



Report on the Inspection of Ardfert Medical Practice

2023



**Comhairle na nDoctúirí Leighis
Medical Council**



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 – ARDFERT MEDICAL PRACTICE

Date of Inspection: 22nd of August 2023.

Location: Ardfert Medical Practice, Farranwilliam, Ardfert, Tralee, Co Kerry.

Inspection Team

Assessor team: Mr Graham Knowles

Dr Andrew Gilliland

Executive support: Ms Denise Carroll (Head of Quality Assurance)

Ms Sarah Jane Bowen (Quality Assurance Manager – Inspections)

Ms Aoise O'Reilly (Quality Assurance Manager – Undergraduate)

Inspection Considerations and Decision-Making Process

The inspection findings and report directly align to the Standards for Training and Experience required for granting a Certificate of Experience to an Intern. The Team took into account documentation (the self-evaluation form and supporting documentation) submitted by Ardfert Medical Practice prior to the visit; insight provided by the supervisors/trainers and the Intern who were interviewed on site; and facilities walk through.

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

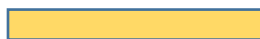
Recommendation and Commendations can be offered based on the compliance rating and any general observations by the Team following the inspection visit.

Level of Compliance for each Standard can be rated as:

Non- compliance (NC)



Partial compliance (PC)



Full compliance (FC)



Standard 1: Rotations

Which category of interns did you meet?

Surgery in general

☐

Medicine in general

☐

Emergency

☐

General Practice

☒

Obstetrics &
Gynaecology

☐

Paediatrics

☐

Anaesthesia

☐

Radiology

☐

Psychiatry

☐



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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 Ardfert Medical Practice was found to be fully compliant in all areas relating to Standard 1 – Rotations. 1. The visiting assessor team noted that the current Interns GP rotation was for 3 months Ardfert Medical Practice. The remaining Interns to have placements at this practice were also for a 3-month period. 2. The Intern rotation falls within the General Practice speciality.	
Recommendations There are no recommendations for this standard.	
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 Ardfert Medical Practice was found to be fully compliant in all areas relating to Standard 2 – Accreditation. Medical School associated with Ardfert Medical Practice is University College Cork. The Intern Network associated with Ardfert Medical Practice is the South Intern Network.	
Recommendations There are no recommendations for this standard.	
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 interns 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.	PC
7. Does this site provide training delivered in an integrated manner to include theoretical learning and practical training during service delivery?	FC

Assessor Comments:

Ardfert Medical Practice was found to be fully compliant in most areas relating to Standard 3 – Content of Training.

The Assessor team noted the following:

1. The intern at this site began their rotation with shadowing for 2 weeks, and now can see patients alone. The treatment plan is always agreed with the supervisor.
2. The intern advised that there have been times they feel Front of House staff have allocated them patients that were slightly above their competence level. The intern advised during these times they asked another doctor to join the consultation. This was happening during the adjustment period in the practice and has now been resolved. The intern is now operating at a level appropriate to their growing competence.
3. The intern has progressed to seeing patients alone and the treatment management plan is always discussed and signed off with the supervisor.
4. Ardfert Medical Practice is a practice where very acutely sick patients can present at any time, prior to presentation at the local emergency service. The intern at this site has the opportunity to shadow consultations with acutely sick patients and once referred to the local emergency service, can call to check-in on patients, referrals, etc.
5. The Intern has access to both formal and informal education training sessions. Formal tutorials are scheduled on a Tuesday and Friday morning at 8.10am. The intern also has Thursday afternoon as protected time to log onto scheduled Zoom study sessions with the University.
6. Upon speaking with both the intern and the supervisor on-site, it is evident there has been no standardised curriculum provided to them by the intern network and the supervisor would welcome this.



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7. Training at this site is delivered in an integrated manner with formal and informal teaching sessions, as well as shadowing and discussion of interesting cases.

Recommendations:

- It was noted that there was no evidence of a formal curriculum nor syllabus provided to the Intern Trainers. This does primarily lie outside the medical practice's control. It is however recommended that better collaboration between the South Intern Network Co-ordinator and the Trainers is facilitated by both parties.
- The Assessors will be writing separately to the Medical Council in this regard but encourage ongoing communication on any areas of uncertainty to ensure future full compliance.

Commendation:

- It was noted that the intern has good exposure to a diverse case mix with increasingly complex cases with patients who are seriously ill. The growing level of competency is noted as above. This practice is commended for their approach to having an intern on site and their clear dedication and commitment to the teaching experience.

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: Ardfert Medical Practice was found to be fully compliant to Standard 4 – Supervision. 1. It was felt that the Intern at Ardfert Medical Centre is adequately supervised, with overarching supervision from the supervisor on-site, as well as day-to-day supervision from other doctors at the practice. It was also noted that all patient management and treatment plans are signed off by the supervisor. Typically, the Intern would present the case and the suggested management plan. The supervisor and/or other doctors at the practice would discuss and amend or sign-off on the treatment plan. Any gaps of knowledge or missed points would be discussed so each situation is utilised as a learning experience. Recommendations ▪ Based on full compliance, there are no recommendations for Ardfert Medical Practice on Standard 4. Commendations ▪ There are no commendations for this standard.	



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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	PC
2. The supervisor/trainer must meet any requirements set by the Medical Council regarding the policy and process of final assessment and sign-off.	PC
Assessor Comments: Ardfert Medical Centre was found to be partially compliant to Standard 5 – Assessment. 2. Upon speaking with the supervisor at this site, it is evident that no final sign-off process has been provided, nor has there been a discussion with the intern network around this. The supervisor on-site would welcome this. Recommendations - It was noted that no official final sign-off process was given to the supervisor. It is recommended that Ardfert Medical Centre contact the South Intern Network Coordinator for guidance as a matter of urgency. The quality of feedback at regular intervals is noted as a positive and valuable insight for the Interns development and progression throughout their rotation. 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: Ardfert Medical Centre was found to be fully compliant to Standard 6 – Professionalism. 1. The training environment emphasises professionalism and ethical issues are dealt with on a case-by-case basis. As per the intern at Ardfert, they felt they could raise any specific ethical issues with the supervisor on-site and they felt this was received well. 2. The intern is aware of the Medical Council's "Guide to Professional Conduct and Ethics for Registered Medical Practitioners", and the training supports these ethical standards. Recommendations - Based on full compliance, there are no recommendations for Ardfert Medical Practice on Standard 6. Commendations - There are no commendations for this standard.	



Standard 7: Resources for Interns

Criteria	FC/PC/NC
The training site must have:	FC
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, with their mentor, clinical supervisor and/or the hospital authorities. The intern must have access to appropriate advice and counselling should it be required	FC
Assessor Comments: Ardfert Medical Centre was found to be fully compliant to Standard 7 – Resources for Interns. 1. The intern at this site has access to a very diverse case-mix, between seeing acutely unwell patients requiring emergency care, the acutely unwell requiring general practitioner care, phlebotomy, and the observation of suturing with the desire to begin suturing autonomously soon. 2. The Intern is allocated a room on a timetable basis, but always has access to a room for patient care and self-study. 3. There was only 1 intern on site at the time of inspection, and the remaining rotations will also see only 1 Intern at a time. There were appropriate resources for the site to provide good patient care and comfort. 4. There is an open-door policy, and the Intern can approach all staff regarding any cause for concern. The Intern has been advised of same. Recommendations ▪ Based on full compliance, there are no recommendations for Ardfert medical Practice on Standard 7. Commendations ▪ There are no commendations for this standard.	



SUMMARY OF FINDINGS FOLLOWING DOCUMENTATION AND THE INSPECTION VISIT.

General observations:

Ardfert Medical Practice is a rural practice made up of 5 doctors, 1 Intern and 1 GP trainee on site. There are numerous multi-disciplinary services housed in the one building: a dental practice (private and public); a pharmacist; a physiotherapist service; 2 nurses' rooms, HSE Psychologist; Hearing Aid Specialist; a speech therapist; a public health nurse; a community mental health nurse, etc. There is an accessible toilet on the ground floor and a lift for mobilisation to the second floor. On the day of the inspection, the team at Ardfert were welcoming and the atmosphere in the practice was positive. All doctors, the Intern on-site and front of house staff were very warm and accepting.

It was evident there was a lack of formal infrastructure and support for Intern trainers whereby guidance in delivering the training and assessment of Interns had not been provided centrally. It was noted there was no evidence of a formal curriculum nor syllabus provided to the Intern supervisors. Better collaboration between the Intern Network Co-ordinators and the supervisors would be welcomed.

The Assessors will be writing separately to the Medical Council in this regard.

It was clear that in Ardfert Medical Practice there was an experienced trainer, with vast expertise in training medical students and GP trainees.

The assessors also noted that the Intern advised that they are nervous about beginning her next rotation, which is hospital-based. The assessors feel it would be of benefit to the Intern to have some time shadowing the Intern who is currently in position in their next rotation.

Recommendations:

Standard 3- Content of Training

- It was noted that there was no evidence of a formal curriculum nor syllabus provided to the Intern Trainers. This does primarily lie outside the medical practice's control. It is however recommended that better collaboration between the South Intern Network Co-ordinator and the Trainers is facilitated by both parties.
- The Assessors will be writing separately to the Medical Council in this regard but encourage ongoing communication on any areas of uncertainty to ensure future full compliance.

Standard 5- Assessment

- It was noted that no official final sign-off process was given to the supervisor. It is recommended that Ardfert Medical Practice contact the South Intern Network Coordinator for guidance as a matter of urgency. The quality of feedback at regular intervals is noted as a positive and valuable insight for the Interns development and progression throughout their rotation.

Commendations:

Standard 3- Content of Training

It was noted by the assessors that the intern had exposure to a diverse case mix with increasingly complex cases who were seriously ill. The Interns growing level of competency is noted. This practice is commended for their approach to the teaching experience.



Declaration

The Clinical Site at Ardfert Medical Practice, Farranwilliam, Ardfert, Tralee, Co Kerry was inspected on 22nd August 2023 for the purposes of:

- Satisfying the Council that Ardfert Medical Practice 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 Ardfert Medical Practice, Farranwilliam, Ardfert, Tralee, Co Kerry be approved by the Council as the site:

- Is 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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