



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Health Service Executive

Oifig an Stiúrthóra Náisiúnta, Acmhainní Daonna  
Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
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## **HSE HR Circular 021/2015**

**To: Each Member of the Directorate and Leadership Team HSE  
Each Assistant National Director, HR  
Each CHO Chief Officer  
Each Hospital Group CEO  
Each Hospital CEO  
Each CEO Section 38 Agency  
Each Hospital HR Director  
Each Head of Medical HR / Medical Manpower**

**From: Rosarii Mannion, National Director of Human Resources**

**Date: 25<sup>th</sup> September 2015**

**Re: Conditions and process by which permanent consultant posts may be filled with locum appointments or temporary appointments**

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**Dear Colleagues,**

This circular is to clarify the conditions in which a permanent consultant post may be filled with a locum consultant appointment or a temporary consultant appointment. It defines when a locum appointment or a temporary appointment may be made and the process to be followed in each case.

Circular 021/2015 replaces HSE HR Circular 008/2010 which previously devolved the responsibility and accountability for locum appointments and temporary appointments to Regional Directors of Operations (RDOs) and subsequently Regional Directors of Performance and Integration (RDPIs). As the RDPI post is no longer in existence and the Hospital Group and Community Healthcare Organisation structures are now in place, the authority to make locum appointments or temporary appointments to permanent consultant posts has been delegated to Hospital Group CEOs and CHO Chief Officers and is effective immediately.

### **1. Filling a permanent consultant post with a locum appointment**

#### **1.1 When can locum consultant appointments be made?**

A locum appointment may only be made where a permanent post already exists and where one of the following applies:

- The permanent post holder is on a period of leave, e.g.: maternity leave, sick leave, unpaid leave, leave of absence, career break etc.
- The permanent post holder is seconded to another role on a temporary basis, e.g.: clinical programme lead, clinical director, etc.
- A permanent post holder has been appointed to the post, but has not yet commenced employment.

## 1.2 Conditions which apply to locum consultant appointments:

- Locum appointments are only permitted on a contract Type A or Type B basis, regardless of the contract type of the approved post; and
- The permanent post involved is a recognised and approved post and there is no change to the approved structure of the post; and
- There is no increase in the overall number of such approved posts (i.e. no authority exists to create a new or additional consultant post, the delegation only applies to locum appointments related to an existing numbered, recognized and approved permanent consultant post); and
- The person filling the permanent post on a locum basis has all the qualifications to work as a Consultant as set by the HSE i.e. registration as a specialist on the Specialist Division of the Register of Medical Practitioners and any additional experience as stipulated in the Qualifications specified by the Health Service Executive available from the National Doctors Training and Planning (NDTP) website at [www.hse.ie/doctors](http://www.hse.ie/doctors)
- Specified purpose contracts should be used for locum appointments.

## 1.3 Process to be followed to obtain approval for a locum consultant appointment

- For approval for a locum appointment to be granted by the Hospital Group CEO/CHO Chief Officer, confirmation must firstly be obtained from National Doctors Training & Planning (NDTP) that an approved permanent post exists. Please see Appendix 1 which sets out how to do this.
- On receipt of formal confirmation from NDTP, the Hospital Group CEO/CHO Chief Officer issues a letter of locum approval and the hospital or community healthcare organisation may proceed to fill the post with a locum appointment. A template letter of approval for a locum appointment is provided at Appendix 2.
- NDTP will only grant approval for a locum appointment for a maximum period of 12 months. Where the need for the locum appointment extends beyond 12 months then the Hospital Group CEO/CHO Chief Officer must notify NDTP at that point, advising that the specified purpose for which the locum appointment has been made continues to exist.
- The Hospital Group CEO/CHO Chief Officer is required to review the use of locum appointments on a quarterly basis to ensure their use is kept to a minimum and that applications for permanent posts are made without delay.

## 2. Filling a permanent post with a temporary consultant appointment

### 2.1 When can temporary consultant appointments be made?

- A temporary appointment may only be made where a permanent post already exists and has been vacated due to one of the following:
  - The permanent post holder has retired.
  - The permanent post holder has resigned.

- Where the host agency has submitted a fully complete application, the receipt of which has been confirmed by NDTP.
- The need to make a temporary appointment should be extremely rare as host agencies should be submitting applications for permanent replacements for approved posts well in advance of the departure of the permanent post holder.

All new and replacement permanent posts must be submitted to NDTP at [consultant.applications@hse.ie](mailto:consultant.applications@hse.ie) and will then be progressed with immediate effect to the Consultants Appointments Advisory Committee (CAAC) for consideration.

Staff in NDTP are available to advise and support delivery units as requested.

## **2.2 Conditions which apply to temporary consultant appointments**

- Temporary appointments are only permitted on a contract Type A or Type B basis, regardless of the contract type of the approved post and
- The permanent post involved is a recognised and approved post and there is no change to the approved structure of the post and
- There is no increase in the overall number of such approved posts (i.e. no authority exists to create a new or additional consultant post, the delegation only applies to temporary appointments related to an existing numbered, recognized and approved permanent consultant post) and
- The person filling the permanent post on a temporary basis has all the qualifications to work as a Consultant as set by the HSE i.e. registration as a specialist on the Specialist Division of the Register of Medical Practitioners and any additional experience as stipulated in the Qualifications specified by the Health Service Executive available from the NDTP website at [www.hse.ie/doctors](http://www.hse.ie/doctors).
- Specified purpose contracts should be used for temporary appointments.

## **2.3 Process to be followed to obtain approval for a temporary consultant appointment**

- For approval for a temporary appointment to be granted by the Hospital Group CEO/CHO Chief Officer, confirmation must first be obtained from NDTP that a fully completed application for the permanent replacement has been received. Please see Appendix 3 which sets out how to do this.
- On receipt of formal confirmation from NDTP, the Hospital Group CEO/CHO Chief Officer issues a letter of approval and the hospital or community health organisation may proceed to fill the post with a temporary appointment. A template letter of approval for temporary appointment is provided at Appendix 4.
- NDTP will only grant approval for a temporary appointment for a maximum period of 12 months. Where the need for the temporary appointment extends beyond 12 months then the Hospital Group CEO/CHO Chief Officer must notify NDTP at that point, advising that the specified purpose for which the temporary appointment has been made continues to exist.
- The Hospital Group CEO / CHO Chief Officer is required to review the use of temporary appointments on a quarterly basis to ensure their use is kept to a minimum and that applications for permanent posts are made without delay.

All queries concerning this circular should be directed to National Doctors Training and Planning by email to [consultant.applications@hse.ie](mailto:consultant.applications@hse.ie) or by phone to 01 6352445.

**Yours Sincerely**



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**Rosarii Mannion**  
**National Director of Human Resources**