

IMO FAQ on Public Health Medicine Agreement



IRISH MEDICAL
ORGANISATION
Ceardchumann Dochtúirí na hÉireann

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1. How many Consultant in Public Health Medicine Positions are being created?

Under the agreement a total of 84 posts will be created by December 2023 in the following phases:

- The first 34 posts are to be filled by June 2022.
- The second 30 posts are to be filled by June 2023.
- The final 20 posts are to be filled by December 2023.

2. What is the contract associated with these posts?

Consultants in Public Health Medicine will sign be offered the Common Consultant Contract which has been amended to incorporate a section on Public Health Medicine (Section 10A).

3. Is this the same contract that is offered to all other Consultants?

Yes, the common consultant contract has been amended and Public Health Consultants will be treated the same as any other speciality under this contract.

4. What if a new consultant contract is agreed to replace the Common Consultant Contract?

While Government have indicated their intention to introduce a new consultant contract it is important to note that NO negotiations on this issue have taken place. In the event of the introduction of any new consultant contract those Consultants in Public Health already appointed will switch to that contract and any future appointments will be offered that contract.

5. Are these new positions?

Yes, the 84 posts are new positions with new roles and responsibilities. It is anticipated that in line with Crowe Howarth, these positions will in the main be domain specific, with both national and regional positions. Some positions may have a national/regional split.

6. How do I apply for a Consultant Post?

The posts will be advertised and filled by open competition in line with the phasing in of consultant posts. You must be on the Specialist Register in Public Health Medicine or within 180 days of being on the Specialist Register to be eligible to apply.

7. Can I do private work under the Common Consultant Contract?

No. It has been agreed that public health consultants will not engage in private practice.

8. What is the salary rate associated with these positions and the contract?

The salary scale is set out below. For each completed year of service in the new positions you will move up one point on the scale

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
€143,846	€150,289	€158,806	€163,460	€170,440	€176,257	€183,237	€189,636	€199,566

9. Will all positions start at the same point on the scale?

No. The National Director Position and Regional Lead positions will commence on the third point of the scale. All others will commence on the first point of the scale.

10. Is there a review process in place?

Yes. Progress under the agreement will be reviewed with such review to be completed no later than February 2022 and a further review to be completed no later than February 2023. The review document is in your information pack and outlines the heading under which progress will be measured.

11. What are our obligations under the agreement?

Participation in the development of an appropriate out of hours/on call service in PHM is required and all cohorts will continue to provide an out of hours/on call service as required by the employer. All cohorts of staff will be required to co-operate with the roll out and implementation of the Future Public Health Model and undertake any duties and functions required to support this. There is a continuing requirement for all cohorts to provide training and development to trainees in Public Health Medicine.

There is a continuing requirement for all cohorts to perform other functions as may be determined in line with operational service requirements, including temporary re-assignment/redeployment to deliver health protection services for the duration of the current Covid-19 pandemic response.

There is agreement to continue to support the implementation of the Pandemic Workforce Plan in the first instance and the subsequent reallocation across other domains of public health practice. There is agreement to participate in and co-operate with the process to finalise the Model as a matter of priority.

12. Where will the first 34 positions be?

It is the remit of the HSE as employer to decide upon where initial positions will be, but it is anticipated that the initial positions will include the national director position, regional lead positions and positions in the health protection domain.

13. Will there be further recruitment of SPHMs?

There will be recruitment at SPHM level where vacancies arise during the implementation phase of the agreement. The agreement provides that such recruitment will be on a fixed term basis except in exceptional circumstances.

14. How will this impact on my pension entitlements?

You will remain on your existing pension scheme and you will not be treated as a new entrant for pension purposes provided that you do not have a break in service of greater than six months.

For those on a pre 2013 pension scheme, your pension entitlements are generally based on your retiring salary.

The HSE pension scheme rules define retiring salary as follows:

“Retiring salary” means the salary of the member at the date of retirement or death where—

(a) a member has had the same scale of salary and has been in the same grade for the last three years of his or her pensionable service, or

(b) a member who is under 62 years of age dies in service, or

(c) a member retires or is retired on medical grounds before 60 years of age with sufficient potential pensionable service to age 60 to avoid averaging;

(d) in the case of a member whose actual service and potential service to the end of his or her contract of employment is less than 1 year, the rate of salary multiplied by the number of days in the contract divided by 365.

In any other case retiring salary shall be taken as the total calculated by multiplying by 1/1095 the annual rate of salary appropriate on the last day of pensionable service for each grade in which the member served during the last three years of pensionable service, and multiplying the result by the number of days of his or her employment in each grade during those years, subject to the retiring

salary so taken not exceeding the annual basic rate of salary payable at the time of retirement or death. Where the pensionable service of the member is less than three years, the number of days of pensionable service shall be substituted for 1095.

In effect this will mean that if you are appointed as a Consultant, after 3 years in post this will be your salary for use for the purpose of your pension calculations. Otherwise, they will average your final 3 years to calculate your retiring salary.

15. What is the legal status of this agreement?

If ratified by the membership this will be an Industrial Relations agreement between the State and the IMO. In the event of a dispute over the operation of the agreement the IMO retain the standard industrial relations mechanisms open to the union including the WRC, Labour Court and direct talks.

16. In the event of a Yes vote for acceptance in the ballot what are the next steps?

The IMO will formally ratify the agreement and implementation of the agreement will commence.

17. In the event of a No vote for rejection in the ballot what are the next steps?

In the event that there is a No vote in the ballot the agreement will not be ratified and the SPHM grade will remain in place with no Consultant in Public Health Medicine position being established. There is no ability to recommence talks.