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**A GUIDE TO THE APPLICATION PROCEDURE  
FOR REGISTRATION IN THE VISITING EEA PRACTITIONERS DIVISION  
OF THE REGISTER OF MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS**

**THE PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT IS  
TO EXPLAIN HOW A MEDICAL PRACTITIONER MAY APPLY FOR REGISTRATION AND  
COMPLY WITH THE SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR REGISTRATION  
IN THE VISITING EEA PRACTITIONERS DIVISION OF  
THE REGISTER OF MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Medical Practitioners Act 2007 and the Health (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2007 (“**the Act**”) replace the Medical Practitioners Acts 1978-2002. Part 6 of the Act deals with registration matters and also gives effect to EU Directives 2005/36/EC and 2006/100/EC on the recognition of professional qualifications (“**the Directive**”). The Council has made the Registration Rules 2010 (“**the Rules**”) under section 11 of the Act. Terms used in the Rules and in this document, for example “the State”, “member state”, “third country” and “competent authority”, are defined in section 2 of the Act and/or in the Directive.

## 2. THE REGISTER OF MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS

### 2.1 Why should a medical practitioner be registered?

If a medical practitioner wishes to practise medicine in Ireland, they are required by law to be registered with the Medical Council. It is an offence to practise medicine within the State while unregistered, with the exception of visiting EEA practitioners **attending in an emergency**. All other visiting EEA practitioners are required to be registered in the appropriate Division of the Register **prior** to commencing medical practice in Ireland. Each medical practitioner is responsible for ensuring that their registration is current and appropriate for their individual circumstances. [See sections 37, 38 and 41 of the Act for further details.]

### 2.2 Unregistered medical practitioners

Any application for registration following a period of unregistered practise may be suspended or refused, pending or based on the decision of a Committee or other authorised person or persons. An Garda Síochána (Ireland’s National Police Service) will normally be informed of any unregistered medical practitioner who, to the Medical Council’s knowledge, was or is in breach of section 41 of the Act.

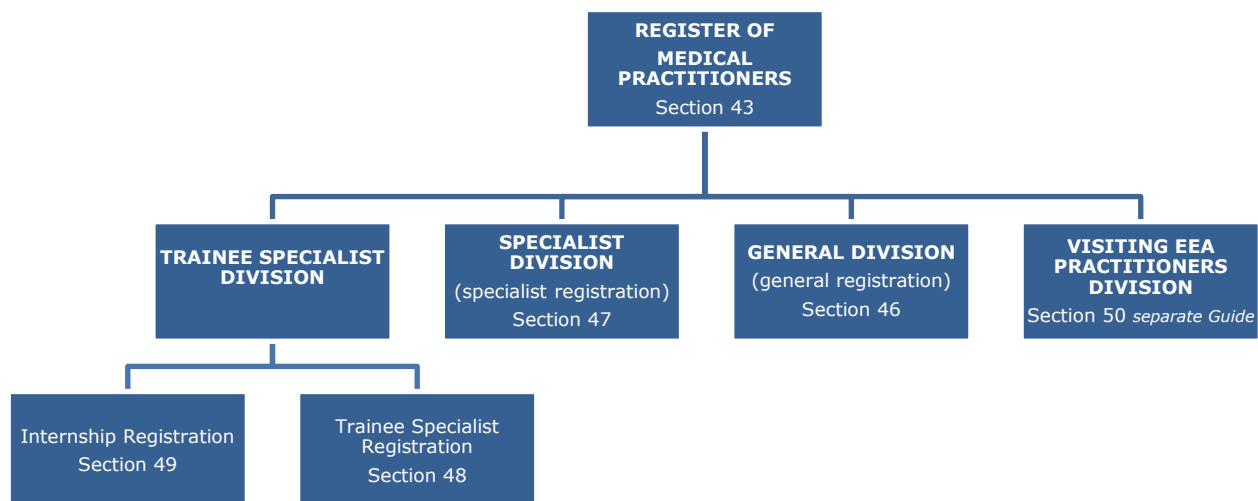
### 2.3 Structure of the Register of Medical Practitioners (“the Register”)

The Register of Medical Practitioners is established under section 43 of the Act and replaces the General Register of Medical Practitioners and the Register of Medical Specialists, which were established under the Medical Practitioners Act 1978. The Register comprises **four Divisions**. A medical practitioner can only be registered in one Division at a time, except for a specialist training in another specialty. [See Figure 1 and separate Guide for other types of Registration.]

### 2.4 Eligibility for Visiting EEA Registration

**Visiting EEA Registration** is only available to eligible EU/EEA/Swiss citizens who are established (hold “full registration” or equivalent) in another EU/EEA member state or in Switzerland and wish to practise medicine in Ireland on a temporary and/or occasional basis. Visiting EEA registration is not normally a viable option for medical practitioners while awaiting the outcome of an application for trainee specialist, general or specialist registration. [See section 50 of the Act.] Further details are available from the **eligibility map** provided at **Appendix A** of this document. The Medical Council would normally consider “temporary and occasional” medical services to be for a period that does not exceed an aggregate of thirty days in any twelve month period. Applications for longer periods of service will be considered on a case by case basis.

**Figure 1: Structure of the Register of Medical Practitioners**



### **3. APPLICATION PROCESS**

#### **3.1 Documentation**

Applicants for Visiting EEA registration should submit the following documentation to the Medical Council:

(i) **Evidence of EU/EEA/Swiss Citizenship / Identification**

Applicants should submit a notarised/attested copy of their current passport. The copy should clearly display their photograph; the same name as displayed on the applicant's basic (primary) medical qualification ("carton degree") (or State Marriage Certificate / Deed Poll, where the names are different); date of birth; EU/EEA/Swiss nationality; gender; and passport number and expiry date. If an applicant can only provide their original passport, they must attend the Medical Council's offices in person with the original passport, so that an ID check may be carried out.

(ii) **Certificate of Current Professional Status / Certificate of Good Standing**

Original certificate(s) ("**CCPS/COGS**") must be **dated within the last three months** and sent directly from the relevant competent authority/ies to the Medical Council. Submitting certificates with an application will cause a delay in the application process. Certificates must be provided from all competent authorities where the applicant has been registered within the past **five years**. Applicants must submit a sworn Declaration accounting for any unregistered periods while practising medicine and provide alternative satisfactory evidence that they are in good professional standing in that jurisdiction. If the applicant has not practised medicine in the past five years, they must submit a statement explaining how they have been occupied and may be required to provide evidence of same and of their attendance at Continuing Medical Education/Continuing Professional Development ("CME/CPD") courses.



at the Medical Council's offices. The Medical Council reserves the right to verify any documentation submitted in support of an application for registration.

### 3.3 **What is an acceptable English Language Translation?**

All documents which are not in the English language must be attached to an English language translation issued and officially stamped by an official translator. The name and address of the translator used must be included, to allow for verification. Failure to do so could result in a delay in processing an application for registration.

### 3.4 **Incomplete Applications**

Applicants should follow all instructions and ensure that they submit all required documentation in the requested format. [See **Appendix A** and the **Declaration Form VEEA1**.] A complete application should be submitted in order for the Medical Council to consider the applicant's eligibility for registration. The Medical Council reserves the right to return incomplete applications to the applicant at the address provided on their Declaration form. The Medical Council reserves the right to declare an application invalid if the applicant submits an incomplete Declaration form and/or fails to provide the outstanding documentation within a specified time period, or if the Medical Council is unable to verify the documentation submitted in support of an application. Invalid applications will be returned to the applicant at the address provided on the Declaration form. If the applicant wishes to re-apply, they must submit a new, complete application.

### 3.5 **Providing Medical Services in an Emergency**

Medical practitioners should apply in advance of providing the service. In emergency situations, the documentation must be provided within fifteen days of the service being provided, together with evidence that they attended in an emergency.

### 3.6 **Fees**

There is currently no application or registration fee for visiting EEA registration.

### 3.7 **Duration of the Application Process**

Medical practitioners must not commence medical practice within the State unless and until they are registered in the appropriate division. Although the Medical Council is committed to processing applications for visiting EEA registration as promptly as possible, **normally within four weeks**, in some cases where the Medical Council is awaiting advice from a third party, the process can take longer and applicants are advised not to commit to taking up a post until they are registered. Medical practitioners intending to practise medicine within the State should ensure that they apply well in advance of taking up employment. Applications are processed as promptly as possible once the applicant has strictly adhered to the application requirements and submitted a complete application.

## **4. RECOGNISED BASIC MEDICAL QUALIFICATIONS**

### 4.1 **Graduates of EU/EEA/Swiss Medical Schools**

Under the Directive, the Medical Council currently recognises formal medical qualifications awarded within the EU/EEA/Switzerland listed in the Directive. Medical practitioners who were awarded their basic medical qualification prior to the "reference date" in the Directive may be required to provide a Certificate from the competent authority confirming that their basic/formal medical qualification and training comply with Article 24 and Annex V, V.1, 5.1.1 of the Directive.

### 4.2 **Graduates of Third Country Medical Schools (outside the EU/EEA/Switzerland)**

The Medical Council currently recognises basic medical qualifications which are at least the equivalent of a basic medical qualification awarded within the State. In general, the Medical Council recognises basic medical qualifications awarded by schools listed in the current

edition of the World Health Organisation ("WHO" or "AVICENNA") Directory of Medical Schools and/or the Foundation for Advancement of International Medical Education and Research ("FAIMER") International Medical Education Directory ("IMED").

## **5. ENGLISH LANGUAGE REQUIREMENT**

Applicants for Visiting EEA registration are exempt from any English language test requirement. However, the Medical Council strongly urges all applicants for whom English is not their first language to attempt the Academic International English Language Testing System (IELTS) to ensure that they have sufficient language skills to practise medicine in Ireland. Applicants should note that they may be required by employers or agencies to meet certain English language requirements.

## **6. MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS WITH A RELEVANT MEDICAL DISABILITY**

Under section 53 of the Act, applicants for registration are obliged to declare on application if they have/had any relevant medical disability. A "relevant medical disability" means a physical or mental disability (including addiction to alcohol or drugs) which may impair the medical practitioner's ability to practise medicine or a particular aspect thereof. Any applicant who indicates that they have a relevant medical disability should request their treating doctor to submit directly a recently-dated report, giving a history of the applicant's condition(s) and expressing their opinion as to whether or not the applicant is fit to practise medicine. The applicant may also be required to attend an independent medical practitioner of the Medical Council's choice, for an assessment of their condition(s). The Medical Council may decide that it is appropriate to only grant registration to the applicant subject to certain conditions. In such circumstances, the applicant will be requested to agree, in writing, to the attachment of the proposed conditions to their registration. If the applicant agrees, they will be subject to the provisions of section 43(6) of the Act regarding entry of those conditions on the Register. If the applicant does not agree to the attachment of the proposed conditions, the Medical Council may decide to refuse to register the applicant. [See paragraph 8 "Refusing Registration".]

## **7. LIMITATIONS OF VISITING EEA REGISTRATION**

Visiting EEA registration does not permit the practice of medicine outside of the specific service stated on the Certificate of Registration. Visiting EEA registration permits the prescribing of drugs only for those patients of the clinical site/health service setting in which the medical practitioner is employed. If a medical practitioner wishes to establish themselves as a medical practitioner in Ireland, they must apply for registration in another appropriate Division of the Register. Visiting EEA practitioners are subject to the Medical Council's rules and disciplinary provisions when practising medicine in the Republic of Ireland. The Medical Council would like to draw the visiting EEA practitioner's attention to *A Guide to Professional Conduct and Ethics – 7<sup>th</sup> Edition 2009* and, in particular, to Section B "Responsibility to Patients".

## **8. REFUSING REGISTRATION**

- 8.1 If an applicant is refused registration in the first instance, they may request in writing that the decision be reviewed prior to a final decision being made on their application. The request must state the grounds for a review of the decision. If, following review, the Medical Council decides to endorse the original decision to refuse the applicant registration, the provisions of section 54 of the Act will apply and the applicant may appeal to the Court against the decision.
- 8.2 Applicants who fail to submit a complete application for registration within a reasonable time period will be declared **invalid** and are not considered to have been refused registration in the first instance. The review process under Registration Rules 2010 does not apply in such circumstances, as they may re-submit an application for registration at any time.

## **9. PROFESSIONAL INDEMNITY INSURANCE**

Employing authorities require registered medical practitioners to hold professional indemnity insurance. Medical practitioners should ensure that they have adequate professional indemnity cover prior to engaging in the practise of medicine within the State (see paragraph 50 of the Medical Council's current *Guide to Professional Conduct and Ethics*). The Medical Council cannot advise medical practitioners on how/where to obtain professional indemnity insurance cover.

## **10. ANNUAL REGISTRATION PROCESS / MAINTAINING REGISTRATION**

10.1 The registration year runs from 1<sup>st</sup> July to 30<sup>th</sup> June. Medical practitioners may only be granted registration for the remainder of the current registration year. Their Certificate of Registration will expire on 30<sup>th</sup> June, following which they are required to complete a new Declaration form.

### **10.2 Change of Address or other Registration Details**

Medical practitioners may at any time while registered apply to change their registered address or any other details. Where a medical practitioner wishes to change their registered name, they are required to provide a notarised copy of their State Marriage Certificate or a Deed Poll as evidence that they may legally use the changed name. Any application for a change of registration details, including address, should be made in writing by post, fax, email or online, quoting their registered name, registration number, current registered address, date of birth and mother's maiden/birth name [surname prior to marriage] (for security reasons).

## **11. REGISTRATION IN OTHER DIVISIONS OF THE REGISTER**

If a medical practitioner wishes to establish themselves as a medical practitioner in Ireland, they must apply for registration in the appropriate Division of the Register. [*See other Guide and Registration Rules.*]

## **12. REGISTRATION OVERSEAS**

A medical practitioner can, if eligible, be registered in the Visiting EEA Practitioners Division while practising medicine and/or undertaking training outside the State, but they should inform the Medical Council, in writing, of any material matter which would be likely to affect the continuation of their registration.

## **13. INFORMATION FOR EMPLOYERS**

### **13.1 Employing Registered Medical Practitioners**

Employers should ensure that all medical practitioners hold current and appropriate registration with the Medical Council prior to allowing the medical practitioner commence employment. Medical practitioners should present to their employer (or authorised agent) a **Certificate of Registration** valid for the current registration period. The employer (or authorised agent) should record the registration status of all medical practitioners employed by them at least for the duration of the medical practitioner's employment.

### **13.2 Visas and Work Permits**

The Medical Council does not request visas or work permits as part of the registration process. It is the responsibility of every employer to ensure that each and every medical practitioner they employ holds the appropriate **visa/permit** for the purposes of practising medicine within the State.

### 13.3 **English Language Proficiency**

Under EU freedom of movement legislation, the Medical Council is not entitled to require evidence of English language proficiency from EU citizens, established in another member state, moving to Ireland to practise medicine. Employers should satisfy themselves that all medical practitioners employed by them have sufficient English language skills to perform their duties and communicate effectively with patients and colleagues. Paragraph 12.1 of the Medical Council's Guide to Professional Conduct and Ethics states: "If you do not have the professional **or language skills**....you **must** refer the patient to a colleague who can meet those requirements." If an employer finds that a registered medical practitioner does not have sufficient English language skills to practise medicine, they should make a formal complaint to the Medical Council. It may be considered professional misconduct if a medical practitioner is unable to communicate effectively with their patients and colleagues.

### 13.4 **Employing Medical Practitioners for Temporary and/or Occasional Services**

Employers of visiting EEA medical practitioners are requested to provide information about the service to be provided, including location, specific dates and type of service to be provided. Where retrospective registration is being sought, they are also requested to confirm, where applicable, that the service was provided in an emergency.

**This Guide may be subject to amendment/changes in whole or in part at any time at the discretion of the Medical Council. This guide does not constitute an offer or guarantee of registration.**

## **USEFUL LINKS**

### **Legislation**

Medical Practitioners Act 2007

[http://www.medicalcouncil.ie/fileupload/news/Medical\\_Practitioners\\_Act\\_2007\\_2372007131752\[1\].pdf](http://www.medicalcouncil.ie/fileupload/news/Medical_Practitioners_Act_2007_2372007131752[1].pdf)

Health (Miscellaneous Provisions Act) 2007

[http://www.medicalcouncil.ie/fileupload/news/Health\\_Miscellaneous\\_Provisions\\_Act\\_2007\\_262200811758.pdf](http://www.medicalcouncil.ie/fileupload/news/Health_Miscellaneous_Provisions_Act_2007_262200811758.pdf)

EU Directive 2005/36/EC

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2005:255:0022:0142:EN:PDF>

EU Directive 2006/100/EC

[http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/oj/2006/l\\_363/l\\_36320061220en01410237.pdf](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/oj/2006/l_363/l_36320061220en01410237.pdf)

### **From the Medical Council's website**

Visiting EEA Registration <http://www.medicalcouncil.ie/registration/temporaryreg.asp>

WHO Directory of Medical Schools <http://www.who.int/hrh/wdms/en/index.html>

AVICENNA Directory <http://avicenna.ku.dk/>

FAIMER's IMED <https://imed.faimer.org/>

**APPENDIX A – ELIGIBILITY MAP FOR VISITING EEA REGISTRATION**

**TO FOLLOW**

**APPENDIX B – REQUIRED STANDARD DOCUMENTATION TO BE SUBMITTED WITH AN APPLICATION FOR VISITING EEA REGISTRATION**

<b>DOCUMENTATION</b> (SEE GUIDE FOR REQUIRED FORMAT)
Sworn Declaration <b>Form VEEA1</b> with 1 x recent colour passport-sized photograph and evidence of professional indemnity insurance attached
Notarised/attested copy current EU Passport
Original Certificates of Current Professional Status / Good Standing sent directly from relevant competent authority/ies; <b>and</b> Sworn Declaration re any periods of unregistered practice (if applicable).
Current Certificate of Full Registration with the relevant competent authority in another jurisdiction (if your CCPS/COGS from another EU member state does not clearly indicate your full registration status)
Notarised/attested copy basic (primary) medical degree (if your CCPS/COGS does not clearly display your bmq)
EU Certification (normally required if your bmq was awarded prior to the reference date in EU Directive 2005/36/EC.)
Notarised/attested evidence of Higher Qualifications (if any) (where applicable, e.g. where providing specialist medical services)