bodies to develop robust and collaborative working relationships with overseas educational partners and sponsoring agencies and states.

1.3 CORE PRINCIPLES

The core principles of the IMG Training Initiative are:

- 1) Each IMG training programme developed by an Irish postgraduate medical training body under this Initiative will be specifically designed so as to meet the training needs of participants to support the health service in their home country.
- 2) The development and implementation of the IMG Training Initiative will not lead to a reduction in the training capacity or quality of any National Domestic Specialist Training Programme in Ireland.
- 3) All appointees to an IMG Programme will be assessed by the relevant Irish postgraduate training body to ensure that they possess the necessary requirements from a training and clinical service perspective.
- 4) Each overseas doctor participating in the IMG Training Initiative will be enrolled with an Irish postgraduate medical training body and will be under the supervision of a HSE funded consultant doctor who is registered on the Specialist Division of the Register of Medical Practitioners maintained by the Medical Council and who is an approved consultant trainer.
- 5) The IMG Training Initiative will utilise the training capacity that exists within the Irish public health service which is not required for the purposes of National Domestic Specialist Training Programmes.
- 6) The IMG Training Initiative will contribute to the overall productivity and effectiveness of health care services provided in Ireland.
- 7) The period of clinical training to be provided under this initiative will be 24 months, at which point all participants will be expected to return to their home countries. In certain exceptional circumstances an additional 12 month extension may be granted to a participant where such is deemed appropriate and necessary by the Irish training body, the overseas partner and the HSE. Under such circumstances, all arrangements put in place to facilitate this 12 month extension, including the necessary visa extension, will be contingent on the doctors continued participation in the IMG programme and the continued requirement that participants will return home upon completion of programme.
- 8) Appointees to an IMG programme will normally be registered on the Supervised Division of the Register of Medical Practitioners maintained by the Medical Council in Ireland.
- 9) The IMG Training Initiative is educationally distinct and operationally separate from Ireland's National Domestic Specialist Training Programmes in structure, purpose, objective, duration and learning outcomes and is not developed as an equivalent or parallel training programme structure.



SECTION TWO: OVERVIEW

2.1 IDENTIFICATION OF IMG TRAINING CAPACITY WITHIN THE PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE

IMG training programmes will be provided at either Primary Postgraduate Training level (early to mid point postgraduate training) or Fellowship level (higher end postgraduate training). Participants in the programme will be assigned by the relevant Irish postgraduate training bodies to undertake structured clinical placements in specific host clinical sites and services for the duration of their IMG programme. Each clinical placement will be so organized and structured so as to ensure that it is appropriate to the participant's clinical experience and training requirements.

On an annual basis, the HSE and the relevant postgraduate training bodies will assess and identify the training capacity within the public health service which could be used for the purposes of IMG clinical training placements.

This training capacity will be identified from three main areas:

1. Funded NCHD posts within approved training departments with access to supervision from a consultant trainer that are not being actively utilized for the purposes of National Domestic Specialist Training Programmes;
2. Funded NCHD posts within approved training departments with access to supervision from a consultant trainer that are actively utilized for the purposes of domestic national specialist training programmes but have not been filled by the relevant training programme; and
3. Capacity for additional de novo training positions within approved training departments that would have access to supervision from a consultant trainer.



This assessment of training capacity will identify the relevant specialties and sub-specialties, the training level i.e. early, mid-point or high end of the training spectrum and the location by service delivery site where such training is available.

Further detailed information regarding the IMG Initiative structure that is in place to govern and manage access to the three main areas of training capacity is set out in Section Three.

Based on this training capacity assessment, the IMG training opportunities available will be reviewed by participating Irish postgraduate training bodies with a view to specific IMG training programmes being developed and implemented. These IMG training opportunities will be advertised by participating postgraduate training bodies and by the HSE in relevant participating overseas countries and with overseas educational partners.

2.2 APPLICATION AND APPOINTMENT TO IMG TRAINING PROGRAMMES

Application, selection and appointment of individual overseas doctors to specific IMG programmes is managed in co-ordination and collaboration with identified overseas sponsoring states and/or overseas national medical training colleges. All applications by doctors must be made through the identified overseas partner.

Individual doctors applying directly to an Irish postgraduate training body for an IMG programme in Ireland will not be accommodated under this initiative. Initial screening and short listing of applicants may be undertaken by the overseas partner.

Following such short listing, all applicants are interviewed and assessed by the relevant Irish postgraduate medical training body with a view to ensuring that any individual appointed possesses the necessary requirements for the IMG programme from both a training and service delivery perspective. These interviews can generally be held using video-conferencing.

The Irish training bodies, based on the annual assessment of clinical training capacity available for the IMG initiative and the training requirements of individual doctors and overseas health services, will then assign successful applicants to specialty specific IMG programmes. This assignment to IMG programmes will result in these individuals being facilitated to undertake structured clinical placements by HSE/health service employers in specific training departments.

As required, participants may rotate through a number of training departments on clinical placements so as to ensure a broad spectrum of exposure to clinical services and clinical training as determined by their IMG programme.

2.3 ACCREDITATION OF IMG TRAINING POSTS

Each clinical training placement identified and utilized for the purposes of an IMG Programme, will be accredited by the relevant postgraduate training body as having the required training elements for the relevant IMG programme, including specific consultant supervision and appropriate clinical experience. Clinical placements will not be identified and utilized solely for the purposes of service delivery requirements.

2.4 IMG TRAINING SUPPORTS

Each IMG participant will be formally enrolled with the relevant postgraduate training body for the duration of their IMG programme. During the programme, IMG trainees will have access to an individualised structured training programme developed and provided under the auspices of the relevant training body and will be formally assessed as to their progress in the programme. Each IMG participant will be required to sign a specific IMG Training Agreement with the respective Irish postgraduate medical training body.

Successful completion of an IMG programme will result in the participant being issued with a formal *Certificate of the IMG Primary or Fellowship Programme* by the relevant training body. This Certificate will be issued upon the participant's return to their home country and will enable the participant's parent training body in their sponsoring home country to formally recognise and accredit their time spent training in Ireland.

SECTION THREE: MANAGEMENT OF CLINICAL PLACEMENTS

3.1 Overview

As set out in the previous section, training capacity to be utilised for the IMG Training Initiative will be identified from three main areas. Specific governance and management arrangements have been developed to oversee the utilisation of this training capacity – based specifically on whether this capacity is available via existing HSE funded NCHD posts or capacity that has been identified where no funded NCHD posts are in place to access same.

3.2 HSE-Funded IMG Training Programme

In relation to IMG Training Programmes to be developed and implemented utilising available HSE funded NCHD posts, whether currently utilised or not for the domestic national specialist training programmes, the following governance and management arrangements will apply:

1. This capacity will be identified by the HSE in consultation with the postgraduate training bodies by means of individual, specialty, site, grade specific NCHD posts being identified;
2. Posts to be used for this purpose will be ordinarily funded at SHO and Registrar level, only in exceptional circumstances will funded Specialist Registrar posts be utilised;
3. Posts identified will be utilised by the postgraduate training bodies to develop pre-defined IMG Training rotational programmes;
4. Countries and states recorded on the United Nations Development Programme Human Development Index as having a low or medium human development will be afforded priority by the HSE and postgraduate medical training bodies in terms of accessing these HSE funded IMG Training opportunities;



5. All participants enrolled in a HSE funded IMG training programme following the IMG selection process referred to in Section 2.2, will be nominated by the relevant training bodies to specific NCHD posts as part of their IMG training rotation;
6. All such participants will be directly employed and paid by the relevant health service employer and will hold the NCHD Contract 2010; and
7. All other employment related requirements will also need to be met by participants including occupational health assessment and Garda / Police clearance.

An example of an IMG Training Initiative which has been developed and implemented under the above governance and management arrangements is the *HSE – College of Physicians and Surgeons of Pakistan IMG Training Initiative 2013*.

3.3 IMG Training Capacity Not Funded by the HSE

In relation to training capacity identified within the health service within approved training departments for which there are no funded NCHD posts available to access same, scope will be available for overseas doctors to engage in an IMG Programme on a sponsored basis by their home states. The following governance and management arrangements will apply to IMG Training Programmes structured in this manner:

1. This capacity will be identified by the postgraduate training bodies in terms of individual clinical placement opportunities being identified by site, specialty and training level;
2. Clinical placements to be used for this purpose can be developed at training levels equivalent to SHO, Registrar and SpR;
3. Potential clinical placements identified will be utilised by the postgraduate training bodies to develop pre-defined IMG Training rotational programmes as appropriate;
4. All participants enrolled in an IMG programme structured in this manner following the IMG selection process referred to in Section 2.2 must have been nominated by their parent state on a sponsored basis i.e. their salary and related costs must be met directly by their parent state;
5. Countries and states recorded on the United Nations Development Programme Human Development Index as having a very high or high human development will be afforded the opportunity by the HSE and postgraduate medical training bodies to access this identified training capacity;
6. All participants enrolled in an IMG programme structured in this manner, will be nominated by the relevant training bodies to specific clinical training placements as part of their programme;
7. For the duration of their IMG programme and

associated clinical placements, arrangements will be put in place to enable the sponsoring states to remunerate such IMG participants at a rate appropriate to their training level in Ireland and benchmarked against the salary scales applicable to NCHDS in Ireland;

8. For the duration of their clinical placement(s) all participants will be subject to the terms and conditions of the NCHD Contract 2010, with the exception of publically funded schemes and entitlements associated with sick leave, maternity leave and superannuation;
9. Any concerns raised regarding the conduct and performance of a participant whilst on such a sponsored clinical placement will be addressed in accordance with the disciplinary procedures in place on the relevant clinical site / service, with said clinical site/service having the right to withdraw its facilitation of the sponsored clinical placement if such is deemed appropriate following application of its disciplinary procedures; and
10. Prior to commencing their sponsored clinical placements, all participants will be required to undergo the mandatory screening requirements of the relevant clinical site/service including occupational health assessment and Garda/Police clearance.

An example of an IMG Initiative which has been developed and implemented under the above governance and management arrangements is the *HSE – Faculty of Radiologists – Kuwait Ministry of Health IMG Training Initiative 2013*.

SECTION FOUR: ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR IMG PARTICIPANTS

4.1 COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Each participant, prior to appointment to an IMG Training Programme, must meet the following requirements:

1. Be validated and confirmed by both the relevant overseas educational partner and the relevant Irish medical training body as having undertaken their undergraduate medical degree in English

AND

2. Be interviewed directly by the relevant Irish postgraduate training body during which their communication skills are assessed and confirmed as demonstrating a level of competency in the English language which is appropriate to the roles and duties of a junior doctor in the Irish system;

AND

3. For those applying for an IMG Programme at Primary Postgraduate Training Level to have successfully completed, as part of a recognised training programme, an intermediate module postgraduate medical examination in the English language as identified and agreed by the HSE and the appropriate Irish training body

OR

For those applying for an IMG Programme at Fellowship Postgraduate Training Level, to have successfully completed, as part of a recognised training programme, a postgraduate medical examination in the English language which is at a level at least equivalent to a Membership examination, as identified and agreed by the HSE and the appropriate Irish training body.

Subject to these mandatory requirements being met, the HSE will grant each participant a formal exemption from the HSE's requirement of undertaking the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) and meeting the HSE specified minimum mark in same.

A list of all exams specifically agreed by both the HSE and the appropriate training body for the purposes of the above at both IMG Primary and Fellowship level will be maintained on an on-going basis by the HSE-MET Unit.

However, if at any stage during their participation in the IMG programme, communication and language issues are identified by the host clinical site in relation to a participant, they will be required to undertake the IELTS within a period of time to be defined by the host clinical site and to obtain the HSE's defined minimum requirements in same in order to proceed in their IMG Training programme. Failure to meet the HSE's requirements in this regard will result in an immediate termination of the clinical placement.

4.2 MEDICAL COUNCIL REGISTRATION

All individuals appointed to an IMG Programme in Ireland will be required by both the HSE and the relevant Irish postgraduate medical training body to apply for and acquire registration with the Medical Council of Ireland prior to commencing their clinical training placement in Ireland. For the 2013/2014 period it is required that individuals be registered on the General Division of the Register of Medical Practitioners, with a view to all participants on IMG Programmes being registered on the Supervised Division from July 2014 onwards.

4.3 IMMIGRATION STATUS

All individuals appointed to an IMG training programme in Ireland will be required to apply for and acquire the appropriate immigration status to enable them to reside and work in Ireland for the duration of their IMG training programme in Ireland.

It has been agreed between the Department of Justice and Equality in Ireland and the HSE that permission to remain and work in Ireland beyond the date of completion of the relevant IMG training programme will not be granted.

Further information on Immigration is available from the Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service www.inis.gov.ie.

SECTION 5: ROLE OF KEY STAKEHOLDERS

While working collaboratively, each stakeholder has an important role to play to ensure the success of the IMG Training Initiative and individual overseas doctors' training experience in same.

5.1 Role of the HSE

- To engage as required with overseas educational partners and sponsoring states with a view to promoting national partnership agreements regarding the IMG Training Initiative.
- To work with the postgraduate training bodies in identifying training capacity that can be utilised for the IMG Training Initiative.
- To review and agree with each training body their individual IMG Training Programmes and the number of participants.
- To facilitate the structured clinical training placements of IMG participants in line with the structures governing same as set out in Section 1.2

5.2 Role of the Irish Postgraduate Training Bodies

- To engage with overseas educational partners and develop strong collaborative and working relationships regarding the delivery of the IMG Training Initiative.
- To work with the HSE in identifying medical training capacity that can be utilised for the IMG Training Initiative.
- To ensure that all clinical placements to be utilized for the IMG Training Initiative provide quality training and offer sufficient supervision and learning experience and are incorporated into a structured IMG training programme.

- To liaise with overseas partners regarding the advertising of the Initiative and the identification of eligible candidates for the programme.
- To conduct the recruitment interviews and ensure that candidates are of sufficient standard to enter the IMG Training Initiative.
- To ensure that the development and implementation of the IMG Training Programme will not lead to a reduction in the training capacity or quality of any National Domestic Specialist Training Programme in Ireland
- To issue the *Certificate of the IMG Primary or Secondary Fellowship Programme* upon participants completion of Programme and return to home country.

5.3 Role of the Overseas Educational Partner/ Sponsoring State

- To nominate eligible candidates for consideration for an IMG programme in Ireland to the relevant postgraduate training body.
- To work with the relevant Irish postgraduate training body to define the training requirements of their health service and their trainees so as to help ensure the IMG Programme meets the needs of both the candidate as well as the health service requirements of the home country.
- To accredit the time spent by a participant in Ireland in a structured IMG programme upon receipt of the Certificate of IMG Programme Completion by the relevant Irish training body.

5.4 Role of the International Medical Graduate Trainee

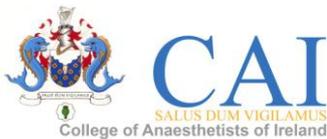
- To express an interest in the IMG Training Initiative to their appropriate sponsoring body
- To meet the eligibility criteria for the programme as set by the HSE and the relevant postgraduate training body
- To ensure immigration paperwork is in order
- To apply for and meet the requirements for Registration with the Medical Council in Ireland
- To abide by the terms and conditions of the NCHD Contract 2010 while occupying training post
- To abide by the terms and conditions of the IMG Training Initiative as so stated while participating in an IMG programme
- To abide by the stated requirements of the home country upon completion of the training programme

APPENDIX A: CONTACT INFORMATION

Contact Details of Irish Postgraduate Medical Training Bodies Engaged in the IMG Training Initiative:

College of Anaesthetists of Ireland

22 Merrion Square N, Dublin 2
+353 1 661 4412
www.anaesthesia.ie/



College of Psychiatrists of Ireland

5 Herbert Street, Dublin 2
+353 1 661 8450
www.irishpsychiatry.ie/Home.aspx



Faculty of Radiologists, RCSI

Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland
123 St. Stephen's Green
Dublin 2
+353 1 402 2139
www.radiology.ie/



Faculty of Radiologists
Dámh na Raideolaithe
Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland

Irish College of Ophthalmologists

121 St Stephen's Green
Dublin 2
+353 1 402 2777
www.eyedoctors.ie/



Royal College of Physicians of Ireland

Frederick House
19 South Frederick Street
Dublin 2
+353 1 863 9700
www.rcpi.ie



Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland

123 St Stephens Green
Dublin 2
+353 1 402 2100
www.rcsi.ie

