



Advice for Retired Doctors (no longer in active clinical practice)

Professional Competence Requirements

The [Medical Council](#) has agreed that retired medical practitioners will be subject to the same professional competence requirements as all other practising doctors. This means that any retired doctor wishing to retain registration for the purpose of practising medicine will be obliged to fulfil their statutory duty to maintain professional competence.

Once a doctor is on the Medical Council register they have an obligation to maintain a minimum level of competence the same as any other licensed doctor, regardless of whether they are practicing or not. Retired doctors who are unwilling or unable to engage in a professional competence scheme will be advised to voluntarily withdraw from the Register.

Challenges facing retired doctors

Retired doctors can usually achieve personal learning credits and external credits in the same way as doctors who are practising full-time. However, for some doctors getting out to meetings can be difficult, especially depending on where they are based in the country. Completing online eLearning modules or engaging in live webinars may be good options if access is a problem. There are several [eLearning modules](#) available on the ICGP website and our series of webinars are available [here](#). For doctors who are not members of the ICGP, any eLearning module that has an assessment element can be recorded for external credits.

For doctors who are not comfortable with using computers, local libraries often run computer classes. [Age Action](#) also run computer tutorials as part of their [Getting Started](#) programme.

Commonly, it is internal credits and the audit that retired doctors have difficulty with. Internal credits and audit involve the doctor applying guidelines and theory to their practice so these requirements are difficult to fulfil if you are not involved in any work or position related to your role as a doctor. However, there are supports available and the suggestions should hopefully give you some ideas.

A good place to start is the [FAQ section](#) of our website where we have two pages of questions dedicated to 'Special Circumstances'. These cover a range of topics such as working overseas, maternity leave, locum GPs, retired GPs and GPs engaged in non-clinical work.

Audit:

An audit does not need to be a clinical audit. Rather, you should audit whatever activity you are currently engaged in. The following sample audits may be useful to adapt by GPs who are not practicing, are practicing on an occasional basis or who are engaged in non-clinical work:

[Acting as an ICGP Representative](#)

[Adapting an Audit for Different GP Working Circumstances](#)

[Writing/Updating a Clinical Care Guideline](#)

[Peer Observation of Teaching Sample Audit for Non-Clinical GP Teachers](#)

Internal Credits

- ICGP has created a 1 page guide to meeting your internal CPD requirement. Please click [here](#) to view this guide.
- You might consider joining a relevant committee as a means of keeping up to date with general practice issues and as a way to contribute the benefit of your experience. Committee meetings can be recorded for 1 CPD credit per meeting to a maximum of 6 credits per year.
- If you are teaching or acting in a professional advisory capacity, then the meetings, presentations or reviews that relate to that role can be recorded in the internal category.
- You could consider forming a Journal Club with other retired doctors. Articles read could be discussed, including how learning could be applied to real-life cases.
- Meetings to discuss medical legal cases
- You may be able to attend some grand rounds. You will need to get approval from the relevant person before attending.
- Guidelines for locum, sessional and out of hours GPs are available to view [here](#)

ICGP Retired GPs Discussion Group

There is a Retired GPs Discussion Group that meets once a month in the college. The group is formed of fully retired and part-retired GPs who meet to discuss general practice issues of particular interest to this group. Attendees can record the meetings for internal credits. The meetings also offer an opportunity to connect with other GPs in the same situation and share information. If you are thinking that you will have to withdraw from the register but would rather not do this, it may be worth coming to one of the meetings to explore if there are any other options that you may not have considered. If you are interested please email professionalcompetence@icgp.ie

ePortfolio Tutorial

If you use a computer for some functions but are not confident or would like to become more familiar with using the online ePortfolio, you are very welcome to come into the college for a one-on-one ePortfolio tutorial. The tutorial can cover whatever aspect you would like to learn about and it is an opportunity for you to ask any niggling queries you have about professional competence.

Still having difficulty?

If you are fully retired in that you no longer see patients and are not engaged in any activity that requires registration with the Medical Council and do not intend to do any medically related work in the foreseeable future, then it will be difficult to meet the Professional Competence requirements as set out by the Medical Council. If this is the case, you may wish to consider voluntary withdrawal from the Register. The current guidance furnished by the Medical Council can be found on the Medical Council website and it might be useful to contact the Medical Council Professional Competence Scheme section to discuss this: <http://www.medicalcouncil.ie/Information-for-Doctors/Professional-Competence/>

Note

If you are still involved in some form of clinical practice, you have a responsibility to keep your clinical skills up to date and the CPD you engage in should be relevant to your clinical work. For example, when carrying out an audit this should be based on your clinical practice, if possible. Some of your internal credits should be achieved through activities related to your work. External and personal learning credit activities should be pertinent to the work you are engaging in.