INFORMATION FOR RETIRED DOCTORS

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.

There are no special requirements for doctors working less than full-time, or on an occasional basis. Once registered with the Irish Medical Council, a doctor has the right to practise medicine. From the public perspective, the responsibility to maintain professional competence must apply to all doctors, regardless of their working arrangements. Therefore, all doctors on the register have a duty to maintain professional competence by enrolling in a professional competence scheme and engaging in maintenance of professional competence activities as defined by the IMC.

There are two scenarios for retired doctors:

(i) Fully retired in that the retired practitioner no longer sees patients and are not engaged in any activity that requires registration with the Medical Council

(ii) Occasionally see patients or are engaged in activities that require the practitioner to be registered with the Medical Council. Eg Teaching, tutoring, medico-legal work, professional advisor etc.

If the first scenario applies and a practitioner has completely retired from practice and does 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. For practitioners who this scenario applies to 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/

If the second scenario applies and a practitioner is involved in academic or medico-legal work, then the Medical Council state that retired practitioners will be obliged to fulfil their statutory duty to maintain professional competence. Therefore practitioners need to work within the current system to accumulate sufficient credits. The categories that cause the most difficulty for retired doctors are the Internal Category and Audit. There are retired doctors currently sitting on the Professional Development Committee/s. RCSI has held meetings with a number of retired doctors and we continue to work with retired doctors and the Medical Council in order to make it as easy as possible for registered medical practitioners to meet the requirements of the Medical Council.