

NATIONAL SURGICAL TRAINING PROGRAMME

HSE / IMG SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMME

IMG TRAINEE GUIDEBOOK

2024 / 2025

RCSI.COM

ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS IN IRELAND



RCSI

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HSE / IMG SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMME

IMG Trainee Guidebook 2024 /2025

Revision History	Section	Summary of Changes
July 2022 Revision	1.0 Overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revision history section added. • Update to Orthopaedic programme director. • Removed reference to registrar posts in year two. • Trainees will not be granted work permit after completion of two year programme.
	3.0 Educational Content and Curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OSS & HFPS classes / online modules (updated)
	5.0 Completion of Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trainees responsibility to upload attendance certs to PCS portal • Update re Certificate of achievement distribution
	8.1 Trainees with performance issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update to title of Professor of Surgical Education. • Amend participants to trainees • Remove specific reference to face to face meetings
	Back page	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removed phone and fax numbers as n/a
September 2022	12.0 Medical Indemnity (added)	Information added regarding Medical Indemnity for those working in HSE / HSE Funded Hospitals.
July 2023 Revision	Overview of the programme	Text updated re year 2 posts in General Surgery
	Educational Content and Curriculum & RCSI Based Assessments & ARCP Matrix	Removal of all references to Case Based Discussions
	Mandatory classes, online modules & explanatory notes	Text updated to reflect changes to mandatory classes & class matrix revised. Text added re Certificates of Attendance; Regional Classes in Year 1; Take home Laparoscopic kits & Anatomy Lab access.
	IMG ARCP Deadlines	Text advising that IMG deadlines differ from CST deadlines
	RCSI Logbook	Text added to advise reviewing RCSI Logbook guide on mSurgery
	New section added re Surgical Affairs Marketing & Communications	Text added re Marketing and Communications emails
July 2024 Revision	Updates to key personnel within the overview of the programme and Governance sections	Clinical lead for General Surgery updated
	Mandatory classes, online modules & explanatory notes	Text updated to reflect changes to mandatory classes & class matrix revised.
	New sections added re Wellbeing and Robotic Surgery	Text added re Wellbeing and Robotic Surgery
	Trainee portal video	Link updated for Trainee Portal video

1.0 BRIEF OVERVIEW OF HSE/IMG SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMME

The College of Physicians and Surgeons Pakistan & Sudan Medical Specialization Board has entered into an agreement with the HSE (Health Service Executive) and the Forum of Postgraduate Training Bodies in Ireland to offer a postgraduate scholarship programme known as The International Medical Graduates (IMG) Scholarship Programme.

The purpose of this agreement is to permit international graduates to complete part of their training in Ireland. As part of this training, successful candidates will be supported in the ongoing development of their knowledge base and the enhancement of their medical skills and competencies within their chosen specialty, currently RCSI supports programmes in General Surgery and Trauma and Orthopaedic Surgery. Trainees will have direct exposure to the health system in Ireland and an opportunity to learn about alternative approaches to the delivery of healthcare services.

Under the terms of the scholarship, successful candidates will be awarded a bursary which will cover the costs of return travel to Ireland, registration with the Medical Council in Ireland, and accommodation and induction on arrival in the country. On commencement in post, candidates will be remunerated and employed under national terms and conditions as applicable to doctors employed in Irish hospital services. Following the 2-year scholarship, candidates must return to complete their exams and training in their country of origin. Trainees who attempt to remain working in Ireland will not be granted extended work permits.

Year 1 (IMG 1) Trainees may have the option to request their chosen General Surgery subspecialty however this will depend on posts being available in participating hospitals. Note any step up to a registrar post would require MRCS Exams to be have been successfully completed. Please also note that arranging a swap into another post or applying for a job outside of the training programme is not permitted.

Year 2 (IMG 2), trainees will have the option to request their preferred chosen General surgery subspecialty. Please note RCSI will accommodate subspecialty requests where possible but this is not guaranteed.

The Clinical Lead for General Surgery Trainees is Mr Yasir Bashir, Consultant Colorectal Surgeon based in Midlands Regional Hospital at Tullamore and St James's Hospital Dublin.

The Clinical Lead for Trauma & Orthopaedics Trainees is Mr. Amir Siddique who is an Orthopaedic Surgeon based in Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital Drogheda.

If you have any concerns that you wish to raise with your programme directors throughout your time here in Ireland, please email imgst@rcsi.com

RCSI uses the Trainees RCSI email address to communicate directly with Trainees and we would advise that you check this email regularly for updates to your programme or events associated with your training.

All IMG trainees are now registered on the Supervised Division of the Medical Council Register. This means as Trainees and as part of your training you are required to sign up to a Professional Competency Scheme (PCS) Please visit <https://www.rcsi.com/surgery/practice/professional-competence-scheme> to read the guidelines and view the resources available. When you have read the guidelines please follow the link to enrol. Contact the PCS team by email at pcs@rcsi.ie if you have any queries or require any assistance with enrolment. Note is the responsibility of the trainee to upload certs of class attendance to your PCS portal.

You can email imgst@rcsi.com for the attention of the Administrator for any information regarding the programme.

1.1 TRAINING PROGRAMME GOVERNANCE

The Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI) is a broad-based, not for profit, health education institution based in St Stephens Green, Dublin. It was founded by Royal Charter to supervise and oversee the training and assessment of surgeons in Ireland. In this respect, it shares common origins with the other three Royal Colleges of the United Kingdom (England, Edinburgh and Glasgow), and continues to conduct its core surgical training activities in close association with these institutions. Today, the scope of RCSI covers Education (Medicine, Pharmacy, Physiotherapy, Nursing, and Healthcare Management), Research, and Postgraduate training with faculties in Surgery, Radiology, Dentistry, Nursing and Sports & Exercise Medicine. The core mission of RCSI is encapsulated in the RCSI Noble Purpose:

“Building on our heritage in Surgery, we will enhance human health through endeavour, innovation and collaboration in education, research and service”

The overall governance structures of RCSI are overseen by the RCSI Council, a 21-person governance body elected on a biennial basis by the Fellows of RCSI. The executive management and delivery of postgraduate surgical training sits in the Department of Surgical Affairs which reports into the RCSI Council. Surgical Affairs is also represented on the RCSI Senior Management Team, which in turn also reports into RCSI Council.

The Irish Surgical Postgraduate Training Committee (ISPTC) reports to the RCSI Council and is the overarching committee responsible for surgical education, training and assessment in Ireland, at both core and higher surgical level.

At CST level, the Core Surgical Training Committee is responsible for all aspects of Core Surgical Training and IMG Scholarship Programme, including curriculum content, quality of teaching and supervision, assessment and trainee progress.

2.0 IMG TRAINING POSTS

During training, IMG trainees will be required to rotate across different locations (clinical placements) to meet their training requirements. For each rotation, trainees will receive a contract of employment from the relevant employer setting out the terms and conditions of employment for that period. Employment in a training site is subject to the local recruitment and other employment policies. RCSI issues a Training Agreement to each trainee.

All trainees are required to sign and upload their training agreement to the Connect SA Trainee Portal before commencing the training programme.

2.1 CONNECT SA TRAINEE PORTAL

The Connect SA Trainee Portal links directly to our Training CRM database and is designed to manage class attendance and documentation throughout the Programme. Along with booking into your mandatory training classes, the portal can be used to store a range of training documents such as:

- Signed training agreement
- Confirmation of completion of online classes for Human Factors and Patient Safety
- Current CV
- Course attendance certs
- Other relevant training documents

You can access the trainee portal using CHROME at: <https://connectsatrainees.rcsi.com> Please use your RCSI.com email & password to access. The Portal is mobile enabled.

A demo for using the portal is available at :
<https://vimeo.com/347523263/237cd4e374>

The Chair of the CST Committee Mr Dara Kavanagh oversees IMG Training in conjunction with the Clinical Leads.

3.0 EDUCATIONAL CONTENT & CURRICULUM

The educational content of the HSE/IMG Scholarship Programme is very comprehensive and is delivered to trainees in two distinct locations:

3.1. WORKPLACE BASED EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The clinical setting in the workplace is the key site of learning, and the majority of trainee learning will take place in the workplace. Here, the trainees learn principally by experiential learning under the traditional apprenticeship model, i.e. the trainee will learn by attachment to ideally two or more consultant surgeons and their team and by full and active participation in the clinical work of that team. Each trainee will have distinct and clearly defined clinical responsibilities within the team and will have a duty of service provision as well as education.

Trainees are expected to learn about the management and care of the surgical patient in both elective and emergency settings, therefore they will work on-call (for emergency surgical admissions) on a regular basis throughout the Scholarship Programme.

During each rotation trainees will engage in all of the clinical settings to which surgical patients are exposed, i.e. hospital wards, the Emergency Department, the operating theatre, Intensive Care Unit, Endoscopy suite, Out-Patients Department and minor operations theatre.

A record of operative experience must be maintained in the electronic logbook (RCSI-Logbook) and this is subject to audit.

3.2. OFF-SITE EDUCATION

The IMG Scholarship Programme has developed a comprehensive programme of educational support which is delivered at the National Surgical & Clinical Training Centre (NSCTC) within the RCSI. A key principle underlying the educational programme is to deliver programmes as close as possible to the clinical workplace through the use of simulation. The off-site educational programme has 3 key components:

- Core knowledge and clinical judgement
- Operative Surgical Skills (OSS)
- Human Factors in Patient Safety (HFPS)

The IMG Scholarship Programme curriculum is module based and is a mandatory component of training for all surgical trainees in IMG 1 and IMG 2.

- OSS and HFPS are run throughout the two years of the programme culminating with end of year blended assessments in IMG 1 and IMG 2.
- Attendance at all the OSS & HFPS classes is mandatory. If a trainee misses a class in either OSS or HFPS, they may still do their end of year assessment but this may impact the awarding of their Certificate of Achievement.

It is important to note that if a trainee missed more than 2 OSS or 1 HFPS class, they will not be given any score of the relevant assessment for that year and this will be noted at their final programme review at the end of their scholarship and may impact the awarding of their Certificate of Achievement.

Each IMG trainee is expected to attend the OSS and HFPS classes outlined in the matrix below during their time on the programme. All mandatory training will be assessed at the end of each training year. Booking into these classes is facilitated via the SA Connect Trainee Portal from mid-July and trainees will be advised when classes are available to book.

We would advise trainees to consult with their colleagues and Hospital HR to ensure they are granted leave to attend the mandatory classes. If you are experiencing any problems with taking leave for your classes please inform you Consultant Trainers or direct supervisor and contact the IMG administrator at imgst@rcsi.com

Modules	IMG Yr 1 (all)	Modules	IMG Yr 2 General Surgery	IMG Yr 2 Orthopaedics
Operative Surgical Skills (OSS)	3 days	Operative Surgical Skills (OSS)	2 days	2 days
Human Factors & Patient Safety (HFPS)	1 day	Human Factors & Patient Safety (HFPS)	2 days	2 days
Human Factors - Online Modules (HFPS)	1(online)			
Blended day (OSS/HFPS)	1 day	Blended day (OSS/HFPS)	1 day	1 day
Live webinar: Bystander Intervention (HFPS)	1 webinar	Specialty Skills Day (OSS) 1	1 day (GS)	1 day (Ortho)
Blended OSS & HFPS Assessment (OSCE)	1 day	Blended OSS & HFPS Assessment (OSCE)	1 day	1 day
Total Skills Days in RCSI	6 days		7 days	7 days

a) Operative Surgical Skills (OSS)

IMG1 – Attendance at each of 3 OSS Training days, 1 blended OSS/HFPS training day and 1 blended assessment.

IMG2 – Attendance at each of the 2 compulsory OSS training days, 1 compulsory OSS & HFPS blended training day, 1 Specialty Specific Training Day (General Surgery or Orthopaedics) & 1 blended assessment day.

b) Human Factors and Patient Safety (HFPS)

IMG1- Attendance at 1 training day, 1 blended OSS and HFPS training day, attendance at 1 online module, participation in 1 live webinar & 1 blended assessment day.

IMG2- Attendance at 2 training days, 1 blended OSS and HFPS training day, & 1 blended OSS & HFPS assessment day.

c) OSS & HFPS Blended Assessments (OSCE)

At the end of training schedule trainees attend for a formal blended OSS & HFPS assessment (OSCE). The OSS component assesses technical skills learnt during that year, assessed by consultant trainers, using objective scoring and validated assessment methodology. The Human Factors component assesses trainees using professional actors in OSCE type scenarios which are supervised and assessed by RCSI faculty and trainers.

Refer to the matrix outlining all of the above, note all training days are in person in RCSI - Some regional

classes for OSS year 1 will take place in Cork and Galway throughout the training year. Class size will be limited, we will advise on these regional classes will be available to book via your trainee portal.

After your attendance at each in person OSS & HFPS class a "Certificate of Attendance" will be issued via your RCSI email. It is a trainee's responsibility to manage these Certificates of Attendance. Certificates of Attendance could be required in the future to verify a trainee's attendance at any of their mandatory training dates. Certificates of Attendance will not be issued retrospectively.

Following the OCSE Assessments the exam board will review the marks and identify underperforming trainees. Trainees identified will be supported through a remediation process. There is no repeat of the exam. There is no opportunity for a trainee to retrospectively take a missed module leading to a score change, once the assessments are completed and the score is published there is no mechanism to change a score.

If borrowing a lap kit please ensure you do this well ahead of the OCSE's to ensure availability, contact OSS@rcsi.com to arrange.

Please note we cannot arrange access to the anatomy lab, please contact the Anatomy Department if access is required although this may not be feasible.

4.0 ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING

4.1. ANNUAL REVIEW OF COMPETENCY & PERFORMANCE (ARCP)

Formal assessment takes place both in the workplace and also as part of the off-site education programme at RCSI. The following assessments provide an overall ARCP score for each trainee

- Trainee Assessment Reports (completed by the Trainer)
- Work based assessments (completed by trainee during training and signed off by Trainer)
 - Structured Clinical Assessments
 - Supervised Assessment of Operative Skills
- RCSI-logbook & validation sheet
- HFPS & OSS class attendance and assessments

All the above elements of ARCP assessment and attendance at mandatory curriculum classes can be managed online via [mSurgery](#).

Throughout surgical training, all trainees will have a formal annual appraisal meeting (every six months during IMG 1 and IMG 2. This will consist of a face to face counselling session with one or more consultant trainers who are independent of the training hospital in which the trainee works. Areas of concern are highlighted and may warrant appropriate intervention and performance management actions if required. The consultant training supervisors to whom surgical trainees are attached will perform informal assessments of their trainees on an ongoing basis. These include assessment of performance in all of the domains in which the trainee works, e.g. on the wards, in the operating theatre, in the outpatient clinic, the intensive care unit and the emergency department, the teaching and education of undergraduates and peers. However, more formal and structured objective assessments will also take place as follows:

a) Structured Clinical Assessment (SCA) x 3 per rotation

The SCA is an assessment of the clinical and professional skills of a trainee on the ward, in the Emergency Department or in the Outpatient Department. Trainees are assessed on different clinical problems which they encounter in a range of clinical settings. The assessment involves observing the trainee interaction with a patient in a clinical encounter. The areas of competence covered

include history taking, physical examination, diagnostic skills, professionalism, clinical judgement, communication skills, organisation and efficiency, and overall clinical care.

b) Supervised Structured Assessment of Operative Performance (SSAOP): x 3 per rotation

This assessment is used to assess the technical, operative and professional skills of the trainee in a range of basic surgical procedures. Specific procedures will be identified by the consultant trainer to provide an opportunity to assess the trainee with respect to technical ability.

c) Trainee Assessment Reports (TAR): x 1 per rotation

These are structured reports on the performance of trainees in the workplace and are completed by the Consultant Trainer. The reports cover clinical skills, professional development, personal skills and workplace relationships.

d) Surgical RCSI -Logbook (Continuous) x 1 Sign off sheet per ARCP per rotation

Each trainee is required to keep an online electronic logbook (RCSI-Logbook). Ensuring that records are accurate and complete is part of trainee's professional responsibility. RCSI-Logbooks are subject to audit so accuracy is of critical importance.

Each procedure should be entered in the logbook as soon as it has been completed (when the operation note is being written up is the best time). If there are problems with accessing an internet enabled PC, trainees should update their logbook at the end of the day. To ensure that the logbook represents a contemporary record of all training experience. **All procedures performed (or observed) must be entered into the logbook no later than 7 days after they are performed. Please review the guide to the RCSI Logbook on mSurgery for more details on how to best utilise the logbook to record operations throughout your training.**

Important Note:

It is a mandatory requirement of the programme to complete 6 forms (3 x SCAs and 3 SSAOPs) & TAR in a ARCP period. Failure to submit these will result in your ARCP session being marked as unsatisfactory.

All forms can be accessed & completed electronically via mSurgery prior to the relevant ARCP 'freeze' date in each six-month rotation period. RCSI- logbook can be directly accessed via mSurgery.

It is important to ensure your trainers are listed with us in order that this receive validation notifications for your forms and logbook; please link with the IMG administrator to ensure your trainer can access mSurgery.

All trainees are strongly advised not to leave the completion of these forms to the week before an ARCP and should regularly complete them during their training to demonstrate achievement of competency.

Note carefully : CST deadlines for CAPA vary from IMG ARCP deadlines so please ensure you do not work off deadlines other than those advised specifically to you by the IMG administrator – if in any doubt email imgst@rcsi.ie for clarification.

4.1.1 WORKPLACE BASED ASSESSMENTS SUBMISSION RULES

Workplace based assessment forms are a key element of trainee progression. A number of strict rules apply to the submission of these assessments. These rules are strictly applied and are as follows:

All assessments must be submitted prior to the ARCP session.

Assessments should only be performed by a consultant on a permanent contract. Assessments signed by SPR's are not acceptable. Assessments signed by a Locum Consultant may be permissible in appropriate circumstances to be agreed by the Programme director, you must contact imgst@rcsi.com with regard to this prior to completion of any assessments.

***Note:** The role of the locum consultant in training has being recognised by the ISPTC of the RCSI due to the ongoing dependency of these trainers in the Irish Healthcare system and the lack of robust or timely appointments to consultant posts in some cases. The support of Locum Consultants to train and support our trainees and their contribution to the training remit cannot be overlooked and is permissible under the following criteria:

Suitability Criteria:

- On the Specialist Register of the Medical Council
- Registered and compliant with PCS
- Want to train
- Appropriate attitude and

Role of Locum Consultant in Training:

- Can hold the role of Clinical Supervisor thereby completing SCAs and SSAOP forms
- Can examine in mock clinics, vivas and participate in the teaching & training of trainees at RCSI Training day

Trainees must submit at least 3 SSAOP and 3 SCA's during each six-month rotation.

Trainees must not submit more than 2 SSAOP's or 2 SCA's from any one consultant trainer in any one rotation. Therefore, trainees must have at least 1 SSAOP and at least 1 SCA completed by a different consultant trainer.

All sections of the assessment must be completed before submission.

The RCSI logbook signoff sheet must be submitted by the identified deadline. This must be signed by the trainee and the trainer. This information will be audited / assessed during each 6 monthly ARCP session.

It is the Trainees responsibility to ensure that all paperwork is submitted before the prescribed ARCP deadline. This will be advised via mSurgery and communicated via your RCSI email address from the IMG administrator at imgst@rcsi.com

4.1.2. RCSI-BASED ASSESSMENTS

a) Operative Surgical Skills (OSS) assessment

During each year, trainees attend the RCSI for formal assessment of technical skills learnt during that year. These are assessed by consultant trainers, using objective scoring and validated assessment methodology.

b) Human Factors in Patient Safety (HFPS) Assessment

All trainees have annual HFPS assessments, using professional actors in OSCE type assessments which are supervised and assessed by RCSI faculty and trainers.

IMG Year 1 must attend annual Blended Assessment (OSS & HFPS)

IMG Year 2 must attend annual Blended Assessment (OSS & HFPS)

4.1.3 BOOKING AN OSS OR HFPS CLASS OR ASSESSMENT

In order to book into a class Trainees will need to access mSurgery or the Trainee Portal using their RCSI credentials.

You will be notified by the IMG Administrator when classes are available to book. See 2.1 for details on

how to use the Trainee Portal to book classes. Please always check with your Hospital HR / Medical Manpower Manager, Consultant Trainer and colleagues before booking a class to ensure no clashes on the schedule.

4.1.4 ARCP (ANNUAL REVIEW OF COMPETENCY AND PROGRESS) REQUIREMENTS

Year 1 (ARCP 1)	
SSAOPs	3
SCAs	3
TAR	1
RCSI logbook	Online validation & copy of logbook for ARCP
Year 1 (ARCP 2)	
SSAOPs	3
SCAs	3
TAR	1
RCSI logbook	Online validation & copy of logbook for ARCP
Blended OSS & HFPS Assessment	To be completed
Year 2 (ARCP 3)	
SSAOPs	3
SCAs	3
TAR	1
RCSI logbook	Online validation & copy of logbook for ARCP
Year 2 (ARCP 4)	
SSAOPs	3
SCAs	3
TAR	1
RCSI logbook	Online validation & copy of logbook for ARCP
Blended OSS & HFPS Assessment	To be completed

5.0 COMPLETION OF HSE/IMG SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMME – CERTIFICATE

A Certificate of Achievement will only be awarded to trainees that have completed the two-year Scholarship Programme. Eligibility for a Certificate of Achievement are outlined below:

1. Trainees must have passed both OSS & HFPS assessments in year 1 and year 2.
2. Trainees must have achieved a satisfactory mark in at least 3 of their 4 ARCP assessments, one of which must include the assessment for the final 6 month period on the programme.
3. A report will be compiled on the trainees two years on the programme. This report will be reviewed by the Professor of Postgraduate Surgical Education and forwarded directly to the relevant IMG College or board.
4. Certificates of Achievement will be sent directly to the relevant IMG college for distribution
5. Please note once you complete the 2 year programme your RCSI email & mSurgery access will expire and you will no longer be able to access either so you should save all important documents, information, forms, certs etc to your own folders and also download a copy of your logbook prior to finishing on the programme.

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## 6.0 THE CURRICULUM – MONITORING & EVALUATION

### 6.1. ONGOING MONITORING

The Irish Surgical Postgraduate Training Committee (ISPTC) plays the central role in this evaluation and review process, both through the main committee and its specialty sub-committees.

At CST level inclusive of the IMG Scholarship Programme, the Core Surgical Training Committee is responsible for all aspects of Core Surgical Training, including curriculum content, quality of teaching and supervision, assessment and trainee progress. The CST committee meets four times per year to review the selection process for CST, the content of the training programmes, hospital rotations for trainees, hospitals and hospital post inspections, quality assurance, examination (MRCS) issues, the ARCP/CAPA process, appraisals and

workplace assessments.

Membership of the ISPTC, the specialty sub-committees, and the CST committee is specifically formulated to ensure representation of the key stakeholders in surgical training. Through membership of these committees, the feedback of trainees and trainers is systematically sought and this feedback is used to implement changes and quality improvements in the training programmes. Trainees also contribute to the monitoring and programme development of the RCSI surgical training programmes.

### Trainee feedback is encouraged and facilitated in several ways:

Trainee representation on RCSI committees such as

- Core Surgical Training Committee
- Committee for Surgical Affairs
- Specialty Training Committee's
- Course feedback / evaluation forms on Core Curriculum days, OSS, HFPS courses. These online forms are completed at the end of each course. The output from these forms is used as part of the continual renewal process to improve course content and delivery against learning outcomes.
- De-identified training post evaluation surveys at the end of each six-month rotation.
- Interviews with trainees during CST and SAC site inspection visits.

RCSI encourages regular trainee feedback which we use to help continually improve our training programmes.

## 7.0 LEAVE ENTITLEMENTS

### 7.1 ANNUAL LEAVE

Annual Leave is determined by the NCHD contract and will be honoured by each of the clinical sites according to local hospital agreements with NCHDs & the NCHD Contract.

### 7.2 EDUCATIONAL LEAVE – (AS PER NCHD 2010 CONTRACT)

The Employer may, taking account of the NCHD's medical education and training status, grant the NCHD up to a maximum of 18 working days (based on a 7.8 hour working day) per 6-month period to facilitate: (this is discretionary on part of the employer)

**7.2.1** Attendance at courses, conferences and educational events determined to be appropriate by the HSE, the recognised postgraduate training bodies and the Universities;

**7.2.2** Study leave prior to an examination or repeat examination for higher degrees or diplomas determined to be appropriate by the HSE, the recognised postgraduate training bodies and the Universities;

**7.2.3** Attendance at examinations determined to be appropriate by the HSE, the recognised postgraduate training bodies and the Universities;

**7.2.4** Attendance at interviews within the Irish public health service appropriate to the NCHD's training / career pathway;

Educational leave must be used in the first instance to attend mandatory training days as per the RCSI educational curriculum as of the Scholarship Programme. Participants in the programme are strongly encouraged to use their leave for participation in Part A, Part B MRCS Exam or the DO-HNS Part 2 OSCE of the MRCS Exam as well as study leave pertaining to the achievement of same.

### 7.3 MATERNITY (ML), PATERNITY, PARENTAL, SICK LEAVE

Entitlement to each of these types of leave is determined by the Trainee's contract of employment with the individual hospital. (NCHD 2010 Contract). However, prolonged absence through sick or maternity leave reduces time spent on the IMG Scholarship Programme and may affect time spent on clinical rotation, assessment and examination eligibility.

- A person wishing to take extended leave should inform HR and their lead trainer in the hospital site directly and contact the IMG Administrator.

Trainees on extended leave which has been approved will be assessed on their return to the programme, to establish their eligibility for recommencing the pathway. This may result in repeating part of a year on the programme.

Other well-founded reasons may be considered dependent on the individual situation.

## 8.0 SUPPORT STRUCTURES

### 8.1 TRAINEES WITH PERFORMANCE ISSUES

The scholarship programme recognises that during that participates may underperform and not achieve the desired performance requirements of the curriculum. There may be many reasons for this underperformance. To help trainees, the training programme provides support to all participates so that they can maximise their development during their time on the programme.

**The support escalations are outlined below:**

- Consultant Trainer or Training Post Supervisor.
- Programme Director of IMG Scholarship programme or nominee.
- The Professor of Surgical Education may, in appropriate situations, bring any problems to the attention of the Core Surgical Training Committee and/or the Irish Surgical Postgraduate Training Committee (ISPTC).

All trainees are encouraged to use those resources available to them during their time on the programme should they encounter any problems during their training or wish to seek career advice

Within the Scholarship Programme, the Annual Review of Competency and Progress (ARCP) process is the principal mode of identification of trainees who are under-performing. This formal process involves counselling session with consultant trainers (not the consultant trainers with whom the trainee is currently working) and takes place every six months in December and June annually; dates will be communicated in advance to all trainees.

During this meeting, all aspects of the trainee's performance, both in the workplace and in the RCSI

structured programme, are examined in detail. Any concerns which the trainee may have with regards to their training progress are also discussed.

## 8.2 TRAINEES IN DISTRESS

The College recognises that trainees may face stressful situations on a regular basis. Coping with the demands of a busy profession, maintaining skills and knowledge and balancing family and personal commitments can be difficult.

Surgical trainees, like the rest of society, can struggle with depression, anxiety and poor mental health. The work environments surgeons find themselves in may also contribute to high levels of stress due to administrative processes and inappropriate behaviour such as bullying, discrimination and sexual harassment.

The College is committed to provide support to trainees to assist them appropriately through difficult situations. The various supports that are available to trainees are outlined in detail in mSurgery (<http://msurgery.ie/>).

## 8.3 WELLBEING

A career in Surgery can be both challenging and rewarding. For all trainees it is crucial to prioritise your health and wellbeing throughout your training and professional journey.

The demanding nature of training requires a balanced approach to maintain physical and mental health.

There is substantial evidence that **maintaining wellbeing in the medical profession contributes to a rich rewarding career**. Neglecting self-care can make the profession less enjoyable and significantly increase the risk of burnout, particularly during training, which has multiple challenges across both the professional and personal domains.

### Importance of Wellbeing in the Profession

- 1. Enhanced Job Satisfaction:** Medical professionals who prioritise their wellbeing report higher job satisfaction. They find their work more meaningful and fulfilling, which contributes to long-term career satisfaction.
- 2. Improved Patient Care:** Doctors who maintain their health and wellbeing are better equipped to provide high-quality care to their patients.
- 3. Reduced Burnout:** Burnout is a significant issue in the medical profession, prioritising self-care helps mitigate these symptoms leading to a more sustainable career.

RCSI as your Post graduate Training body, is always striving to understand by means of feedback and engagement, how we can best support trainees. The provision of support and referral pathways for trainees, and/or, trainers who are supporting trainees that are struggling, due to reasons related to health and wellbeing and may be impacting their ability to lead a fulfilling and sustainable career is vitally important for us. Early identification and prevention of such issues through the promotion, support and education of Health and Wellbeing strategies is key during what is often considered a busy but rewarding time of your career pathway.

### Key points to ensure health and wellbeing are at the forefront:

- 1. Work-Life Balance:** Maintaining a balance between professional responsibilities and personal life is essential. Allocating time for rest, relations and hobbies can help mitigate burnout.
- 2. Mental Health Support:** The RCSI has a range of mental health resources available to trainees this can provide the necessary support during stressful times.
- 3. Physical Health:** Regular exercise, a balanced diet, and adequate sleep are foundational to maintaining, physical health.
- 4. Social Interaction** - The evidence shows that positive social connections at work—supportive interactions, a sense of belonging, and effective teamwork—improve worker well-being and can protect against harmful effects of workplace stress.

The RCSI has established a CONFIDENTIAL e-mail address for Trainees & Trainers who may wish to access Health and Wellbeing resources available via RCSI. You can be assured that all communication will be treated with respect.

Please contact us at [wellbeing@RCSI.com](mailto:wellbeing@RCSI.com)

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9.0 LEARNING SUPPORTS FOR TRAINEES

9.1 MSURGERY MOBILE APP

mSurgery is a Mobile App for surgical trainees (<http://msurgery.ie/>) which has been a significant development to support training in an environment where trainees need quick access to knowledge resources and revision. The application includes minor operations, videos, library, e-books, training guides, skills lessons, and training timetables. mSurgery (<http://msurgery.ie/>) is the central information point for all elements of the training programme. Access to mSurgery is via your RCSI login only

9.2 RCSI LIBRARY

All Surgical trainees have access to the RCSI Library. The RCSI library's collections support the teaching, learning, research and clinical activities of the College. All resources, services and facilities are described on the library website at <http://www.rcsi.ie/library>

9.2.1 E-RESOURCES

All RCSI registered students, trainees and RCSI staff have 24/7 access to library online resources via the main library website. RCSI Dublin provides access to over 10,000 electronic journals. E-journals are accessible through the e-journals section on the library website.

These are also available on mSurgery (<http://msurgery.ie/ebooks>).

9.2.2 ONLINE DATABASES

An extensive number of online databases available to RCSI students and staff include MEDLINE, PsycInfo, Embase, Web of Science, Cochrane Database, SCOPUS, and Journal Citation Reports. A full list of databases is available under the "Find Articles: Databases" section of the library website.

9.2.3 THESES & OPEN ACCESS INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH REPOSITORY

Theses and dissertations which have been completed as part of the degree awarding process are deposited in RCSI Library by the relevant School. These copies are the archival record for the National University of Ireland and the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland and are preserved and made available for use by researchers and scholars. These are available online in the RCSI institutional open access repository http://epubs.rcsi.ie/theses_dissertations/ and are available as a resource for all.

9.2.4 PRINT RESOURCES

The print book collection contains approximately 15,000 titles and is a working collection. Pharmacy related texts are findable via the library online catalogue by searching by title, author or subject.

9.2.5 FUNDING & SUPPORT FOR TRAINEES

There are a number of funds currently in place to support Trainees in educational and training activities. Please see table below for a brief overview of all available funds. Full eligibility criteria, guidelines and refund forms along with more information can be accessed via <https://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/leadership-education-development/met/ed/fin/>

9.2.6 FOUNDATIONS OF ROBOTIC SURGERY ONLINE COURSE

RCSI in partnership with International Medical Robotics Academy (IMRA) have launched a unique online 'Foundations of Robotic Surgery' Course, developed by surgeons for surgeons, the course has a linear robotic surgical training curriculum using online education, virtual reality, 3D video, simulators and advanced synthetic organ models.

Enhance your theory, knowledge and skills in surgical robotics in preparation for safe robotic surgical practice. Doctors will be equipped with the theoretical knowledge and practical working understanding of how-to setup a robot and console, the fundamentals of operating the robot, how to achieve robotic surgical competence and much more.

This course is designed for any healthcare professional wanting to develop their knowledge and understanding of surgical robotics, including surgeons, trainees, medical students, nurses and technicians.

This online course will be delivered in 9 learning modules that can be completed over 2-4 weeks. Each module includes lectures, instructional videos and assessments.

Full information including features, learning outcomes and overview of the experts involved in the courses creation can be found at <https://www.rcsi.com/dublin/professional-cpd/cpdss/foundation-of-robotic-surgery/course-details>

TRAINEE SUPPORT SCHEME	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EUR 1250 maximum per year per trainee. • Funding is not carried over year-on-year. • Processed via HSE • Available from July 2021 • Further Information • https://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/leadership-education-development/met/ed/fin/
CLINICAL COURSES AND EXAMS FUND	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Run by HSE/NDTP for courses and exams only on the approved list. • EUR 450 per claim, no restrictions on how many claims can be submitted per year. • Trainees must claim for this fund through the HR Departments in their hospital within six months of attending the exam/course. • Further Information • https://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/leadership-education-development/met/ed/fin/ • https://msurgery.ie/home2/specialist-training/financial-supports-for-sprs
STATISTICAL PACKAGE (Stata Statistics Package)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please access here using your RCSI log noting you will need to contact RCSI IT for download, ensure you advise that you are a current CST Trainee https://vle.rcsi.com/course/view.php?id=693&section=4 • Normal purchase cost €275 per year.
ENDNOTE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This can be downloaded using your RCSI log on through https://vle.rcsi.com/course/view.php?id=693&section=4 • Normal purchase cost €300 per Trainee.

10.0 PRIVACY POLICY

As advised in your training agreement and set out in the Surgical Affairs Privacy Policy (available on mSurgery. ie under CST Policies, Procedures & Guidelines), the College routinely collects data which includes trainee feedback and examination results for internal quality assurances purposes. This data is used to inform the Surgical Affairs Department of current trends within the training environment and help us develop and review training practices in line with these. Cohort data may occasionally be published in the medical literature. All reporting on such data will always be anonymised

11.0 CHILDCARE

RCSI provides a subsidy and has an agreement in place with Giraffe Childcare (at its Dublin sites) for a limited number of childcare places for children of RCSI staff and registered full-time students in the Schools of Medicine (including Physician Associates programme), Physiotherapy, Pharmacy and School of Postgraduate Studies students studying full-time on a Research programme i.e. MCh by Research, MSc by Research, MD and PhD. Please note this offer does not extend to Postgraduate Surgical or Emergency Medicine Trainees who are not in full time education in RCSI. Giraffe develop and operate childcare and early learning centres for pre-school children from three months and upwards. Emergency care is also available when other care arrangements are temporarily unavailable

12.0 MEDICAL INDEMNITY

If you are employed by the state (a HSE hospital or a HSE funded hospital), and treat patients in a state facility, then the state provides indemnity against claims arising from your professional practice through the State Claims Agency.

State indemnity will only cover the financial consequences of a claim for clinical negligence. Its purpose is to ensure patients are compensated if they suffer harm, rather than protect you or your professional interests.

However, the State Claims Agency does not cover:

- internal complaints and disciplinaries related to your clinical practice
- regulatory body actions (such as medical council complaints)
- criminal allegations arising from the provision of clinical care.

Medical indemnity bodies (such as the Medical Protection Society) do provide cover for these situations. They can also advise on how best to protect yourself in your professional practice, assisting in preparing and checking reports for the State Attorney and providing assistance with media relations to help protect your reputation.

RCSI advises all doctors, regardless of their working arrangements, to seriously consider obtaining their own professional indemnity.

Additional benefits include, but are not limited to, free communication skills and risk management workshops, verifiable CPD and CEU, emergency medicolegal advice available 24/7, and support and assistance for Good Samaritan acts.

More information about Medical Protection membership for state-indemnified professionals can be at www.medicalprotection.org/ireland/membership/faq

13.0 SURGICAL AFFAIRS COMMUNICATIONS

Please do not unsubscribe from RCSI Marketing and Communications emails. As an RCSI trainee, you will receive a variety of regular communications in relation to events, key updates, training opportunities etc, communications sent out are selected to enhance your training experience and help you stay connected to RCSI.



RCSI

Surgery

Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland

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