



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 14th July 2025*



NATIONAL
DOCTORS
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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 (PCS)

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 (CPD-SS)

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 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.

In 2014, a review of the previous Professional Development Programme (PDP) for NCHDs was conducted, as the programme had been in existence for four years. 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 end of September each year.

NCHDs will have access to a range of clinical courses/activities provided by all Irish Training Bodies. They will be able to participate in training and educational activities and earn a maximum of 20 external credits or 3 days per annum, whichever is greatest.

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.

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.

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

Conditions of the Scheme

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 will be produced and circulated to all enrolees by mid-August. A further prospectus covering January - June will be circulated to all enrolees not later than end of November. Both documents will also be available all year round at [NDTP's website](#).

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 is in place. This will streamline the administration process for Trainees & Training Bodies.

The following conditions apply to this scheme:

- 1) HSE-NDTP funded credits may only be used to undertake training activities provided by the 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 the July changeover to end of September and mid-December to end of January each year. Applications for registration will only be accepted during this time.
- 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 allow the training body offer the course place to another NCHD on the waiting list.

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.

Overview of the process for NCHDs & Registration for the Scheme

1) Step One

The NCHD should review eligibility criteria defined for continuous professional development support scheme to ensure it can be met. Any queries regarding eligibility for these programmes can be directed to the relevant training body.

2) 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.

3) Step Three

NCHD will receive confirmation of enrolment from the training body. Prospectuses detailing courses/events available across all training bodies will be provided to the NCHDs. The documents will also be available all year round at [NDTP's website](#).

Registration for the Scheme

The enrolment period for the Continuous Professional Development Support Scheme (CPD-SS) is as follows:

- **1st Registration closes on 30th September 2025**
- **2nd Registration closes on 30th January 2026**

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 organised by a Training Body will be required to book with the relevant training body.

NB: Please note that NCHDs must enrol on a Professional Competence Scheme (PCS) before enrolling on the CPD-SS.

Please refer to the [Table 1](#) for the contact details of the relevant training bodies.

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:

- Are you currently enrolled in a Professional Competence Scheme as required by law?
- Do you hold the NCHD Contract 2010?
- Do you work within the public health service?
- 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 (PCS) 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 (PCS) 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](#).

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 and the CPD-SS.

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

You can register via the relevant Training Body, please check [Table 1](#) for their contact details.

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 applied/enrolled for the CPD-SS in September; do I have to reapply/enrol again in December?

No, if you successfully applied for CPD-SS in September, you **DO NOT** need to reapply in December.

14. 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 1 - Training Body Contact Details



The College of Anaesthesiologists of Ireland

Website: <https://www.anaesthesia.ie/>

Email: kmcgrath@coa.ie

Phone: 01 661 4412

Relevant clinical specialty areas:

- Anaesthesiology
- Pain Medicine
- Intensive Care Medicine



The College of Psychiatrists of Ireland

Website: <https://irishpsychiatry.ie/>

Email: cpdss@irishpsychiatry.ie

Phone: 01 634 4371

Relevant clinical specialty areas:

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



Irish College of Ophthalmologists

Website: <https://www.eyedoctors.ie/>

Email: info@eyedoctors.ie

Phone: 01 402 2777

Relevant clinical specialty areas:

- Medical Ophthalmology



The Royal College of Physicians of Ireland

Website: <https://www.rcpi.ie/>

Email: cpdss@rcpi.ie

Phone: 01 863 977

Relevant clinical specialty areas:

Faculty of Paediatrics:

- General Paediatrics

Faculty of Pathology:

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

Institute of Obstetricians & Gynaecologists:

- Obstetrics & Gynaecology

Institute of Medicine:

- Cardiology
 - Clinical Genetics
 - Clinical Neurophysiology
 - Clinical Pharmacology and Therapeutics
 - Dermatology
 - Endocrinology & Diabetes
 - Gastroenterology
 - General (Internal) Medicine
 - Genito-Urinary Medicine
 - Geriatric Medicine
 - Infectious Diseases
 - Medical Oncology
 - Nephrology
 - Neurology
 - Palliative Medicine
 - Pharmaceutical Medicine
 - Rehabilitation Medicine
 - Respiratory Medicine
 - Rheumatology
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Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland

Website: www.rcsi.ie

Email: cpdss@rcsi.ie

Phone: 01 402 8592

Relevant clinical specialty areas:

- Cardiothoracic Surgery
 - Emergency Medicine
 - General Surgery
 - Neurosurgery
 - Ophthalmic Surgery
 - Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery
 - Otolaryngology Surgery
 - Paediatric Surgery
 - Plastic, Reconstructive & Aesthetic Surgery
 - Trauma & Orthopaedic Surgery
 - Urology
 - Vascular Surgery
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Faculty of Radiologists and Radiation Oncologists

Website: www.radiology.ie

Email: pcs@radiology.ie

Phone: 01 402 2139

Relevant clinical specialty areas:

- Diagnostic Radiology
 - Radiation Oncology
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