



Comhairle na nDochtúirí Leighis
Medical Council



Report on the Inspection of Ballymun GP

13th December 2023



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About the Medical Council

The Medical Council's remit is patient safety, and the Medical Council is the regulatory body for doctors in Ireland. The Council is comprised of 25 members (13 non-medical and 12 medical members). The Council maintains the Register of Medical Practitioners - the Register of all doctors who are legally permitted to carry out medical work in Ireland.

The Medical Council has a statutory role in protecting the public by promoting the highest professional standards amongst doctors practising in the Republic of Ireland. The Council sets the standards for medical education and training in Ireland. It oversees lifelong learning and skills development throughout doctors' professional careers through its professional competence requirements. It is charged with promoting good medical practice. The Medical Council is also where the public may make a complaint against a doctor.

Context for Intern Inspections

As part of the Medical Council's regulatory and quality assurance role, the Council sets and monitors adherence to standards for education and training as set out in Medical Practitioners Act 2007.

For Intern clinic training sites, the standards for education and training are set out in the [Standards for Training and Experience Required for the Granting of a Certificate of Experience to an Intern](#). These standards have been drawn up in fulfilment of the Medical Council's responsibilities under Part 10 of the Medical Practitioners Act 2007, to specify and publish in the prescribed manner, the standards for training and experience for interns which is required for the granting of a certificate of experience (section 88 (3) (d)).

The Council monitors compliance and adherence to these standards via site inspections and monitoring processes.





INSPECTION REPORT – BALLYMUN GP

Date of Inspection: 13th December 2023
Location: Ballymun GP, First Floor, Ballymun Civic Centre, Ballymun, D09C8P5

Inspection Team Details

Assessor Team: Prof Mary O’Sullivan (Chair)
Dr Ailis Ní Riain

Executive support: Ms Sarah Jane Bowen Inspections Manager
Ms Faye Mangan Quality Improvement Executive

Inspection considerations and decision-making process:

The assessor team took into account all documentation submitted by Ballymun GP, the self-evaluation form and supporting documentation received prior to the visit; and the information and explanations provided by the supervisors and trainers at each site and the information provided by the Intern interviewed on site, when assessing the clinical training site’s compliance with Medical Council Standards for Training and Experience Required for the Granting of a Certificate of Experience to an Intern.

A level of compliance will be applied to each standard based on documentation reviewed as mentioned above, information gathered from interviews and the facilities walk. The varying levels of compliance that can be allocated to each standard are highlighted below.

Recommendation and Commendations can be offered based on the compliance rating and any general observations by the Team following the inspection visit.

Level of Compliance for each Standard can be rated as:

Non- compliance (NC)



Partial compliance (PC)



Full compliance (FC)





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Standard 1: Rotations

Which category of interns did you meet?

Surgery in general	☐	Medicine in general	☐	Emergency Medicine	☐
General Practice	☒	Obstetrics & Gynaecology	☐	Paediatrics	☐
Anaesthesia	☐	Radiology	☐	Psychiatry	☐

Duration of Rotation: 3 months

Criteria	FC/ PC /NC
1. Training and experience must comply with the Medical Council's policy on length of internship and approved rotations; that is, a minimum of a total of twelve months, which should normally be consecutive, of which at least three months must be spent in Medicine in general and at least three months in Surgery in general.	FC
2. As part of this twelve-month period, an intern may also be employed for not less than two months and not more than four months in the following specialties: Emergency Medicine; General Practice; Obstetrics and Gynaecology; Paediatrics; Psychiatry; Anaesthesia (to include perioperative medicine) and Radiology.	FC
Assessor Comments Ballymun GP was found to be fully compliant in all areas relating to Standard 1 – Rotations. 1. The visiting assessor team noted that the current intern's GP rotation was for 3 months at Ballymun GP. Due to staffing, this is the final intern that Ballymun GP will be taking in this intern year. The practice will endeavour to provide interns with rotations at this site in the future once the appropriate level of supervision can again be provided for the interns. 2. The intern rotation falls within the General Practice speciality. Recommendations - Based on full compliance, there are no recommendations for Ballymun GP on Standard 1. Commendations - There are no commendations for this standard.	



Standard 2: Accreditation

Criteria	FC/ PC /NC
1. The training site must be affiliated with a Medical School and/or a PGTB/network and/ or health system which is accredited by the relevant regulator. The responsible body for organising, coordinating, managing, and assessing the training setting and the training process on the site must be clearly identified.	FC
Assessor Comments Ballymun GP was found to be fully compliant in all areas relating to Standard 2 – Accreditation. The site is associated with the Royal College of Surgeons, Dublin/Northeast Intern Network.	
Recommendations Based on full compliance, there are no recommendations for Ballymun GP on Standard 2.	
Commendations There are no commendations for this standard.	

Standard 3: Content of Training

Criteria	FC/ PC /NC
1. Practice – based training involving the intern’s personal participation, at an appropriate level, in the service and responsibilities of patient-care activity, in the training institution.	FC
2. Personal participation at a level (not acting “above grade”) appropriate to an intern’s growing competence (including not being asked to undertake clinical activities above their level of competence)	FC
3. Regular opportunities for the intern to exercise responsibility and clinical decision-making appropriate to their growing competency, skills, knowledge and experience.	FC
4. Regular opportunities to work as an integral part of a team with a variety of disciplinary backgrounds.	FC
5. Regular, pre-arranged/ scheduled formal education and training sessions.	FC
6. Evidence that the content of training and syllabus / curriculum is consistent with the eight domains of good professional practice as adopted by the Medical Council.	FC
7. Does this site provide training delivered in an integrated manner to include theoretical learning and practical training during service delivery?	FC
Assessor Comments: Ballymun GP was found to be fully compliant in all areas relating to Standard 3 – Content of Training.	



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1. Following conversations with both the intern and their supervisor it was clear that personal participation of the intern at the GP practice was at the appropriate level, in terms of service and responsibilities for patient-care activity. The intern felt well supported from the start of their rotation. They were welcomed into the practice and given support throughout.
2. The intern at this site advised they act at a grade appropriate to their growing competence and this was supported by her supervisor's comments on capabilities and progress.
3. The intern advised the assessor team that they feel they are progressing well. They began their rotation with a 2-week induction at the practice, sitting with the staff at Front of House to learn the computer system, how to manage post, and how the practice is managed. The intern then shadowed the GPs at the practice and observed the different styles of communication with patients and relationship building. At the time of inspection, the intern was seeing patients alone and all cases/treatment plans are discussed with the supervisor for final sign off. The intern is also responsible for the post one day a week, and codes the incoming letters. The intern also discusses which letters are to be actioned and how with the supervisor. On Wednesdays, the intern is responsible for reviewing the patient results, and communicates these with the patients via phone call.
4. The intern on-site advised that they shadow the doctors at the practice and has frequent interactions with the GP Registrar. The intern also interacts with Front of House staff, and the supervisor advised the assessor team that they promote this engagement. The intern has also spent time with the community nurse and attended most of the multi-disciplinary team meetings. Ballymun GP is in a primary care centre, where a physiotherapist, speech and language therapist, dentist, etc can also be found. The assessor team suggest that the intern is given the opportunity to observe the full scope of this primary care team and spend time with some of these health disciplines and how they support patients. This would enhance the interns experience of working as an integral part of a team with a variety of disciplinary backgrounds.
5. The intern and supervisor stated there are regular education and training sessions with protected teaching and study time, with the intern attending online lectures as well as lectures on-site at Beaumont Hospital. There is invaluable daily and weekly informal learning also occurring due to the nature of the supervisory relationship in place for the intern.
6. There was some evidence that the content of training and curriculum is consistent with the Eight Domains of Good Professional Practice. The assessor team suggest that the supervisor on-site engages with the Intern Network Co-ordinator to discuss formalising the curriculum for intern training with this network.
7. Theoretical learning and practical training during service delivery happens on an on-going basis. The supervisor and the other GPs on-site have case-based discussions with the intern to widen the intern's clinical experience and exposure.

Recommendations

- Based on full compliance, there are no recommendations for Ballymun GP on Standard 3.

Commendations

- The assessor team would like to commend the supervisor at Ballymun GP on taking the initiative to engage with the Intern Faculty Co-ordinator regarding the appropriate level of support and work to expect at intern level. The assessor team would also like to commend the development of a personalised induction programme by the supervisor. This was much appreciated by the intern.



Standard 4: Supervision

Criteria	FC/ PC /NC
1. There must be effective overarching supervision of the intern's training and clinical practice by an identified clinician(s) of appropriately senior level, normally a specialist doctor who is recognised as a specialist by the relevant regulatory authority of the host country.	FC
Assessor Comments: Ballymun GP was found to be fully compliant in all areas relating to Standard 4 – Supervision. 1. It was felt that the intern at Ballymun GP is adequately supervised, with overarching supervision from the supervisor on-site, as well as day-to-day supervision from other senior doctors at the practice. It was also noted that patient management and treatment plans are signed off by the supervisor. Recommendations - Based on full compliance, there are no recommendations for Ballymun GP on Standard 4. Commendations - There are no commendations for this standard.	

Standard 5: Assessment

Criteria	FC/ PC /NC
1. There must be evidence of regular and constructive feedback and assessment by the supervisor/trainer who has knowledge of the intern's development and performance and can verify their satisfactory progress.	FC
2. The supervisor/trainer must meet any requirements set by the Medical Council regarding the policy and process of final assessment and sign-off.	FC
Assessor Comments: Ballymun GP was found to be fully compliant in all areas relating to Standard 5 – Assessment. 1. It was felt that the intern at Ballymun GP is adequately assessed, with regular and constructive feedback and assessment from the supervisor. It was noted that the supervisor was provided with no formal training on how to assess or give feedback. Such training/modelling of feedback would be hugely beneficial to the supervisor and the intern noted that a mid-way structured assessment (potential to use the formal sign off form) allowing the intern and the supervisor to discuss strengths and areas for improvement for second part of the placement. The assessor team suggest that the site engages with the Intern Network Co-ordinator in this regard. 2. The supervisor and the intern are aware that there is a formal sign-off process, and this has been provided to the supervisor by the Intern Network Co-ordinator.	



Recommendations

- Based on full compliance, there are no recommendations for Ballymun GP on Standard 5.

Commendations

- There are no commendations for this standard.

Standard 6: Professionalism

Criteria	FC/PC/NC
1. The training environment must emphasise professionalism and the development and maintenance of the relevant knowledge, skills, attitude, and behaviour, including communication skills, integrity, compassion, honesty, adherence to professional codes, respect for patients and their families, colleagues, and self-care.	FC
2. The intern must be aware of, and comply with, the Medical Council's "Guide to Professional Conduct and Ethics for Registered Medical Practitioners", and the training should support these ethical standards.	FC
Assessor Comments: Ballymun GP was found to be fully compliant in all areas relating to Standard 6 – Professionalism. 1. The supervisor on-site at Ballymun GP advised that tutorials around Professionalism happen organically and this is not formalised. Recommendations ▪ Based on full compliance, there are no recommendations for Ballymun GP on Standard 6. Commendations ▪ There are no commendations for this standard.	

Standard 7: Resources for Interns

Criteria	FC/PC/NC
1. Access to a sufficient number of patients and case mix so as to provide exposure to a broad range of clinical cases appropriate to the rotation.	FC
2. Space and opportunity for private study and access to a library with adequate and up to date books and journals, including on-line access to standard library databases for journal access and literature searches.	FC
3. The number of interns on a site should be appropriate to the resources of that site, including its staffing at all levels while at the same time having due regard for patient care and comfort.	FC
4. The training site must emphasise the primacy of patient safety, and interns must be encouraged to raise concerns about ethical issues, should they arise,	FC



with their mentor, clinical supervisor and/or the hospital authorities. The intern must have access to appropriate advice and counselling should it be required.

Assessor Comments:

Ballymun GP was found to be fully compliant in all areas relating to Standard 7 – Resources for Interns.

1. The intern has a sufficient case-mix and is assigned patients from the practice partners.
2. The intern has appropriate space and opportunity for private study.
3. There was one intern on-site at the time of the inspection, and as detailed in Standard 1, this is the final intern rotating through this site for the 2023/2024 intern year. There is an appropriate level of resources for the site to provide safe patient care.
4. The intern was aware of whom to reach out to for any cause for concern. In the first instance it would be their supervisor, or another member of staff at the practice. Should an issue occur with a doctor at the practice, the intern advised they would contact the Faculty Co-Ordinator at the Intern Network.

Recommendations

- Based on full compliance, there are no recommendations for Ballymun GP on Standard 7.

Commendations

- There are no commendations for this standard.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS FOLLOWING DOCUMENTATION AND THE INSPECTION VISIT.

General observations:

Ballymun GP is an urban primary care centre, with three partners (two whole time equivalents) with a fourth partner on maternity leave. There is also a GP Registrar at the practice. In terms of administrative staff, there is one practice manager, six reception/ administrative staff (4.5 whole time equivalent). Also located in the primary care centre is a dental service, social care service, speech and language therapy, a physiotherapist, Public Health Nurse and Child and Adult Mental Health Services.

Due to staffing, this is the final intern that Ballymun GP will be taking in this intern year. The practice will endeavour to provide interns with rotations at this site in the future once the appropriate level of supervision can again be provided for the interns.

Recommendations:

Based on full compliance with all standards, there are no recommendations.

Commendations:

Standard 3: Content of Training

- The assessor team would like to commend the supervisor at Ballymun GP on taking the initiative to engage with the Intern Faculty Co-ordinator regarding the appropriate level of support and work to expect at intern level. The assessor team would also like to commend the development of a personalised induction programme by the supervisor. This was much appreciated by the intern.



DECLARATION

The Clinical Site at Ballymun GP on 13th December 2023 for the purposes of:

- Satisfying the Council that Ballymun GP setting meets acceptable intern training standards. (49 (3)(b)) MPA 2007
- Monitoring adherence to guidelines on medical education and training for interns and standards for training and experience required for the granting of a certificate of experience. (88(3)(e)) MPA 2007

It is recommended that Ballymun GP, First Floor, Ballymun Civic Centre, Ballymun, D09C8P5

Be approved by the Council as the site:

- Is compliant with the standards for training and experience required for the granting of a certificate of experience to an Intern.
 - Adheres to the relevant Guidelines on Medical Education and Training for Interns
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