



# **NCHD Training Supports Scheme (TSS)**

## **Guidance Document for Employers & NCHDs**

**Effective from August 2021**

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## Training Supports for NCHDs

### Introduction

The Programme for a Partnership Government provides a commitment to fully implement the recommendations of the Strategic Review of Medical Training and Career Structures (Mac Craith Report). To assist in the recruitment and retention of key medical staff, Mac Craith acknowledged the need for enhanced training supports for all NCHDs.

In 2017 the IMO, HSE and Department of Health reached agreement in a High Court Settlement in respect of the legal challenge taken by the IMO on the restoration of the Living Out Allowance for NCHDs. A review of Training and Education Supports, which the IMO and both the HSE and Department of Health acknowledge is a key concern for NCHDs, formed part of this High Court Settlement Agreement.

Taking this into account and following substantial consultation with the parties listed above the approach set out below to Training Supports for NCHDs was adopted with effect from 8<sup>th</sup> July 2019.

A contribution towards supporting NCHD training is available from HSE – National Doctors Training & Planning (NDTP). The TSS is part of a suite of educational and training supports provided by the HSE to NCHDs.

### Principles of the Training Supports Scheme:

#### Description of the Training Supports Scheme and what is Eligible for Reimbursement via this Scheme:

1. The Training Supports Scheme (TSS) can be used to claim for exams, courses or conferences which satisfy the TSS Eligibility criteria. See Appendix 1: *Courses, Conferences, Examinations and Items Not Covered under the Training Support Scheme* for more information.
2. The TSS is in addition to existing financial support schemes such as the Clinical Course and Exam Refund Scheme (CCERS) and the Higher Specialist Training Fund (HST). Further details on other financial supports can be found at <https://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/leadership-education-development/met/ed/fin/>.

#### NCHD Eligibility for the TSS Fund:

1. The TSS is available to all NCHDs who hold a current HSE NCHD contract 2010 for a minimum period of 12 weeks and are working in an HSE funded post. See Appendix 2: *Frequently Asked Questions* for further information on NCHD eligibility for TSS.

**NCHD Funding Entitlement:**

1. Until July 2022, the annual amount available to NCHDs under this training supports scheme for each training year is as below. Please note that funding amounts will apply on a pro-rata basis to a less than full time NCHD:

Grade	Amount
Intern	€750
SHOs and Registrars	€1250
SPRs/GP Registrars/Psychiatry SRs on a training scheme	€2000

2. Funding of the scheme is provided on a “training year” basis. The definition of a “training year” is the second Monday in July until the second Monday in July of the following year.
3. TSS is a contractual entitlement for both training and non-training NCHDs that hold the 2010 NCHD contract.
4. NCHDs that are on a training scheme for the full training year should have access to the full amount of their fund entitlement, respective of their grade, from the commencement of the training year. Rotating during the training year does not affect this.
5. NCHDs that are not on a training scheme and for example only hold a contract for 6 months July – December, will only be able to draw down the pro rata amount for 6 months from the start of the training year i.e. 50%. If the NCHD then holds the contract in another site for another 6 months (e.g. January – July of the same training year) they would be entitled to the next 50% when they take up their new post. The NCHD would now have access to the amount of money remaining in their balance from their first site plus the amount awarded by their second site.
6. There is no rollover of funds from one training year to the next. Remaining balances will be reduced to zero at the end of every training year.

6a) Due to the Covid-19 Pandemic, a once off rollover of NCHDs remaining TSS balances from the 2019-2020 Training Year has been permitted and these funds will be carried into the 2020-2021 Training Year provided the NCHD is still eligible for TSS in 2020/2021. This change is for one year only and the normal rules around no rollover shall apply from training year 2021 onwards.

6b) Due to the ongoing Covid-19 Pandemic, a second rollover of NCHD balances from the 2020-2021 Training Year has been permitted and these funds will be carried into the 2021-2022 Training Year provided the NCHD is still eligible for TSS in 2021/2022. **This change is for one year only and the normal rules around no rollover shall apply from training year 2022 onwards.**

7. A full new allocation for the new training year will be made available where applicable for the appropriate NCHD grade. It is therefore up to each individual NCHD to submit complete applications on a timely basis.
8. Entitlement to the TSS is unaffected for NCHDs on approved leave e.g. Maternity Leave, Paternity Leave or Sick Leave.

### TSS Principles Regarding Eligibility of Educational Activities under the TSS:

1. The TSS can be used to reimburse NCHDs for exams, courses or conferences that they have attended and that satisfy the TSS eligibility criteria. See Appendix 1 *Courses, Conferences, Examinations and Items Not Covered under the Training Support Scheme* for more information.
2. Travel, subsistence and accommodation to TSS eligible exams, courses and conferences are also covered under this scheme. See Appendix 1 *Courses, Conferences, Examinations and Items Not Covered under the Training Support Scheme* for more information.
3. Travel, subsistence and accommodation, associated with the first passing of exams, that are eligible under CCERS, can be claimed for via TSS. The same principles apply in this instance with regards travel, subsistence and accommodation.
4. Travel, subsistence and accommodation, associated with courses that are eligible under the Higher Specialist Training Fund, can be claimed for via TSS. The same principles apply in this instance with regards travel, subsistence and accommodation.
5. Travel, subsistence and accommodation for non-training purposes e.g. interviews, work travel etc. should not be claimed under TSS but instead via local travel and subsistence procedures as appropriate. For more information on this please contact your local Medical Manpower Manager.

### TSS Principles Regarding Submission of an Application:

1. Only complete applications must be made to a current employer following the end date of the course/exam/conference. Complete applications are applications that have all relevant receipts, proof of attendance, proof of CPD accreditation (if appropriate) and travel expenses (if appropriate) included.
2. Applications should be made as soon as possible to the NCHD's current employer following the end date of the course/exam/conference to avoid delays in processing. If the NCHD changes employers during the training year, they may make the claim to this employer.
3. Applications should be submitted to an employer by the end of the training year and in this instance the cost of such a claim will be subtracted from the current training years' balance. It is possible to claim the cost of a course/exam/conference, undertaken in the previous training year, during the following training year, however, as there is no rollover of funds the cost of the course/exam/conference will be deducted from the following training years TSS balance.
4. Consultants/line managers are not required to pre-approve or approve any of the courses/exams/conferences covered in Appendix 1: *Courses, Conferences, Examinations and Items Not Covered under the Training Support Scheme*. However, the normal procedures applied locally for accessing Educational Leave must be adhered to.
5. There is no limit to the number of applications that can be made, once there are funds available.
6. Multiple applications can be made at the same time, however, these must be for separate course/conferences/exams and a separate application must be made for each application.

7. NCHDs should not make multiple applications that relate to the same course/conference/exam. For example, a claim for the cost of the course, the cost of the travel associated with this course and the cost of the accommodation associated with this course should all be made under the same application.
8. NCHDs should refer to their local Medical Manpower department for procedures on how to claim Travel & Subsistence.
9. Employers and NCHDs must adhere to the terms of the scheme. Access to the provisions of the scheme may be suspended or withdrawn if the terms of the scheme are breached.
10. The NCHD should familiarise themselves with both policies (CCERS & TSS) and submit their application under the correct scheme when seeking reimbursement e.g. CCERS or TSS.

#### TSS Principles Regarding Payment:

1. Payment is made by the employer to whom a claim is submitted, irrespective of where the expense is incurred.
2. The total cost of the claim will be covered provided the NCHD has a sufficient TSS balance. If the NCHD only has enough balance to partially cover the cost of the claim, then they will only be awarded the maximum amount of their remaining balance.
3. Once the NCHD has claimed the maximum of their balance for that Training Year they will **not** be able to make any further applications during that Training Year.
4. The cost of travel, subsistence and accommodation will only be reimbursed from funds remaining after the actual cost of the course/conference/exam has been met and where the NCHD retains a balance from which to draw down.
5. Employers must check applications submitted are in line with HSE Financial Regulations, in particular [NFR-05, Travel and Subsistence](#).
6. NCHDs will not be taxed on refunds of training expenses processed under this scheme.
7. In order to expedite the refund to NCHDs, with effect from July 2019 HSE-NDTP will provide funding to employers prospectively at the start of each training year, therefore employers should refund NCHDs as soon as possible after the application is received, without the need to await funding from HSE-NDTP. NDTP track site expenditure for TSS on an ongoing basis and provide funding top-ups to clinical sites when appropriate. It is the sites responsibility to ensure that the TSS funding is ring-fenced locally and is used specifically for the processing of TSS applications. NDTP issue quarterly balancing statements to local medical manpower advising of their current funding position. Funds transferred to sites for the purposes of TSS must not be used in any other manner
8. Payment should be received by the NCHD within 4-6 weeks of approval.
9. If an application is approved and the NCHD is not reimbursed within 6 weeks since the application was approved the NCHD should contact their local Medical Manpower Manager.
10. NCHDs applications should be actioned either before or within 28 days of leaving a clinical site. After this time, applications will be regarded as unprocessed and Medical Manpower Managers

will not be able to action applications with this status. NCHDs can re-submit unprocessed applications to their new site (provided they are still eligible for TSS) by using the Edit Application section on their NER Portal. Therefore, it is essential that NCHDs submit applications in a timely fashion so Medical Manpower Managers can approve/reject these applications, as appropriate, in a timely fashion.

11. In the event that an NCHD receives payment for a TSS application but subsequently resigns without 12 weeks' service, then the NCHD will be required to repay any funding received from the TSS. If employed for greater than 12 weeks then the TSS entitlement is applied pro rata, and any overpayment must be repaid

**NB: Any refund sought for training supports must relate to allowable training under this policy's Appendix 1. If a course/exam/conference is not in line with this policy, then it is ineligible for refund under TSS.**

## Implementation of the TSS from July 2019 & Retrospective Period January –July 2019

The scheme was launched on 8th July 2019. As part of this introductory period, retrospective applications may be submitted for educational activities undertaken from 14th January 2019 - 7th July 2019, however any such claims will be deducted from your current TSS allocation. To qualify you must be work in a HSE funded post and hold the NCHD contract 2010 on 8th July 2019 and also have been working in a HSE funded post and held NCHD contract 2010 during the period January to July 2019.

The Clinical Course & Exam Refund Scheme (CCERS) has increased to meet the full cost of exam/course upon passing the exam, with effect from 8th July 2019 onwards. The TSS **may not** be used to meet retrospective costs associated with this scheme. Please see the NDTP website <https://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/leadership-education-development/met/ed/fin/> for the CCERS policy.

## Process for Making and Approving Applications

For NCHDs

NCHDs should make all applications under the TSS section on their NER (National Employment Record) account.

NER forms part of the Doctors Integrated Management E-System (DIME). The purpose of this system is to reduce the administrative burden for NCHDs during the course of their employment in the health services. The TSS module is housed within the NER/DIME system.

The functionality within the NER Portal will enable NCHDs to:

1. Make a New Application
2. Edit an Application – (only if the application has a status of New, Further Info Required or Unprocessed)
3. Delete an Application – (only if it has not yet been submitted)
4. Check Remaining Balance

5. View a log of all your TSS Applications
6. View TSS Guidance Document

The procedure for NCHDs to claim reimbursement via TSS is as follows:

1. Open your NER portal account (it is possible to do this from a mobile device i.e. a smart phone). Should you need to reactivate your account or create a new account please see Appendix 2 *Frequently Asked Questions*.
2. Identify the type of course/exam/conference you have attended and input start and end dates where applicable.
3. Attach all relevant receipts and documentation associated with the application – At least 1 document must be attached in order to allow you to submit an application – File size must be less than 5MB and the document must be either in PDF or JPEG format. Documents that should be included when making an application are as follows:
  - a. Proof of Attendance (e.g. letter/email/document/exam results that shows the NCHD was in attendance)
  - b. Proof of CPD/CME points for courses/conferences that make the course/conference eligible under TSS
  - c. Receipts that display the cost incurred for the course/exam/conference, (unless only the travel/accommodation associated with the course/conference/exam is being claimed for)
  - d. Accommodation receipts (if applicable),
  - e. Travel receipts (if applicable),
4. NCHDs should refer to their local Medical Manpower department for procedures on how to claim Travel & Subsistence. Please note travel associated with the course/conference/exam must be submitted with the application for the course/conference/exam. They should not be submitted as separate applications unless claiming the travel/accommodation costs associated with courses/exams that were covered under CCERS/Higher Specialist Training Fund.
5. Complete online Declaration Form by ticking check box– You must declare that receipts are originals etc. **NCHDs are required to keep receipts for 6 years and they may be subject to audit.**
6. Submit application electronically via NER to current employer upon completing the course/conference. In the case of an exam, submit your application when your result is received (to determine whether it is eligible for either TSS or CCERS).
7. Please also see the TSS NER User Guide for NCHDs should you require further information about how to make a TSS application <https://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/leadership-education-development/met/database/userguides/>.
8. Once an application has been submitted, it appears for verification by Medical Manpower users of the Doctor Integrated E-Management System (DIME). An application is pending until approved by your Medical Manpower Manager. Medical Manpower Managers will review applications against this policy, assess if there are sufficient funds to cover it or provide part payment, and if

so approve the relevant amount due for payment. Once an application is approved no amendments to the application can be made by the NCHD.

9. NCHDs will receive DIME notifications via email in relation to the status of their applications and also if further information is required for a specific application. If you have any questions regarding the status of your application you should contact your local Medical Manpower Department directly. **Please note NDTP are not in a position to deal with individual queries from NCHDs.**
10. For administrative purposes the system will be closed for any new applications from 4 weeks after the commencement of the training year to allow all residual applications from the previous training year to be closed off. **This means all applications must be submitted before the annual NCHD changeover/end of the training year in order for these applications to be processed and deducted from the current Training Years TSS balance.** Please note that there will be no rollover of funds from one training year to another.

10a) Due to the Covid-19 Pandemic, a once off rollover of NCHDs remaining TSS balances from the 2019-2020 Training Year has been permitted and these funds will be carried into the 2020-2021 Training Year provided the NCHD is still eligible for TSS in 2020/2021. This change is for one year only and the normal rules around no rollover shall apply from training year 2021 onwards.

**10b)** Due to the ongoing Covid-19 Pandemic, a second rollover of NCHD balances from the 2020-2021 Training Year has been permitted and these funds will be carried into the 2021-2022 Training Year provided the NCHD is still eligible for TSS in 2021/2022. **This change is for one year only and the normal rules around no rollover shall apply from training year 2022 onwards.**

**NB - You must ensure your course/conference/exam is eligible per this policy and that you have funds available to cover all/some of the cost.**

#### For Medical Manpower Managers

The process for Medical Manpower Managers assessing applications is as follows:

1. NCHDs should first be post matched to your site before you will be able to allocate them a balance. For more information on this please see the NCHD Post Matching User Guide <https://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/leadership-education-development/met/database/userguides/>.
2. Each NCHD will then have to be assigned a TSS balance before they will be able to submit a TSS application. This should happen at the beginning of the training year or at the start of a changeover if an NCHD is on a less than full time contract. Please see the *TSS Principles* regarding *NCHD Funding Entitlement* where the breakdown of entitlements is highlighted per NCHD grade.
3. Input the appropriate amount available for the NCHD into the Balance Setting section of the Training Supports module, referencing grade and duration of current contract. Where NCHDs work less than full time the amounts must be pro-rated. NCHDs that are expected to complete a

full training year and are rotating to another site should be assigned the full TSS balance by their first clinical site.

4. Under the Applications section of the Training Supports module of DIME, all submitted applications from any NCHDs matched to your clinical site will appear here.
5. Verify the application is valid under the policy and ensure that all required receipts and documentation are attached and are in line with the TSS policy.
6. Check the NCHD has enough funds in their balance to cover all or at least part of the application.
7. Applications will have one of the following statuses:
  - a. **Submitted:** Awaiting Medical Manpower processing
  - b. **New:** Application has been created by NCHD but not yet submitted to Medical Manpower
  - c. **Provisionally Approved:** Application has been actioned by Medical Manpower, however is awaiting final approval e.g. Travel & Subsistence calculation
  - d. **Approved:** Application has been approved by Medical Manpower. It must then be sent to Finance to ensure NCHDs receive payment. Please consult with your local Finance Department to confirm correct procedure.
  - e. **Further Info Required:** The application has been returned to the NCHD for clarification / to get further information
  - f. **Rejected:** The application is rejected if not in line with allowable expenses under this policy. Once an application has been rejected, no further action can occur. If an application was rejected in error the NCHD will have to submit the application again.
  - g. **Unprocessed:** An application is considered unprocessed if Medical Manpower has not actioned an application within 4 weeks after the NCHD has left their post.
8. System generated emails are sent to NCHDs advising them of the status change with regards their application and their NER account is updated to reflect this also.
9. If the application is ready for approval insert the amount to be paid to the NCHD. Total cost to be paid should be broken down into the following categories: Total amount for the course and Total amount for Travel & Subsistence (if applicable). Please note the cost of the course/conference/exam will be awarded before any travel/subsistence/accommodation costs will be given. Only if the NCHD has enough balance to cover the cost of the travel after the cost of the course/conference/exam is covered will it be awarded.
10. Proceed to process payment in line with locally agreed finance pathways.
11. Please see the MMM TSS User Guide for more information on how to assign balances and to action TSS applications <https://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/leadership-education-development/met/database/userguides/>.

## Travel and subsistence

It is noted that travel and subsistence is payable as per HSE policy and may be claimed from an NCHDs TSS allowance. Full details of the travel and subsistence policy and rates are found here: <https://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/benefitservices/travel-subsistence/>. NCHDs should refer to their local Medical Manpower department for procedures on how to claim Travel & Subsistence. **Please note there is no separate funding available for travel.**

## APPENDIX 1 Courses, Conferences, Examinations and Items Covered / Not Covered under the Training Support Scheme

**Note:** The NCHD must provide Medical Manpower with the appropriate supporting documentation with each application to facilitate employer decision making when determining if an application is eligible for reimbursement in line with criteria below:

APPLICATION CATEGORY 1 - COURSES AND CONFERENCES		
Application Type	Eligible for Reimbursement	NOT Eligible for Reimbursement
<b>Course Registration Fees</b>	<p>Meetings of relevant Irish professional bodies</p> <p>National and International courses / conferences with appropriate CPD/CME accreditation / content</p> <p>MD/PhD Fees</p> <p>Masters, MBA, Postgraduate Diploma, Certificate with Medical/Quality/Leadership/Management component</p> <p>Membership revision courses/Mock Exams e.g. CASC/Question Banks (Proof of attendance may not be necessary in this instance)</p> <p>Professional Competency Scheme (PCS) Registration</p> <p>Online courses/conferences with appropriate CPD/CME accreditation / content</p>	<p>Annual or business meetings with no CME/CPD component</p> <p>Fees / expenses for social activities associated with courses</p> <p>Medical Council registration fees</p> <p>Private Indemnity Insurance</p> <p>Fees/expenses for persons accompanying claimants</p> <p>Courses/conference where there have been no expenses incurred by the individual NCHD</p> <p>Online courses/conferences with no CPD/CME component</p> <p>Duplicate application already made under the following schemes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Specialist Training Fund (HST and GP Trainees)</li> <li>-Continuous Professional Development – Support Scheme</li> <li>-Clinical Course &amp; Exam Refund Scheme</li> </ul>

## CATEGORY 2 – EXAMINATIONS

Application Type	Eligible for Reimbursement	NOT Eligible for Reimbursement
<b>Examinations</b>	<p>Examinations not covered under the Clinical Course and Examination refund scheme which are recommended as part of post-graduate training</p> <p>Exams listed under the CCERS where the NCHD was unsuccessful and thus ineligible to apply via CCERS</p>	<p>International and UK examinations where equivalent examination is available in Ireland e.g. MRCPUK</p> <p>Examinations not recognised/required as part of post-graduate training in the Irish Health System.</p> <p>Examinations required for registration in other countries (excluding USMLE – if required as part of your postgraduate training programme only)</p> <p>English language examinations</p>

## CATEGORY 3 – Other ITEMS Covered/NOT COVERED UNDER THIS SCHEME

Application Type	Eligible for Reimbursement	NOT Eligible for Reimbursement
	<p>Journal/Publication fees for research</p> <p>Printing of academic posters for conferences</p> <p>USMLE - if required as part of your postgraduate training programme only</p>	<p>On-line Subscriptions (to access on line journals please contact your local library)</p> <p>Interview prep courses and Training Body application fees</p> <p>Hardware/Software</p> <p>No Medical equipment/accessories</p>

### CATEGORY 3 – Other ITEMS Covered/NOT COVERED UNDER THIS SCHEME

Application Type	Eligible for Reimbursement	NOT Eligible for Reimbursement
		<p>Books</p> <p>Annual Registration Fees for Professional Membership e.g. Membership of the Royal Academy of Ireland</p> <p>Conferring and associated fees</p> <p>USMLE - if not required as part of your postgraduate training programme</p> <p>Travel and Accommodation associated with Study Days</p>
<p><b>Transportation</b>  <i>Transportations costs associated with:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Courses/conferences/exams that are eligible under TSS</li> <li>Exams or courses covered under CCERS which have been successfully passed. The cost of the exam or course is applied for under CCERS and the travel under TSS.</li> </ul>	<p>As per HSE travel policy, available at:  <a href="http://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/BenefitsServices/Travel_Subsistence/">http://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/BenefitsServices/Travel_Subsistence/</a></p>	<p>As per HSE travel policy, available at:  <a href="http://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/BenefitsServices/Travel_Subsistence/">http://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/BenefitsServices/Travel_Subsistence/</a></p> <p>Business / first class travel costs – costs will only be refunded at economy class rates</p> <p>Transportation costs associated with interviews or study days</p>

### CATEGORY 3 – Other ITEMS Covered/NOT COVERED UNDER THIS SCHEME

Application Type	Eligible for Reimbursement	NOT Eligible for Reimbursement
<b>Accommodation</b> <i>Accommodation costs associated with:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Courses/conferences/exams that are eligible for refund under TSS</li> <li>Exams or courses covered under CCERS which have been successfully passed. The cost of the exam or course is applied for under CCERS and the accommodation under TSS.</li> </ul>	<p>As per HSE travel policy, available at:  <a href="http://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/BenefitsServices/Travel_Subsistence/">http://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/BenefitsServices/Travel_Subsistence/</a></p>	<p>As per HSE travel policy, available at:  <a href="http://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/BenefitsServices/Travel_Subsistence/">http://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/BenefitsServices/Travel_Subsistence/</a></p> <p>Accommodation costs associated with interviews or study days</p>
<b>Subsistence</b> <i>Subsistence costs associated with:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Courses/conferences/exams that are eligible for refund under TSS with appropriate CPD/CME accreditation</li> <li>Exams or courses covered under CCERS which have been successfully passed. The cost of the exam or course is applied for under CCERS and the subsistence under TSS.</li> </ul>	<p>As per HSE policy, available at:  <a href="http://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/BenefitsServices/Travel_Subsistence/">http://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/BenefitsServices/Travel_Subsistence/</a></p>	<p>As per HSE travel policy, available at:  <a href="http://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/BenefitsServices/Travel_Subsistence/">http://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/BenefitsServices/Travel_Subsistence/</a></p> <p>Subsistence costs associated with interviews or study days</p>

## APPENDIX 2 Frequently Asked Questions:

### How do I check if a course/conference/exam is eligible under TSS?

Please see Appendix 1 and the below FAQ's before contacting your local Medical Manpower Department.

## For NCHDs

### 1. Questions Prior to Submitting an Application:

#### 1.1 How do I make an application through TSS?

Applications for TSS must be submitted through your NER portal. Applications must include all receipts associated with the application i.e. course/conference/exam receipts, travel receipts, accommodation receipts, as well as proof of attendance at the course/conference/exam. Appropriate CPD/CME accreditation should be provided where applicable. Please note your application may be rejected if you do not have all appropriate documentation included in your application.

#### 1.2 I don't have an NER account or my NER account is deactivated –can I avail of the scheme?

If you are eligible to apply under TSS and are registered with the IMC, you should open an NER account to be able to submit applications under this scheme. Applications via any other method will not be accepted.

To set up a new NER account or reset a forgotten password please see pages 2 and 3 of the NER User Guide which can be found at the following link:

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/leadership-education-development/met/database/userguides/ner-portal-quick-step-user-guide11.pdf>.

To reactivate a current account please contact your local Medical Manpower Department.

#### 1.3 There is a lock symbol on my NER account under the TSS section – why?

There may be a lock symbol for one of a few reasons:

- Medical Manpower has not assigned a balance to your account yet – Please contact your local Medical Manpower to rectify this.
- You have not been matched to a post – Please contact your local Medical Manpower to rectify this.
- You have used all of your balance in previous TSS applications.
- You have not provided an IMC number on your Hire Form – Please update.
- The TSS is in lockdown. You cannot make new applications for 4 weeks after the end of the training year. You will be contacted by email when the system is open for applications again.

**1.4 Can I apply using my smart phone?**

Yes - it is possible to do this.

**1.5 I am not matched to a post on NER/DIME– how can I submit an application to my employer?**

Your clinical site must first match you to a post for the period of time you will be employed with them, in order for you to submit an application during this time. You should contact your local Medical Manpower Department if you are not matched to a post.

**1.6 I have been allocated only half of my TSS fund entitlement. Why have I only received this much?**

It is likely you are in a non-training post, and your balance has been applied in line with the length of your contract. If this is not the case, please contact your local Medical Manpower Department to discuss.

**1.7 Approval – does my consultant need to approve my application?**

No there is no pre-approval required before submitting a TSS application. Once the course/exam/conference is in line with the terms and conditions of the scheme (Appendix 1) it will be approved by Medical Manpower. Educational leave is a separate entitlement and must be applied for using existing forms/processes. NCHDs should also refer to their local Medical Manpower Department for procedures on how to claim Travel & Subsistence.

**1.8 I am about to start a course which is eligible for the Training Supports Scheme. I will start the course while I am employed by one clinical site and finish the course while I'm employed by a different site. How will this work?**

You should submit the application after completing the course to your present employer. Your balance will follow you from clinical site to clinical site as you rotate on your training throughout the Training Year.

**2. Questions about NCHD Eligibility for TSS:****2.1 If I have a 6-month contract and I am not on a training scheme. Am I eligible for TSS?**

If you hold the 2010 NCHD contract and are working in a HSE funded post, your TSS balance will be assigned to you on a pro-rata basis.

**2.2 How does TSS work for interns?**

You should get your full annual entitlement in the year you have been offered a one-year intern post via the National Intern match. Your first employer should enter your annual entitlement.

**2.3 What if I am on a training scheme for between 1 to 4 years?**

Your first employer after the July changeover should allocate you the full year's allowance.

**2.4 What if I am leaving the Irish Public Healthcare System, taking up employment in in a private hospital or going into Research/Lecturer post where I will not hold the NCHD contract 2010?**

You must make any full and final applications from your current employer before you finish in your post. This means if you book a course or conference where the start date is after the end date of your contract such a course is not eligible under this scheme. In the case of an ongoing course where receipts and proof of attendance can be produced prior to your contract end date, this part of the course is claimable under the scheme.

**2.5 I am on sabbatical from training and clinical practice to do a PhD/research/lab based work, and working privately. Can I claim TSS funding?**

No. It is necessary to hold the HSE NCHD 2010 contract in order to avail of the scheme which would not be held in a private/research post.

**2.6 I am on flexible training or working less than full time – can I avail of the scheme?**

Once you hold the 2010 NCHD contract you will have access to your fund on a pro-rata basis.

**2.7 I am an agency NCHD – can I avail of the scheme?**

Only NCHDs holding the HSE NCHD contract 2010 as issued by a HSE or Section 38/39 employer and are a holder of a HSE funded post can avail of the scheme.

**2.8 I am on the Richard Steevens Scholarship. Am I entitled to TSS funds?**

As Richard Steevens Scholarship recipients do not receive the 2010 NCHD contract from their employers overseas, they are not eligible to claim TSS.

**2.9 I am an Aspire Fellow. Am I entitled to TSS funding?**

Yes, as Aspire Fellows hold the 2010 NCHD contract and work in HSE funded posts.

**2.10 Are Post CSCST Fellows entitled to TSS?**

Once you hold the NCHD 2010 contract and work in a HSE funded post.

**2.11 Can I apply for TSS if I am officially on a career break?**

No

**2.12 I am on the military medicine scheme. Am I entitled to TSS?**

Military Medicine Trainees in years 1 and 2 are entitled to TSS as they hold the 2010 NCHD contract. Military Medicine Trainees in years 3, 4 and 5 are not entitled to TSS as they are employed directly by the Department of Defence and do not hold the 2010 NCHD contract.

**2.13 I have dental council registration but not medical council registration. Am I eligible for this scheme?**

Dentists are not eligible for TSS. Only dentists who have dual registration with the medical council and are working as a doctor (e.g. SpR in Maxillo-Facial Surgery) are covered by the terms of the TSS.

**2.14 I am rotating to a private site am I still entitled to TSS?**

Only NCHDs holding the HSE NCHD contract 2010 and are a holder of a HSE funded post can avail of the scheme. The only exception to this are a very small number of trainees, who are required as part of training to rotate to private hospitals but will still hold the 2010 NCHD contract. They will have an entitlement to this training support scheme.

**2.15 I am on maternity leave – can I avail of the scheme?**

Yes - your entitlement is unaffected. However, you must hold the 2010 NCHD contract and be employed in a HSE funded site. Please note you must remain registered with the IMC to retain the ability to submit a TSS application via the NER system. While you are on statutory Maternity Leave your TSS balance will remain unchanged but if you decide to take additional unpaid maternity leave your TSS balance will be calculated on a pro-rata basis.

**2.16 I am on sick leave. Can I apply for TSS?**

Once you are in compliance with the sick leave scheme, hold the 2010 NCHD contract and are working in a HSE funded site you can avail of TSS.

**2.17 I am an ICAT Trainee am I eligible for TSS?**

ICAT Trainees that hold the 2010 NCHD contract are eligible for TSS.

**2.18 I am currently eligible for TSS. During the previous Training Year I was ineligible for TSS as I undertook a year in research. Now that I am eligible for TSS can I submit an application for a course I attended while I was ineligible for TSS?**

Once you are eligible for TSS now, you can apply for reimbursement for the cost of a TSS eligible course that you undertook while you were ineligible for TSS during the previous Training Year only.

### 3. Questions about Submitting an Application:

#### **3.1 Is there a prospective/pre borrowing payment facility?**

There is no facility for prospective payment. Applications submitted must include proof of attendance in order to receive a refund.

#### **3.2 Can I submit part of my application to my previous employer?**

Applications may only be submitted to your current employer.

#### **3.3 What if I don't have a current employer?**

Full and final applications should be submitted to your employer prior to leaving employment. Once you leave and no longer hold the 2010 NCHD contract, you cannot make an application.

#### **3.4 If I stay on with my current employer will my fund rollover?**

Only if this is within the same training year. Following the July changeover each year all balances are reduced to zero and a new balance is assigned to NCHDs based on their grade for the next training year. (Exception for the 2019-2020 Training Year where the remaining balances rolled over into the 2020-2021 Training Year and 2020-21 Training Year where the remaining balances will rollover into the 2021-2022 Training Year as a once off).

#### **3.5 How do I claim for travel and subsistence?**

NCHDs should refer to their Medical Manpower Department for procedures on how to claim Travel & Subsistence.

#### **3.6 Can I claim for something paid in another currency?**

Yes, once it is in line with this policy.

#### **3.7 Do I need original hard copies of receipts?**

Electronic receipts are acceptable. NCHDs must declare via an online declaration that receipts are originals and genuine. NCHDs are required to keep receipts for 6 years and may be subject to audit.

#### **3.8 Can courses such as Degree/Masters/PHD/MD be claimed for in instalments?**

Longer running courses such as Masters/Diplomas/PhDs can be claimed for in instalments but a prospective application cannot be made. The NCHD should highlight clearly the start and end dates from which the instalments refer to. You may not use money from future training years, however, you may pay year 2 of a course from the following years TSS allocation.

**3.9 Can I claim twice for the same course/exam?**

This would be considered a breach of the terms and conditions of the scheme and this is not permitted under the TSS. However, you may claim for the same exam/course undertaken on a different date e.g. resit/renewal.

**3.10 Can I submit a partially complete application, with no proof of attendance?**

Proof of attendance must be provided in the case of exams, courses or conferences. This could be in the form of a letter, email, exam results or a document which proves attendance. In the case of a Masters, PhD or Diploma, NCHDs should provide proof of commencement even if they have not completed the course.

**3.11 What constitutes proof of attendance?**

Confirmation from the educational or training body that you attended the exam or course is considered sufficient proof of attendance. This could be in the form of a letter, email or other document that confirms the NCHD was in attendance at the exam or course. Exam results or certificates of CPD credits are not required, but will also suffice.

## 4 Questions after Submitting an Application:

**4.1 My Medical Manpower Manager has rejected my claim. Can I appeal their decision?**

The TSS has a strict list of eligible criteria which Medical Manpower should adhere to. If it is in line with this policy, it must be paid. However, your Medical Manpower Manager has the duty to reject inappropriate or incomplete applications. If you are unhappy with the decision of Medical Manpower, then your first port of call should be to query with them.

**4.2 I have submitted an application on NER, it has yet to be actioned by my Medical Manpower Department. How do I expediate this?**

Your local Medical Manpower Department unit deals directly with specific applications. You should contact them should you have a query regarding an application. This is particularly important to do nearing the end of the training year or site rotation. NDTP are not in a position to deal with individual queries from NCHDs.

**4.3 I have completed my application but it has not been received by my Medical Manpower Manager, why is this happening?**

Ensure that you have clicked “Submit” rather than “Save and Exit” after you have completed your application. Please check the “Edit Application” section on NER as your application may be sitting here if it has not been received by your Medical Manpower Department.

#### **4.4 How will I know when I have been paid?**

You must check to see if the amount you have claimed for has been approved by your local Medical Manpower Manger and appears in your bank account. It is reasonable to allow up to 6 weeks for payment following approval by your Medical Manpower Manger. It is your responsibility to check your bank account as the system shows what is approved for payment rather than what has been paid.

### **5 Questions about TSS, CCERS and HST:**

#### **5.1 Can I apply for an exam, covered under the Clinical Course and Exam Refund Scheme (CCERS), via TSS?**

You should apply via the CCERS scheme for reimbursement of any exams or courses; you have successfully passed, and are listed on the approved CCERS list. The TSS is an additional entitlement and can be used to cover the cost of a CCERS approved exam where you have been unsuccessful. The CCERS has been expanded since July 2019 so the full cost of eligible exams, once successfully passed, will be covered under CCERS. You may not claim any residual costs of exams paid under the CCERS.

#### **5.2 If I made an application under the CCERS scheme between Jan - July 2019 may I claim the remaining costs from the TSS when introduced in July 2019?**

No. If you have previously made an application from any other HSE support scheme, it is not permissible to make a subsequent application under TSS.

#### **5.3 Can I claim the cost of a CCERS approved exam/course and the travel associated with this exam under TSS?**

If you have successfully passed the exam/course, you can apply for a refund under CCERS. You may then apply for the cost of the travel/accommodation/subsistence for this exam/course under TSS if necessary. Please note that you should include proof of attendance to the exam/course along with the TSS submission but not the receipt of the exam/course as this will be sent via CCERS. For an unsuccessful sitting of a CCERS approved exam/course you can apply for the cost of the exam/course and the travel under TSS, provided you have sufficient funds.

#### **5.4 If I have claimed under TSS for a successful sitting of a CCERS approved exam and then realise I should have applied under CCERS; can I now apply under CCERS?**

No. Once your application has been approved under TSS you can't resubmit and make the application under a different scheme. Please read both the CCERS and TSS policies before making an application to ensure you are claiming under the correct training scheme.

### **5.5 I have claimed the cost of a course under the Higher Specialist Training Fund. Can I claim the cost of the travel associated with this course under TSS?**

If you received reimbursement for a course under the Higher Specialist Training Fund, you can then apply for the travel/accommodation costs (if applicable) associated with the course via TSS. However, you cannot claim for the same costs more than once under two different schemes.

## **For Medical Manpower Managers**

Please note the Frequently Asked Questions for NCHDs will also be applicable to Medical Manpower Managers.

### **1. Questions Regarding Assigning Balances:**

#### **1.1 How do I know what to allocate for each grade?**

The allocations for a full training year are as outlined on page 4 of this document. In the Balance Setting of the Training Supports Module, Medical Manpower Managers must award eligible NCHDs the correct TSS entitlement for the training year on the July changeover each year, and top up their balances, if required, throughout the year for those on a less than full time contract.

#### **1.2 What if I have an NCHD who starts after July?**

The fund amount must be calculated on a pro rata basis e.g. if the NCHDs contract runs between August 2019 to July 2020 the NCHD is allocated 11/12 of the annual amount for their grade, for that training year.

#### **1.3 What if I have an SHO who is promoted to a Registrar?**

Their fund stays the same.

#### **1.4 What about an NCHD on a 6-month contract starting in July?**

Insert half the amount that they would be entitled to for the full year. If you renew the contract you must increase the allocation in line with the contract extension. Alternately if the NCHD changes employer the next employer must add to this if the NCHD is employed in another clinical site for the second half of the training year.

#### **1.5 How should I assign a TSS balance for an NCHD who is 50% college, 50% hospital based?**

The NCHD should hold the 2010 NCHD contract and work in a HSE funded post first in order to be eligible for TSS. If this is the case, they should be entitled to a balance that is pro-rata based on their contract. If this is not the case, they would not be entitled to TSS.

**1.6 What if an NCHD joins my site but has not got a balance assigned?**

If the NCHD is on a Training Scheme you can allocate the NCHD the total amount that they should receive for the year. If they are not on a Training Scheme you can allocate the NCHD the amount pro-rata in line with their contract duration.

**1.7 Should balances be reduced for NCHDs on parental leave?**

No. Full balances should be given to NCHDs on parental leave.

**1.8 If an NCHD holds a contract of indefinite duration are they entitled to TSS?**

Once the NCHD holds the 2010 NCHD contract they should be eligible for TSS.

**1.9 We are a Private Hospital and we fund our doctors directly for courses and conferences through our accounts department. Will the TSS affect NCHDs in our site?**

The TSS is a contractual entitlement for NCHDs who hold the 2010 NCHD contract. So if the NCHD holds the 2010 NCHD contract and works in a HSE funded post then they would be entitled to TSS.

**1.10 Should I give an NCHD the full TSS entitlement as per their grade even though they are only at my site for 3 months?**

If an NCHD is on a training scheme and is due to rotate to another site, they should be assigned the full TSS entitlement for the year. If the NCHD is not on a Training Scheme they should be assigned their TSS entitlement pro-rata as per their contract duration.

## 2. Questions Regarding Pre-Approval of an Application:

**2.1 If an NCHD has completed a course when not employed in this hospital, do I have to pay it?**

Yes. If the course satisfies the TSS eligibility and is within the time frames for reimbursement.

**2.2 Is there a time limit for submission of TSS applications?**

NCHDs should submit TSS applications as soon as possible to their current employer following the end date of the course/conference/exam. If the NCHD changes employers during the training year they may submit the application to the new employer. Applications should be submitted to their current employer by the end of the training year and in this instance the cost of the claim will be subtracted from their current training years TSS balance. It is possible to claim the cost of a course/exam/conference, undertaken in the previous training year, during the following training year, however, as there is no rollover of funds the cost of the course will be deducted from the following training years TSS balance.

### **2.3 How will Consultants/Clinical directors be involved?**

Consultants and clinical directors will not be involved in the approval of courses/exams/conferences etc. Medical Manpower Managers will approve applications based on Appendix 1: *Courses, Conferences, Examinations and Items Covered / Not Covered under the Training Support Scheme*. However, the normal procedures for educational leave still apply.

### **2.4 How does this scheme interact with study leave?**

NCHDs entitlement to paid educational leave is separate from this entitlement.

## **3. Questions Regarding TSS Application Eligibility:**

### **3.1 How will NCHDs know what they can claim for?**

A copy of this policy will be made available to all NCHDs.

### **3.2 What if I cannot decide whether or not an application is eligible for repayment?**

Please consult Appendix 1 *Courses, Conferences, Examinations and Items Covered / Not Covered under the Training Support Scheme* of this document

### **3.3 What if an application is made that doesn't fall under the scheme eligibility?**

You must reject the application on the Training Supports Module on DIME and advise the NCHD of the reason why.

### **3.4 What if an NCHD is claiming for something that is not covered in Appendix 1, but the consultant has approved it?**

Only applications submitted in accordance with Appendix 1: *Courses, Conferences, Examinations and Items Covered / Not Covered under the Training Support Scheme* may be paid.

### **3.5 What if an NCHD attends a course/conference/exam in a specialty they are not working in?**

Provided they submit an application in line with this policy, it should be paid.

### **3.6 Can I process the cost of flights and hotel bookings before the NCHD has gone to a course if they have provided all the booking information?**

No. Not until proof of attendance is provided can the NCHD receive reimbursement. Prospective applications cannot be made under TSS.

### **3.7 What if a hotel costs more than the allowable amount under the HSE travel and subsistence policy?**

Only an amount up to the maximum stated in the HSE Travel and Subsistence policy can be paid.

## **4. Questions Regarding What Should Be Included as Part of an Application:**

### **4.1 Can I accept a partially complete application, with no proof of attendance?**

Proof of attendance must be provided in the case of exams, courses or conferences. In the case of a Masters, PhD or Diploma, NCHDs should provide proof of their commencement even if they have not completed the course e.g. a letter from the college/lecturer

### **4.2 What constitutes proof of attendance?**

Confirmation from the educational or training body that the NCHD attended the exam or course is considered sufficient proof of attendance. This could be in the form of a letter, email or other document that confirms the NCHD was in attendance at the exam or course. Exam results or certificates of CPD credits will also suffice. Please note courses/conferences that are eligible for reimbursement via TSS as they have appropriate CPD/CME accreditation should include copies of the CPD/CME accreditation where possible.

### **4.3 Are receipts in another currency eligible?**

Yes - these are eligible.

### **4.4 When should I use the Currency Convertor on the Training Supports Module on DIME?**

An NCHD may submit an application for a training event that has an associated cost in a foreign currency. If the NCHD does not provide proof of the euro transaction from their bank account for the training event, you can use the currency convertor to determine the exchange rate on the day that the NCHD paid for the training event. It should be used in the cases when an NCHD has not provided proof of the euro conversion rate that they paid. Please note the Currency Convertor is an external website and is not managed by NDTP.

## **5. Questions Once an Application has been Approved/Rejected:**

### **5.1 I have rejected an application in error. Can this be reversed?**

No. If an application is rejected in error you will have to ask the NCHD to resubmit the claim again.

### **5.2 If I have approved an application in error can I reverse this?**

Only if the application has not been sent to finance for processing can the application be rejected. If the application is rejected, Medical Manpower Managers won't be able to action it any further.

**5.3 If I have approved an application for the wrong amount can I amend this?**

Once it has not been sent to finance for processing and the NCHD has a sufficient TSS balance remaining you can choose amend application and update the amount as appropriate.

**5.4 How are NCHDs to be reimbursed and are the refunds subject to tax?**

Method of payment of TSS funds is a local level decision. We would advise that you link with your local finance department for more information. However, funds should not be subject to tax.

**5.5 In July each year do I have to process payments for leavers?**

Yes - if you were their current employer when they submitted the application.

**5.6 How long do I have to process applications under this scheme?**

You must process applications in a timely fashion. Please note that all applications must be processed within 4 weeks of the end of the training year or within 28 days of an NCHD leaving your site.

## 6. Travel, Subsistence and Accommodation:

**6.1 What is the procedure outlined for Travel and Subsistence for TSS?**

Procedures around travel and subsistence vary from site to site. For the purposes of TSS, we have suggested that local procedures for claiming travel and subsistence are to be followed.

**6.2 Is there a Travel and Subsistence claim form available for the TSS?**

There is no travel and subsistence claim form which should be used specifically with TSS. We have suggested that sites follow their own local procedures around making travel and subsistence claims via TSS.

## Contact Information

This policy is the first point of reference for Employers and NCHDs. If an NCHD has a query it should be directed to their Employer. Employers may direct queries to NDTP – [doctors@hse.ie](mailto:doctors@hse.ie). **NDTP is not in a position to deal with queries from individual NCHD queries.**