



Continuing Medical Education Supports for Consultants

Guidance Document for Consultants, Employers & Training Bodies March 2023

The Medical Practitioners Act 2007 and Consultants' Contracts oblige health service employers to facilitate the professional competence of Consultants. Public funding targeted at Continuing Medical Education for Consultants is managed in a manner that is aligned with legislative requirements, is transparent, measurable, ensures value for money and is provided through appropriate structures.

The following principles underlie the funding of CME by health employers:

- Consultants' CME funding is a discrete budget item and it is not intended that this funding be allocated to make up deficits in other budgetary areas
- The Consultant is best placed to evaluate and determine their own educational needs based on their scope of practice, service, education and health research
- CME structures must ensure that Consultants are facilitated to remain up to date with new systems and processes relevant to their work
- Application and funding processes are consistent nationally
- All Consultants employed will have access to supports
- Application and funding processes must be as simple, clear and efficient as possible
- The process must provide value for money.

The CME fund is held and maintained by the primary employer as identified by the Consultant's individual contract of employment. The primary employer processes and pays CME claims, and maintains information on the balance of a fund available in any calendar year.

Consultants holding the 2023 contract have a vouched CME fund of €12,000.

Consultants holding the 2008/1997 contract have a vouched CME fund of €3,000.

The CME application and funding process requires that:

1. The standard CME reimbursement form is used nationally (and will be available to download online/where NISRP is in use CME claims are made via NISRP)
2. All claimants must be registered on a Professional Competence Scheme with the relevant postgraduate training body in Ireland
3. Only activities which have or are seeking formal CME / CPD credits / content associated with them will be eligible for funding
4. Claims must be submitted within 6 months of the financial liability being incurred by the applicant or the claim will not be accepted
5. A total funding amount per annum per Consultant as specified in their contact of employment will apply. This funding amount will apply equally to permanent appointees irrespective of whether they hold full-time or less than full time posts. Non-permanent Consultants will be entitled to claim to a funding amount pro-rata to the duration of their appointment
6. In the event the Consultant was unable to make use of CME funding as a result of extended sickness absence or maternity leave, flexibility may be considered when processing applications
7. CME applications will be considered in accordance with the schedule of items identified by the HSE as appropriate for support under the Consultant CME Scheme
8. Payment will be made within 60 days of application

9. The Consultant may appeal a decision to refuse funding to the Clinical Director. Should a further issue arise regarding non-payment of an item specified as eligible for reimbursement in this document, the matter can be referred to the Consultants' Grievance and Disputes procedure
10. The schedule of items to be supported by the HSE under this scheme will be subject to regular review by the HSE and relevant staff representative organisations
11. If a Consultant has a query regarding the eligibility or otherwise of an event / activity vis-à-vis reimbursement under this Scheme, they are advised to seek prior advice / input regarding same from HR / clinical director prior to incurring the relevant financial liability.

Claim Categories

CLAIM CATEGORY 1 – COURSES AND CONFERENCES

Only courses/conferences with or seeking appropriate national CPD/CME accreditation are eligible.

Claim Type	Eligible	Not eligible
Courses/Conferences	National and international Courses / conferences with appropriate CPD/CME accreditation / content related to the delivery of specialty Diploma/Masters/PHD fees E-learning courses provided there is a recognisable medical education component Meetings of Irish professional bodies directly concerning the management/organisation of CME/CPD in Ireland	Annual or business meetings with no CME/CPD component Fees / expenses for social activities associated with the course Fees/expenses for persons accompanying claimants Medical Council registration fees
<i>Transportation / Accommodation/ Subsistence costs associated with Courses/conferences with appropriate CPD/CME accreditation</i>	As per HSE travel policy, available at: http://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/Benefits_Services/Travel_Subistence/	As per HSE travel policy, available at: http://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/Benefits_Services/Travel_Subistence/ Business / first class travel costs – costs will only be refunded at economy class rates

CLAIM CATEGORY 2 – EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS

Materials associated with CME

Claim Type	Eligible	Not eligible
Medical journals	Purchase of on-line medical journals and online subscriptions, where these are not available through the employer/HSE library service	Text books, non medical journals, magazine subscriptions, etc Displays for office use (i.e. charts, posters, models etc) for which the HSE/employer already provides separate funding
Software	Computer software that has a CME focused component, statistical packages, MS Office. Software that supports online CME access.	Administrative office products such as dictation Software / devices, billing software, organizational software etc
Laptop/Tablet	Hardware that is used to access online CME - Laptop/Tablet*, headset, web camera, modem. *Laptop/Tablet – A contribution of up to €1,000 towards the purchase of a laptop OR tablet. This will be available once every 4 years from the date of purchase (as per receipt). If a Consultant chooses to spend more than €1,000 they will be liable for this additional amount. Claims under this category will be processed via finance/payroll and are subject to BIK (benefit in kind) tax deductions per Revenue rules. Please contact your local payroll / finance team for details.	Software or hardware without a CME access component e.g. smartphone, desktop, printer.

CLAIM CATEGORY 3 – FEES

Claim Type	Eligible	Not eligible
Professional Competence Registration Fee	Annual registration fee for enrolment on a recognised Professional Competence Scheme in Ireland / for enrolment on a recognised Professional Competence Scheme in Ireland	Registration fee for professional competence scheme outside of Ireland except where it is not possible for the Consultant to be registered on a professional competence in Ireland for their specialty or subspecialty.
Registration fees associated with professional memberships	Annual registration fee for professional memberships	