

NDTP *Aspire* Post-CSCST Fellowship Awards 2021 Application Guide

HSE-NDTP is now inviting applications for a number of funded *Aspire* Fellowship Awards to commence in July 2021

Application forms and queries can be submitted to

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Applications Open: Monday 4th August 2020

Deadline for submission of applications: Monday 14th September 2020

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NDTP *Aspire* Post-CSCST Fellowships

Background

Ireland is in a unique position to deliver world-class care to patients while training future health leaders. Irish hospitals have an exceptionally high concentration of fellowship-trained consultants who bring the latest expertise from some of the most innovative and high-quality hospitals in the world. NCHDs have the opportunity to benefit from this pool of talented trainers from intern to SpR level. The next logical step is to consider fellowship training in areas where we can deliver internationally-competitive programmes tailored to the context and requirements of our own health system.

The MacCraith Report (2013) recommends the continued development of post-CSCST fellowship capacity in Ireland in order to retain specialist medical expertise in the public health system in advance of appointment to Consultant posts. High-quality fellowships may help to address consultant recruitment and retention challenges, not only by providing the necessary clinical experience, but also by demonstrating the HSE's commitment to investing in and developing world-class training programmes. Such fellowships will also appeal to trainees who do not wish to, or are unable to, travel abroad for fellowship training. Offering a post-CSCST fellowship which allows the fellow to remain in Ireland is likely to be attractive to many high-quality candidates who otherwise may opt to defer or forego fellowship training.

Post-CSCST fellowship posts carry prestige and attract experienced, high-impact clinicians. Hospital groups and individual clinical sites will need to be creative and resourceful to engage the interest of such candidates, which will foster healthy competition and innovation. Particular attention may be given to programmes which include future-focused elements of training, such as quality improvement and clinical informatics.

Fellows blend the experience of consultant-level doctors with the flexibility of an NCHD role. This unique profile enhances the innovation ecosystem, not just for NCHDs but also for nursing, allied health professionals, management, and support staff, who all benefit from the teaching, research, and leadership skills of fellows. If properly supported, a fellow may produce significant academic output, with the opportunity to shape policy and discourse at a national level. A well-defined and well-resourced fellowship programme has the potential to deliver innovative research and high-value intellectual property which can be spun into the Irish health system. Fellowship roles align closely with common hospital group strategies regarding service provision, academic excellence, and good governance, as well as training body goals to increase the quality and depth of education and training.

The *Aspire* Award

The NDTP *Aspire* (Post CSCST) Fellowship awards have resulted from the collaborative efforts of HSE's Acute Hospitals' Division, Mental Health Division, National Doctors Training and Planning (NDTP) and the Post-Graduate Medical Training Bodies in Ireland and will provide funding for 8 Fellowships; 6 in the Acute Hospitals' Division and 2 in Mental Health, to commence in July 2021. The 8 successful 2021 *Aspire* Fellows will receive:

- SpR Salary (highest point of scale) and headcount for the duration of the fellowship
- Eligibility to access the Higher Specialist Training Fund during the fellowship
- Formal recognition of achievement following completion of the fellowship from the relevant Irish Post Graduate Medical Education Body/Bodies
- A high quality fellowship experience in Ireland that will improve competitiveness for positions within Ireland.

Aims and objectives

The NDTP *Aspire* Fellowship awards aim to:

- Stimulate the design and introduction of a number of high quality, relevant and valuable post CSCST fellowships that are not only attractive to doctors, but also harnesses the potential for high quality specialist training now available in Ireland
- Address the need to provide specific post CSCST training opportunities needed for a range of roles and skill sets at consultant level in the Acute Hospital system at present and into the future
- Encourage innovation and medical leadership
- Increase retention of post-CSCST fellows
- Demonstrate that the Irish health system is world class and competitive
- Produce fellowship-trained consultants with skills tailored to the Irish context
- Provide a more supportive and more diverse training environment for NCHDs
- Enable higher quality clinical research
- Encourage hospitals, hospital groups, and research institutions to compete for and support fellows
- Facilitate NCHDs who do not wish to (or are unable to) travel abroad for fellowship
- Opportunity to create a fellowship brand, similar to the strength of the Dr Steevens' Scholarships (during higher specialist training), for Post CSCST doctors to positively signal to the medical community at home and abroad the quality of opportunity in Ireland.

Conditions of the NDTP *Aspire* Fellowship award

- Approval is provided in respect of Fellowships commencing in 2021 (generally expected to commence in July 2021)
- *Aspire* fellows are entitled to apply through the relevant training body for the HSE Specialist Training funding scheme and through their employer for the HSE Clinical Course / Exam Refund Scheme. Both of these programmes are funded by NDTP (TSS).
- Employers should note that other costs, including on-call costs / other additional payments/ trainers' grants/ overtime payments etc. are not provided within NDTP funding for this programme.
- All *Aspire* fellows sign the NCHD Contract 2010 with the relevant employing authority, and are subject to the terms and conditions of that employment contract.
- In the event that the Fellow is on any type of leave (including but not limited to statutory leave entitlements such as maternity leave and any non-statutory leave) other than normal holiday leave for any period greater than 4 consecutive weeks or an aggregate period of 6 weeks in any consecutive 52 week period (which leave is referred to in this clause as "the extended leave") the host institution shall notify HSE-NDTP in writing immediately. It is acknowledged that the HSE-NDTP shall suspend payments of the Fellowship until such time as the Fellow's leave ceases and the Fellow returns to the Fellowship programme.
- Following a formal request, HSE-NDTP may consider extending the Fellowship period by the period for which the Scholar was absent due to the extended leave (other than holiday leave and other than the first 4 weeks of other leave. For the avoidance of doubt, the extension in the Fellowship period referred to in this clause will not result in any increase in the amount of the Fellowship payable. The liability of HSE-NDTP shall remain limited to payment of the amount of the Fellowship as set out above. The extension provided for in this clause shall therefore involve no extra cost to HSE-NDTP.

- The fellowship must provide a structured certifiable educational experience to doctors who have obtained CSCST and are within three years of post CSCST
- In the case where a candidate has been appointed to the fellowship subject to completion of CSCST sign off from the relevant training body must be obtained.
- The fellowship post must be evaluated and approved by the appropriate training body this must be in place prior to the fellow commencing in post. The post must also have a supervisor assigned, with authority and accountability for the fellowship, prior to the fellow commencing in post.
- Applications must include a programme design for the fellowship programme to demonstrate:
 - An overview of the core curriculum to be offered
 - A quality fellowship experience, protected training time and less of a focus on service delivery commitment
 - Details of how the fellowship will protect/prioritise the unique learning requirements of the fellow
 - Evidence that there will be opportunities for audit and research
 - Details of the value of the proposed fellowship to the health service, for example addressing a particular workforce requirement, niche area, particular skillset acquisition, obtaining of skills/knowledge that are not available in Ireland at the current time, etc.
- The duration of the Fellowship should be outlined within the application (it is expected that most will be 12-month duration however Fellowship proposals up to 24 months will be considered)
- Fellowships which offer an appropriate international component will be considered
- Previously successful Aspire Fellowships are not eligible to re-apply (the Aspire Fellowship funding is provided on a 'once off' basis to an applicant site)
- The fellowship should align to workforce opportunities, and this year NDTP are particularly interested in receiving fellowship applications which offer both a clinical and non-clinical component, particularly in the following areas:
 - General paediatrics
 - General/acute internal medicine
 - Geriatrics
 - Ophthalmology
 - Anaesthesia
 - General/colorectal surgery
 - Urology
 - Obstetrics and gynaecology
 - Mental Health
 - Clinical informatics
 - Quality improvement
 - Patient Safety
 - Future health technologies
 - Genomics and personalised medicine
 - Leadership and education
 - Innovation
 - Data science and analytics
 - Workforce Planning
- The fellowship must not impinge on the training of pre-CSCST trainees.
- Where appropriate, the fellowships should fulfil training body requirements for Medical Council specialist registration (e.g. Intensive Care Medicine) and HSE employment requirements for consultant posts.

Application Process

- The first step of the process involves designing a quality fellowship proposal which will normally be 12 months (but maybe 18 or 24 months).
- The next step involves engaging with an Irish post graduate training body (or bodies in the case of a collaborative fellowship), to agree the oversight, approval and certification of the fellowship.
- The third stage involves submitting the completed fellowship proposal to NDTP / HSE for consideration.
- For the applications that are awarded the Aspire Fellowships, the final stage involves recruiting a suitable candidate to commence in July 2021.

Selection Process

The HSE-NDTP will form an expert advisory panel to assess the applications, and may seek specific advice from relevant experts, Clinical Directors etc. as required. The principal considerations will be:

- Quality of the fellowship proposed
- Identified unmet patient need
- Specialty and service priorities
- Unavailability of such training in Ireland currently
- The potential benefits to the Irish health service and patients.

Other factors may include specialty spread, geographical distribution and other considerations.

The 8 successful 2021 National Aspire Fellowships will be announced early in 2021. The 2021 Aspire Fellowships will then be advertised to doctors that have received CSCST from an Irish PGTB but will be no more than 3 years post CSCST on 11th July 2021.

What is the eligibility criterion for a doctor applying for an Aspire Fellowship?

Doctors eligible to be appointed into one of the NDTP *Aspire* fellowships must be within three years of CSCST and have completed their HST training within an Irish Postgraduate Training Body.