

Arrangements for the recruitment of assistants and partners and for payment of grants towards the cost of providing practice premises

Title: Arrangements for the recruitment of assistants and partners and for payment of grants towards the cost of providing practice premises

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From: Department of Health, Ireland

To: Chief Executive Officer, Each health board

I am directed by the Minister for Health to say that, following discussions with the Irish Medical Organisation, the changes detailed in this circular are to be implemented in respect of arrangements for the recruitment of assistants and partners and for payment of grants towards the cost of providing practice premises. These arrangements form part of the conditions approved under Section 26 of the Health Act, 1970 for the provision of services under Section 58 of that Act.

1. Selection Procedure for Partners and Assistants with a view to Partnership

Arising out of problems associated with the operation of a national panel of candidates for selection of assistants and partners, it has been agreed to revise the selection procedures as follows:

(a) Each Health Board shall now advertise a competition for the establishment of a panel in its own area from which principals may choose partners and assistants with a view for posts approved by health boards in the course of the following 12 months.

Doctors who hold the minimum qualifications for entry to the GMS specified in Circular 9/81 will be eligible for the competition.

(b) The interview board in each case will be composed of an independent chairman, a general practitioner, a medical officer of the health board and a member of the health board's management team. In view of the number of general practitioners who might be expected to apply, all candidates may not be called to interview.

(c) The interview board shall place in rank order all candidates who are found suitable. Following interviews, each health board other than the Eastern Health Board will place on its panel the final 20 candidates in rank order determined by the interview board. The Eastern Health Board will place the final 40 candidates in rank order on a panel. Names will appear on the panel in alphabetical order and the rank order of candidates on the panel will not be published or notified to principals.

(d) When an appointment is made to a GMS post during the life of a panel, the next suitable candidates (if any) in rank order determined by the interview board will thereupon be added to the panel by the health board in question. The intention is to ensure that, where possible, principals may have a reasonable choice of candidate and that applicants may have a reasonable opportunity to compete.

(e) Candidates will be asked to notify the health board in the event of their taking up a post in the GMS or another whole time post or otherwise ceasing to be available for appointment as a partner or assistant. Their place on the panel will, in such circumstances, be filled as in the case of appointments to a post of partner or assistant.

(f) These arrangements will be for a twelve month period only, commencing on 1 January 1987, during which the operation of the system and the process of selection of assistants and partners generally will be the subject of discussion with health boards and the Irish Medical Organisation.

(g) Inclusion in a panel for assistants and partners does not confer any entitlement to appointment.

2. Grants for Practice Premises

The level of practice premises grants for participating doctors in the GMS is revised as follows:

Single handed practitioner - 25% of cost up to maximum of £2,680.

Partnerships and Single handed practitioners in remote and rural areas - 37.5% of cost up to maximum of £3,940

Groups of three - 50% of cost up to maximum of £5,360 (increasing by £1,340 for each additional doctor over three in the group)

These grants will be paid in accordance with the relevant provision of appendix B to Circular 13/72.

J O'Rourke

Assistant Secretary

28 October 1986