



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Oifig an Stiúrtóra Náisiúnta, Acmhainní Daonna
Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Ospidéal Dr. Steevens'
Baile Átha Cliath 8

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**To: Each Member of Management Team, HSE;
Each Regional Director of Operations, HSE;
Each Regional Assistant National Director of Human Resources, HSE;
Each Employee Relations Manager, HSE
Clinical Directors, HSE
Medical Manpower Managers, HSE
Each CEO HR Manager, directly funded Voluntary Hospital / Section 38
Agency**

Re: Professional Competence

Since May 2011, all medical practitioners have been required, by law, to maintain their professional competence. The first 12-month period for professional competence concluded on April 30th 2012.

Doctors who are actively engaged in an intern training programme, initial specialist training programme or higher specialist training programme fulfil their legislative requirement through these programmes.

All other doctors are required to enrol in a Professional Competence Scheme with a recognised postgraduate training body and engage in professional development activities. The Medical Council is now commencing the process of auditing a sample of doctors to ensure that they have evidence that they are observing their legal duty to maintain professional competence. Failure to provide such evidence may place a doctor's continuing registration and their right to practise medicine risk and, as a result, could jeopardise eligibility for employment.

It is the responsibility of each individual registered medical practitioner to ensure that they are meeting their legislative requirements for the maintenance of professional competence.

The Health Service Executive requires that all doctors in its employment are fulfilling their responsibilities in relation to professional competence and will be seeking assurance from doctors that they are maintaining their professional competence in compliance with the Medical Practitioners Act 2007, Part 11, Section 94. The HSE is supportive of both the implementation of Professional Competence Schemes and the Council's plans to undertake an audit of doctors' activities in relation to such schemes.

Attached are copies of the Medical Council's communications for your information. The Council has recommended that doctors' statements of participation in professional competence should be displayed in a place of prominence, viewable by patients, in order to reiterate doctors' commitment to the provision of safe services and the HSE supports this recommendation.

The new Professional Competence year commenced on May 1st last and the new period for Professional Development Programmes will commence in July 2012. All doctors employed in the public health service are required to comply with these requirements. The HSE provides substantial amounts of funding for the training and development of doctors from intern through to consultant level. Doctors who are on the NCHD Contract and registered on the general or supervised division should note that information regarding Professional Development Programmes commencing July 2012 will be circulated shortly.



Barry O'Brien
National Director of Human Resources