



**Training Handbook:**

**Basic Specialist Training, Institute of Medicine**

**2026/2027**



## Contents

<b>Foreword</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b><i>Governance of the RCPI Training Programmes</i></b> .....	<b>6</b>
Governance Structure .....	6
RCPI Trainers .....	7
Trainees' Committee .....	8
Regulations Relating to Basic Specialty Training .....	9
Research and Audit .....	13
BST Taught Programme .....	13
Annual Evaluation Process .....	14
Leave of Absence .....	14
Flexible/ Less Than Full Time Training.....	16
Reasonable Adjustments .....	18
Withdrawal from the BST Programme .....	18
Out of Clinical Programme Experience .....	19
ePortfolio.....	20
RCPI Benefits .....	21
HSE Financial Support Schemes .....	23
Health and Wellbeing .....	23
Trainee Awards.....	24



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## Foreword

This document has been prepared by the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland (RCPI) and provides important information in relation to the Institute of Medicine (IOM) Training Programmes. The purpose of the document is to also outline the rules and regulations pertaining to Basic Specialist training in General Internal Medicine.

This document replaces previously published documents and reflects the continuously evolving nature of training in the above specialties. The document also refers to the published RCPI policies which should be read in conjunction with the Training Handbook.



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### **Important**

Information in this document is accurate at the date of publication. However, regulations are continually evolving, and up-to-date information should be obtained from RCPI if in doubt. The most up-to-date version on this document will always be available on [The RCPI Website](#).

While other institutions are referred to (e.g. Medical Council, Health Service Executive, National Doctors Training Planning) we have given our interpretation of their regulations. The institutes themselves should be contacted for definitive information.

There is inevitably some repetition in this document as it is intended to be used as a reference. If regulations are unclear or seem contradictory, RCPI or the Specialty Training Body will determine the correct interpretation.



# Governance of the RCPI Training Programmes

## Governance Structure

There are six accredited postgraduate training bodies under the umbrella of the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland:

- Faculty of Occupational Medicine
- Faculty of Pathology
- Faculty of Paediatrics
- Faculty of Public Health Medicine
- Institute of Obstetricians & Gynaecologists
- Institute of Medicine

The accredited Training Body oversees the development and delivery of the postgraduate training programmes.

In Medicine the IOM oversees the Basic Specialty Training for General Internal Medicine and the Higher Specialty Training Programmes in the medical specialties.

Basic Specialist Training (BST) is two years in duration.

The Director of Training and Education for IOM oversees the delivery and development of the IOM BST training programme. Supporting the Director of Training is the Associate Director for BST.

In BST the Associate Director has been appointed to oversee the development and delivery of the BST Programme. Supporting the Associate Director are the Regional Programme Directors (RPD). Each BST Hub and Spoke programme has an appointed RPD overseeing the delivery of the regional programme. There are also appointed Training Leads in “spoke” hospitals within the scheme. The Associate Director chairs the Regional Programme Director (RPD) Forum which reports to the Board of the training body, the IOM, and meets quarterly.

The function of the RPD Forum at BST level is to actively participate in the development and delivery of postgraduate specialist training in the defined specialty, under the governance of the training Body. The RPD Forum is responsible for delivery of the training programme in the defined specialty in accordance with decisions made by the training body. All decisions and proposals for changes relating to development and delivery of the training programme in the defined specialty must be approved by the training body prior to implementation by the RPD Forum.



## RCPI Trainers

Trainers play a crucial role in the delivery of our Basic and Higher Specialist Training programmes.

They guide Trainees along the path to becoming a specialist and help the next generation of medical leaders reach their full potential.

RCPI recognises that the quality of training depends largely on Trainers' clinical experience and expertise, along with their competence, aptitude, and abilities as good role models.

The primary focus of the RCPI Trainer is to oversee RCPI Trainees' development and education at all training levels, through their involvement in teaching, training, evaluation and supervision. At HST level no Trainer can have more than one HST Clinical Trainee. This rule can be reviewed by the IOM under exceptional circumstances. At BST level it is recommended that no Trainer should have more than two RCPI Trainees.

The core responsibilities of the Trainer are to:

- Meet the Trainee and understand their current training requirements
- Agree a training plan at commencement of post
- Facilitate attendance at educational activities
- Act as a supervisor to the Trainee
- Provide feedback and motivation to Trainee
- Attend Trainee annual evaluations where required
- Monitor progress and performance
- Sign off records of training in the ePortfolio

The following criteria are required to be a registered Trainer:

- Registered on the relevant Specialist Division of the Medical Council Register
- Registered on a Professional Competence Scheme
- Practising at consultant level in Ireland
- Fellow of the relevant training body (RCPI or one of our Faculties/Institutes). Please note this is desirable but not mandatory



## Training Site Environment

All training posts and the training environment are monitored by RCPI through the Training Site Quality Improvement (QI) model. This model evaluates the Trainee, Trainer and site environmental factors that influence training outcomes. Further information is available on the [Quality Enhancement Office Website](#)

### Facilities

Your training site must provide an appropriate training environment and facilities that will allow you to develop the knowledge, skills and clinical judgement essential for your specialty. Physical facilities should include enough space for research and study. You should also have access to professional literature and information technology.

We regularly inspect all training sites approved for training to ensure that they meet these requirements.

## Trainees' Committee

The RCPI Trainees' Committee is the 'voice' of Trainees in RCPI. They represent Trainees on College Council, the Advisory Committee, the IOM, each STC and the Examinations Committee.

The RCPI Trainees' Committee has always had an active interest in postgraduate specialist training and acts as an important interface between Trainees and RCPI. The goal of the Committee is to represent Trainees' interests and work towards improving training.

They are also responsible for the organisation of a number of Trainee Awards including:

- The Corrigan Medal
- The David Mitchell Award
- The William Stokes Award
- The Kate McGarry Prize

Trainees are encouraged to get involved with the Trainees' Committee. For information on the Trainee Committee please email [trainees@rcpi.ie](mailto:trainees@rcpi.ie). For a list of current Trainee Committee members and details on the role you can review the [RCPI Trainees Committee Homepage](#)



## Training Post Evaluation

Each year you will be asked to complete a short online Training Post Evaluation (TPE). In it, you are asked to evaluate the training post you have just completed. This includes the working conditions and the training-related supports available to you in that post. The evaluation is completely anonymous. You are not asked for any identifying information such as your name, date of birth or RCPI ID number.

Your honest feedback is enormously important to us, as it helps RCPI identify any issues affecting the quality of training in specific posts or sites, so that we can act and continue to drive improvements in training.

## Regulations Relating to Basic Specialty Training

### Point of Entry to the Programme

Entry to the BST Programme is once a year, in July. Trainees typically enter year one of the programme, unless they have achieved credit for prior training, and trainees must complete all years and requirements of each programme to be awarded a BST Certificate. Trainees are required to complete the programme over a maximum period of four years from date of entry.

Recognition of prior training is considered if the previous experience formed part of a recognised, structured and completed training programme, completed within the previous five years (trainees will be expected to submit a full application with relevant supporting documentation including, logbooks, evaluations, curricula documents and appraisals). Such requests will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis and should be applied for immediately on entry to the training scheme.

### Allocation Process

A Trainee entering the Basic Specialty Training scheme will, normally, be informed of their assigned rotations for the first two years of the scheme. A full list of RCPI approved training sites can be found on the [RCPI Website](#). Please note that changes can occur to allocations at discretion of the RPD/IOM. Changes to allocation can occur due to a number of factors, and by undertaking the BST GIM training programme trainees' agree to these terms and per their training agreement.

Swapping posts is not encouraged but may, on occasion, be approved by the Regional Programme Director(s) subject to the following parameters: Both parties involved must mutually agree to the change; the swap should not affect either parties ability to fulfil training requirements and complete BST. No pressure, coercion, or financial or other incentives should be involved; and full consent must be given by both trainees. All post swaps must be independently validated and approved by the Royal College of Physicians. All post swap requests must be submitted to your RCPI coordinator a minimum



of 6 weeks prior to the commencement of the post.

When trainees are advised of their training post they are encouraged to engage with their site as early as possible in relation to onboarding paperwork. Trainees are encouraged to keep their information up to date via their National Employment Record ([NER app](#))

### Hub and Spoke Hospitals

BST GIM Hub	Hospitals
<b>Galway Hub</b>	Galway University Hospital
	Sligo University Hospital
	Letterkenny University Hospital
	Mayo University Hospital
	Portiuncula Hospital Ballinasloe
	Roscommon Hospital
	Mayo Clinic USA
<b>Mater Hub</b>	Mater
	Connolly Hospital
	Our Lady's Hospital Navan
	Our Lady's Hospital Drogheda
	Midlands Regional Hospital Mullingar
	Mayo Clinic USA
<b>South Hub</b>	Cork University Hospital
	Mercy University Hospital
	Marymount Hospice
	Mallow General Hospital
	Bantry General Hospital
	University Hospital Kerry
	South Tipperary Hospital Clonmel
	University Hospital Waterford
<b>Mid-West Hub</b>	University Hospital Limerick
	Ennis Hospital
	Nenagh General Hospital
	St John's Hospital
	South Tipperary Hospital Clonmel
<b>Mayo/Sligo Hub</b>	Galway University Hospital
	Mayo University Hospital
	Sligo University Hospital
	Roscommon Hospital
<b>St James's/Tallaght Hub</b>	St James's Hospital
	Tallaght University Hospital
	Midlands Regional Hospital Mullingar
	Midlands Regional Hospital Portlaoise
	Midlands Regional Hospital Tullamore
	Naas General Hospital



	University Hospital Waterford
	Wexford General Hospital
	St. Luke's Hospital, Kilkenny
	St Columcilles Hospital
	St Luke's Hospital Rathgar
	Portiuncula Hospital Ballinasloe
	Peamount Hospital
<b>Beaumont/Connolly Hub</b>	Beaumont Hospital
	Connolly Hospital
	Our Lady's Hospital Navan
	Our Lady's Hospital Drogheda
	Cavan General Hospital
	St Luke's Hospital Rathgar
	National Rehab Hospital
	St Joseph's Hospital Raheny
	Bon Secours Hospital Glasnevin
<b>St Vincents Hub</b>	St Vincents University Hospital
	University Hospital Waterford
	St. Luke's Hospital, Kilkenny
	Wexford General Hospital
	St Columcilles Hospital
	St Michaels Hospital Dún Laoghaire
<b>South East Hub</b>	University Hospital Waterford
	Wexford General Hospital
	St. Luke's Hospital, Kilkenny
	South Tipperary Hospital Clonmel
	Cork University Hospital

## Post Reassignment

RCPI endeavours to provide Trainees their allocation assignment for their first two years in the scheme. Following that, allocations are assigned based on training requirements and Trainee's preference.

If a Trainee's circumstances have changed, applications for a post reassignment within the assigned Hub will be considered. Applications received by your RCPI coordinator will be considered and escalated to the Regional Programme Director.

Applications will generally be considered as part of the allocation process. All communications regarding post-reassignment must go through your RCPI coordinator.

## Training Site Environment

All rotations must meet the criteria outlined below, and all rotations require the approval of RCPI. Regular evaluation of all rotations by RCPI is the basis for monitoring training. All posts will be expected to conform to statutory guidelines on hours and conditions of work for doctors in training.



BST Site Visits include review of rotations with the Regional Programme Directors, assurance of the academic training environment and feedback from Trainers and Trainees.

Criteria for approval of a BST rotation:

1. Each Trainee must rotate through **three** out of the five core specialties listed:
  - Cardiology
  - Respiratory
  - Geriatric Medicine
  - Endocrinology
  - Gastroenterology
  
2. Each post is three months in duration and the BST programme is 24 months in total. The 24 months of training must include:
  - A minimum of six months spent outside of the metropolitan area
  - A minimum of six months in a level four hospital, and a level three **or** two hospital
  
3. A minimum of 18 months on call for unselected G(I)M/Cardiology, with on call frequency determined by local hospital on-call Rota arrangements. Additionally, A three-month post in the emergency department may be counted towards your 18-month call requirement
  
4. Each Trainee must have an assigned Trainer
  
5. Each Trainee should spend no more than three months in any one specialty
  
6. Structured Educational Activities must be in place at each training site, including journal clubs, SHO teaching, grand rounds and MDT meetings
  
7. Trainees should attend a minimum of 8 specialty outpatient clinics per 3 month rotation, when working in a specialty with an outpatient commitment and should participate in post-call ward rounds with the opportunity to present the patients they have admitted.

## Trainers

Every BST post has at least one assigned Supervising Trainer, whose duties include:

- Meeting with the Trainee in their first week in post and agreeing the Trainee's Personal Goal Plan
- Appraising the Trainee's progress at regular intervals during the post
- Meeting the trainee at the end of the rotation and completing the End of Post assessment in ePortfolio
- Supporting the Trainee, both personally and in respect of obtaining career advice



## Research and Audit

Audit and QI activities are an important part of training. Trainees must be able to organise, conduct, present, interpret and discuss regular audits of outcomes of personal and departmental work. Trainees are expected to demonstrate proficiency in this outcome relatively early in the programme and record at least one audit or Quality improvement activity per year.

Trainees are encouraged to:

- Ask their Trainer for audit ideas at the start of a rotation
- Choose a project that is achievable considering other commitments
- Consider sharing the audit with a colleague to reduce the burden
- Try to pick something that has presentation/publication potential
- Learn the necessary steps for completing clinical audit from someone who knows the subject, rather than learning a skill badly from an uninformed teacher
- Learn the difference between audit and research
- Start with trying to do case reports. They are less challenging and can be completed in a shorter period than large-scale studies
- See if any senior colleagues are working on an ongoing project that the Trainee could become involved in
- Consider a literature review as an intermediary step after case reports, which can be shared among several author

## BST Taught Programme

The BST Taught Programme is an essential element of the BST curriculum. It consists of a series of modular elements spread across the years of BST covering generic training components such as communication, ethics, etc. The programme is delivered via a combination of self-paced online content, live virtual tutorials, and in-person workshops. Trainees will be assigned self-paced online content per quarter. This self-paced online content will be delivered via RCPi's virtual learning environment, Brightspace. Each quarter will also include one scheduled virtual tutorial lasting 90-minutes. Allocated dates will be provided before the start of the training year. Trainees must plan the time to complete requirements per quarter. Attendance is also required at specialty-specific workshops throughout the programme. Information related to the Taught Programme can be found on the [BST Taught Programme FAQ](#).

Attendance at study days, the Taught Programme, exams and conferences including study leave;



entitlement is as per the NCHD Contract for educational leave (up to 18 working days per six months).

## Annual Evaluation Process

The Annual Evaluation of Progress is the formal method by which a Trainee's progression through their training programme is monitored and recorded each year. The evidence to be reviewed by the panel is recorded by the Trainee and Trainer in the Trainee's e-Portfolio. Trainees are required to undergo an annual evaluation process. This evaluation will take place either in person or virtually between April and June.

Trainees must attend the evaluation. Trainees who do not complete an annual evaluation during each year of training will not be eligible for certification as they do not meet the minimum requirements of training. Trainees are required to complete their four Quarterly Assessment Forms and End of Year Evaluation form on their ePortfolio with their Trainer in advance of their evaluation date.

## Leave of Absence

Study leave and annual leave do not affect BST completion dates and are as per the NCHD contract.

### *Taking time out of the BST programme*

Once you commence BST, you must complete your training in a consecutive 2-year block except in exceptional circumstances. Details on special leave and how it may affect your completion date are outlined below.

### *Special Leave (Other than study and annual leave):*

The clinical workplace-based component of BST training takes place in 8 posts of 3-month rotations over 2 years. To have been deemed to have satisfactorily completed this component of the training programme, a trainee must have completed:

- A minimum of 8 rotations
- A minimum of 8 weeks in each 3-month rotation
- 3 of 5 core specialties
- A minimum of 18 months general medical on call, as per the SHO on call rota in the hospital in question, including call overnight
- A minimum of 8 outpatient clinics in each rotation (for specialties with a significant outpatient commitment)



- Six months in a rotation outside of the metropolitan area
- Time spent in a level 4 and level 3 or 2 hospital

Any absence from the training programme other than annual leave/study leave will be considered special leave. The granting of special leave does not change the curriculum requirements as above. As above, a trainee must complete a minimum of 8 weeks in each 3 month rotation and must complete 8 rotations - therefore any special leave over 4 weeks in a rotation will result in a need to complete an alternative 3 month rotation in order to meet training requirements.

If special leave of less than four weeks is taken on more than one occasion (i.e. more than one period of special leave, during more than one rotation), the following will apply:

- Leave of less than 6 weeks in a 12-month period - no change to expected BST completion date.
- Leave of more than 6 weeks but less than 12 weeks in a 12-month period – the trainee will be required to carry out an additional three months of training.
- Leave of more than 12 weeks but less than 16 weeks in a 12-month period – the trainee will be required to carry out an additional six months of training.

In cases where special leave has been taken, and a trainee is required to complete a further period of training, the College will help to place the trainee in (a) suitable, approved training post(s). The post(s) will be approved for BST in the Trainee's specialty and will be counted towards the clinical training required for certification. However, please note the following:

- RCPI cannot guarantee a post(s) in the trainee's current hospital or region
- The Trainee may need to wait until a suitable post becomes available.
- It may be necessary to complete a minimum of one year in a structured rotation if no suitable, stand-alone six-month post can be found. If a trainee wishes to take leave of absence, retain credit and return to the BST programme, this must be agreed with the RPD, Associate Director of BST, and the BST office. The trainee should seek prospective approval of their leave of absence at least 4 weeks in advance. Approval will be agreed on a case-by-case basis and credit may not be retained in all cases. Leave of absence can only be taken in exceptional circumstances.

## Parental Leave

If a Trainee takes parental leave, they will have to make up this time on the programme, similar to that of a Flexible Trainee. Any time that is taken as parental leave must be made up before a Trainee will be awarded their Certificate of Completion of BST.

## Transfer Between Hubs

Where possible, rotation transfers may be approved to accommodate Trainees who have had an



unforeseen and significant change in their personal circumstances since the start of their training programme, for example:

- Disability or ill health
- Responsibility for caring for ill/disabled partner, relative or other dependent
- Responsibility for caring for school-age children

Transfers between rotation programmes in General Internal Medicine must be approved by your RPD and the RPD of the rotation programme to which you want to transfer and the Associate Director of BST.

The overall combination of the Trainee's first and subsequent rotation must meet the requirements for BST certification. The following are the steps for transferring between hubs in the same specialty:

1. The Trainee should approach the regional director of their current hub to request a transfer
2. If the RPD agrees in principle to a transfer, the Trainee should approach the regional programme director of the hub to which they want to transfer
3. If both RPDs agree to the transfer, and suitable posts are available, both regional directors must agree formally to the transfer in writing, sending a copy to the BST office. This notification should include the agreed transfer date, and a list of all posts affected by the Trainee's move. The director of the Hub being vacated should include a proposal for replacing the Trainee who is leaving.
4. Medical Manpower in the relevant hospitals must agree to the transfer
5. The Trainee must notify the Associate Director of BST of his/her intention to transfer in writing
6. The Associate Director of BST will inform the Trainee if his/her combined rotation schemes will meet the requirements for BST certification
7. The BST office in RCPI will update the Trainee's record accordingly.

### Application Process

Please review the [Post Reassignment Policy](#) before submitting

- Applications made under the reassignment policy must be received prospectively, no later than three months before the rotation is due to commence
- You may be required to provide documentation and evidence to support your application

### Flexible/ Less Than Full Time Training

It is the policy of the RCPI training bodies to advocate for flexible training. Whilst the training programme is full-time, it is recognised that some Trainees may have individual circumstances that mean that training on a full-time, continuous basis would not be practical for them. All Trainees, with the exception of Year 1 BST's are eligible to apply.



Trainees can apply for flexible training through two routes:

- HSE Job Sharing
- HSE Supernumerary Flexible Training Scheme

## HSE National Flexible Training Scheme

The HSE National Doctors Training and Planning (NDTP) operates a National Flexible Training Scheme, which allows a small number of Trainees to train part-time for a set period of time at 50% WTE.

Applications may be made for flexible training by all Trainees excluding first year BST. This scheme is not recommended for final year Trainees. You must have a well-founded reason to apply, e.g. responsibility for young children or elderly relatives, or personal family circumstances. You cannot apply for flexible training in order to pursue other paid work or research.

Participation on the flexible training scheme will be restricted to a maximum of two years and will only be extended by NDTP in exceptional circumstances. This is to provide as many Trainees as possible with the option to train flexibly.

Applications generally open in September each year and RCPI will share the details with trainees on behalf of NDTP. Applications for flexible training should be made to NDTP, however Trainees are required to let their relevant training body know that they are going to apply in plenty of time, so rotations can be planned and structured.

## Job Sharing

Postgraduate Trainees on the HST Programmes can avail of job-sharing opportunities for a set period of time.

These posts involve matching two trainees in a site to share a 0.5 WTE post.

A training post can be shared by two Trainees who:

- Are training in the same specialty *and*
- Are within two adjacent years of each other on the training programme

Applications may be made up to 12 months in advance of the proposed date of commencement of the job share post and received no later than the month of October of the previous year of commencement.

Please refer to the [Job Share](#) policy document for more information on how to apply and further information on the regulations of job sharing.



## Reasonable Adjustments

In some instances, it may be necessary for Trainees to apply to have a reasonable adjustment to their training programme in line with the RCPI Reasonable Adjustment Policy. This policy applies to all areas of disability including physical and psychological. If a Trainee wishes to inform the RCPI of a disability requiring reasonable adjustment, they are required to submit all relevant and recent supporting documentation written by the appropriate health professional (e.g., treating physician, Occupational Medicine physician, psychiatrist, education psychologist). The supporting documentation should include the nature of the adjustment requested and must be submitted to the RCPI via email to [wellbeing@rcpi.ie](mailto:wellbeing@rcpi.ie). Please note that all trainees are required to meet the requirements of the training programme in order to complete their training and to be issued with a BST cert.

## Acting Up to Registrar posts

Trainees are forbidden from 'Acting-up' into Registrar posts during the two-year BST programme.

## Withdrawal from the BST Programme

If a Trainee wishes to withdraw from a Training Programme before their expected BST completion date, they must first notify their Specialty Training Coordinator and Trainer of their wish to withdraw from the Training Programme.

The trainee should give at least four weeks written notice of their wish to leave their current training post. The Specialty Training Coordinator will organise an exit interview with the trainee and the National Specialty Director(s), which the trainee is expected to attend. The trainee can complete a [pre-exit interview questionnaire](#) ahead of this to ensure all details are captured in relation to exit. Leaving the programme without giving reasonable notice or explanation to the NSD(s) is not acceptable behaviour.

Please note it is a requirement of the college to notify Medical Manpower on your site of your intention to leave the programme once we are notified. If you have not been in contact with the college in 12 months, or have failed to respond to communication, you are de-facto removed from the training scheme.

## Withdrawal to take up another position:

The Irish training colleges regularly share information regarding Trainees transferring between schemes. If a BST Trainee is mid-scheme and is offered a position on another training scheme, early withdrawal from BST prior to the commencement of entry to the new training scheme without the



express permission of the Regional Programme Director and the Associate Director of BST will be reported to the new training scheme. This may result in a withdrawal of the training offer for the new scheme, as such a withdrawal is considered unprofessional behaviour.

## Out of Clinical Programme Experience

Out of Clinical Programme Experience is not permitted in Basic Specialist Training.

### Examinations

All Trainees on a BST programme must complete the Membership of the Royal College of Physicians (MRCPI) in order to be deemed to have completed their training and awarded a BST cert.

If a Trainee has not completed the MRCPI after the completion of the two-year clinical rotations the certification of completion will not be issued.

Further information regarding the format, locations and dates of the MRCPI and other examinations can be found at the [RCPI Examinations Webpage](#)

### BST Completion Criteria

For a Trainee to be awarded a Certificate of Completion of Basic Specialist Training Trainees are required to:

- Apply and be successful in the application process for the relevant BST programme
- Successfully complete 24 months in training posts as allocated by IOM that are approved for BST
- Achieve all outcomes as set out in the curriculum
- Attend all relevant study days
- Attend all taught programme modules
- Maintain an up-to-date and correctly completed ePortfolio as evidence of satisfactory completion of training
- Attend and have their annual evaluations signed off
- Complete the Membership of the Royal College of Physicians (GIM)

Failure to complete any of the above may result in a Trainee have their training time extended.

Trainees must complete their BST Training Programme within four years of their start date.

Completion dates may change under the following circumstances:

- If a Trainee takes special leave in excess of 6 weeks over two years and is required to complete a further period of training



- If a Trainee has not reached the required standard and is required to undertake additional training
- If a Trainee has not fulfilled the curriculum requirements for BST certification and is required to undertake additional training or attend outstanding elements of the Taught Programme.
- If a Trainee's completion date is changed for any reason, the Trainee and regional programme director will be informed in writing by the BST coordinator in the Training Team, RCPI

### The Four-Year Rule

Trainees must complete BST within a four-year period, beginning from the date of entry to BST. If a Trainee's expected completion date is changed to a date greater than four years after their start date, they will be required to undertake a full two-year programme again from the beginning.

### ePortfolio

ePortfolio is an electronic logbook for recording essential information about training, educational and evaluation activities. Trainees are required to maintain an up-to-date ePortfolio throughout BST, as it is an official record of satisfactory completion of training.

Trainees must complete an ePortfolio during their training programme. All Trainees will be given access to the RCPI ePortfolio which is set up depending on the specialty of the trainee. Trainees must complete minimum requirements for their specialty. Details on the minimum requirements can be found in each specialty curriculum. The ePortfolio is also used to conduct Trainee Evaluations and end of post feedback.

The ePortfolio is the trainee's record of their training and the information in the ePortfolio is owned by the Trainee. Following completion of the training programme a Trainee will have access to the ePortfolio for three years. RCPI provide a number of training videos on how to use your ePortfolio. As you rotate through posts, your trainers are required to verify recorded information and sign off evaluations. To do this, they will need to log into the RCPI website and open ePortfolio.

#### **When to update ePortfolio**

Trainees must update their ePortfolio at key points, listed below.

#### **At the start of the year**

- Check that personal details are correct
- Check that the details of post and trainer are correct



- Review the training curriculum and requirements for the specialty. The curriculum and specialty requirements are reviewed every year, so Trainees need to be aware of any changes

#### **At the start of each post**

- Trainees must meet with their trainer within the first six weeks to agree on the personal goals plan. The personal goals plan must be recorded on ePortfolio and the Trainer must sign it off.

#### **During each post**

- Trainees must enter training and educational activities on ePortfolio
- Complete workplace-based assessments as they happen

#### **At the end of each quarter and at the end of the post**

- Trainees must ensure ePortfolio is up to date and signed off by the Trainer
- Meet the Trainer to complete the End of Post Form

#### **At the end of each training year**

- Trainees must make sure that the ePortfolio is up to date and signed off by the Trainer in preparation for the End of Year Evaluation
- Complete the annual evaluation form with the trainer in advance of the Evaluation

#### **At the end of your training programme**

- Make sure that the ePortfolio is up to date and signed off by the trainer in preparation for the Final Year Evaluation

## RCPI Benefits

We are pleased to offer you a range of benefits to support all trainees on our training programme:

- Free attendance at Masterclasses, St Luke's Symposium as well as events and webinars organised by our Faculties and Institutes.
- Assistance with applying for a Student Leapcard for discounted fares on transport services
- Free four-month subscription to a BMJ OnExamination Package – request an access code by emailing [Training@rcpi.ie](mailto:Training@rcpi.ie). To redeem your voucher and activate your four-month subscription, You can log into [BMJOnExamination](#)



## RCPI Trainee Representative

Trainee Representatives are an important point of contact for Trainees seeking clarification or direction relating to training and education matters and are expected to encourage and support improvements to educational facilities that will improve training delivery, for example MRCPI tutorials, journal access, journal clubs, internet access and Trainer engagement.

They are also expected to encourage open and honest feedback from Trainees on their training experiences.

Where possible, Trainee Reps also attend the RCPI QI visits at their hospital site(s).

Trainee Reps are appointed each year for a period of one year, with applications for new appointments normally opening in June. It's an ideal opportunity to take up a formal role in RCPI and put your management skills into action.

Trainees can apply to become a Trainee Rep for their hospital if they meet the following criteria: A SpR in a full-time clinical post in Higher Specialist Training or in the second or later year of Basic Specialist Training

- Clear assessment/training record of at least 12 months prior to your application
- Interest in education and training

Trainees are encouraged to get apply to be a Trainee Representative. For information on the Trainee Committee please email [Trainees@rcpi.ie](mailto:Trainees@rcpi.ie).



## HSE Financial Support Schemes

### **Clinical Course & Examination Refund Scheme for NCHDs**

This HSE scheme is open to all NCHDs. The HSE Clinical Course and Examination Refund Scheme covers the cost of examination fees and clinical courses such as Advanced Cardiac Life Support.

There is an approved list of clinical courses and examinations qualifying for this refund scheme contained in the [HSE Clinical Course & Examination Refund Scheme Document](#). The full cost of an approved examination/course taken on after this date is eligible to be refunded for the **first sitting of the exam**. Applicants must hold HSE NCHD contract 2010. Subsequent sittings of the same exam are ineligible for any payment under this scheme. However subsequent sittings may be claimed from the HSE Training Support Scheme (TSS).

### **Training Support Scheme (TSS)**

This scheme is in addition to existing financial supports such as the Clinical Course and Exam Refund Scheme and the Higher Specialist Training Fund. Funding is allocated based on Grade. Funding is available pro-rata for doctors employed on shorter contract durations.

A list of approved clinical courses, conferences and examinations that can be claimed for under the TSS are listed on the [Financial Supports HSE Website](#)

## Health and Wellbeing

The health and wellbeing office provides professional services to Trainees who require additional support during their training programme. This can include any of the following areas:

- Mental/physical health issues which impact on training progression
- Interpersonal conflict or difficulties
- Professionalism competencies development such as communication, assertiveness, building relationships
- Complaints made by Trainees or about Trainees
- Difficult working environments/conditions including bullying which was not resolved locally
- Burnout
- Career guidance
- Mentoring
- Advice and referral to other services such as Occupation Medicine, Health Committee, psychology and psychiatry
- Advice and referral to additional resources such as course, books, online resources,



mentors

The health and wellbeing service is available to RCPI Trainees only and forms part of their training programme where required. As such, it is not a confidential service. Trainees are referred by their Trainers, NSDs or they may self-refer into the service. All supports can be reviewed via the [Health and Wellbeing Website](#). Please note that if you have an issue of health and wellbeing which might affect your ability to complete your training requirement, it is your responsibility to inform your trainer and your Regional Programme Director, in order to ensure that you can still meet your training requirements.

## Trainee Awards

### **Corrigan Award for BST Case Study**

The Corrigan Award is awarded by the Trainees' Committee in RCPI. It recognises excellence in communication - The ability to identify complicating and challenging aspects of patient histories and communicate what we can learn from them. The winner receives the Corrigan Medal, named after past RCPI President Sir Dominic Corrigan (1859-1863) and an educational grant worth €1,000. This competition is open to all Trainees currently undertaking BST with RCPI.

### **David Mitchell Award for Audit**

The David Mitchell Award is awarded by the Trainees' Committee in RCPI. It recognises audits that improve patient care and/or specialist education and training. The winning Trainee or team of Trainees receives an educational grant worth €1,000 for a single Trainee or €1,500 for a team of Trainees. The competition is open to all Trainees, or a team of Trainees currently registered with RCPI.

### **Dorothy Stopford Price Medal**

The Dorothy Stopford Price Medal recognises excellence in research or audit on vaccination, immunisation or control of infectious diseases and its potential impact on public health. The medal is awarded by the Faculty of Public Health Medicine to honour this pioneer in infectious disease control in Ireland. This competition is open to all Trainees.

### **Arthur Eakins Award**

The Arthur Eakins Award was introduced in 2024 by the Health and Wellbeing sub-committee of the RCPI Training Committee, in conjunction with the Faculty of Occupational Medicine. It aims to



recognise the importance of Trainee health and wellbeing and encourage Trainees to actively get involved in improving and promoting health and wellbeing. It is awarded to a Trainee for a research project or quality improvement initiative which improves and promotes Trainee Health and Wellbeing. The medal and education grant worth €1,000 is funded by the Faculty of Occupational Medicine

## Policies and Procedures

There are several [BST Policies and Procedures](#) that Trainees may refer to throughout the duration of their training programmes. Below is a summary of these policies and procedures.

## RCPI Policies

1. Roles and Responsibility of a Trainer
2. Post Reassignment Policy
3. Job Sharing Policy
4. Progression through Training: Higher Specialist Training
5. Anti-Bullying Policy
6. Appeals Policy: Postgraduate Training
7. Disciplinary Process for Postgraduate Specialist Training
8. Equal Opportunities Policy
9. Grievance Policy: Postgraduate Training
10. HST Allocation Policy

## Other Relevant HSE Policies

- Specialist Training Fund Policy
- Clinical Course and Exam Refund Scheme
- Training Support Scheme



## Review

This Handbook shall be subject to annual review by the Institute of Medicine.

Approved By:	Date
IOM	September 2019
Review	
Review by IOM	July 2026



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