



Comhairle na
nDochtúirí Leighis
Medical Council

Applying for Registration: Are You Fit and Proper to Practise?

October 2025

Introduction

1. About the Medical Council

The Medical Council is the regulator of doctors in Ireland and maintains the Register of Medical Practitioners - the register of all doctors who can practise medicine in Ireland. Our role, functions, and powers are set out in the Medical Practitioners Act 2007 (the Act¹).

The Medical Council sets the standards for medical education and training in Ireland. It oversees lifelong learning throughout doctors' professional careers through its professional competence requirements. It is charged with promoting good medical practice. The Medical Council is also the body where the public may make a complaint against a doctor.

You can find out more about the Medical Council's work by visiting www.medicalcouncil.ie.



2. What does “Fit and Proper” Mean?

Being *fit and proper* to practise medicine involves two key elements:

“Fit” refers to:

- Your qualifications, knowledge, and professional experience.
- Your ability to practise safely and effectively.

“Proper” refers to:

- Your honesty, integrity, and trustworthiness.
- Your respect for professional and ethical standards.

These are assessed case by case, in line with the **Medical Practitioners Act 2007**.

¹ The 2007 Act has been amended by the Regulated Professions (Health and Social Care) (Amendment) Act 2020 and the Regulated Professions (Health and Social Care) (Amendment) Act 2023

3. Why the Medical Council Requests Information

The Medical Council may ask for details related to an applicant's health, character, or competence to assess their ability to practice medicine safely. This ensures that individuals granted registration are fit and proper to practise medicine and that appropriate safeguards are in place where necessary when risks have been identified.

When Must I Provide This Information?

These guidelines explain how we assess whether a doctor is a fit and proper person to practise medicine in Ireland. These guidelines are relevant to doctors who are:

- Applying for registration
- Renewing your registration
- Applying for restoration (e.g. after withdrawal or cancellation)

4. Your Responsibilities as an Applicant

You are personally responsible for:

- **Assessing your own fitness to practise**, including health and character.
- **Declaring any relevant matters**, such as legal issues, previous sanctions, or health conditions.
- **Providing supporting information** when required.

5. Key Declarations: Checklist for Applicants

Use this checklist to help you determine whether you need to make any declarations during your application.

A. Registration History

Have you ever:

- ☐ Had your registration, suspended, refused or cancelled in Ireland or elsewhere?
- ☐ Been refused registration or a licence to practise medicine?
- ☐ Practised under conditions or undertakings imposed by another regulator?

B. Legal History

Have you ever:

- ☐ Been convicted of a criminal offence, in Ireland or abroad (including driving offences, if serious)?
- ☐ Been subject to any investigation or proceedings by another professional body or employer?
- ☐ Been declared bankrupt or made an arrangement with creditors?

C. Health (Relevant Medical Disability)

Do you currently have—or have you previously had—a health condition that:

- ☐ Could impair your ability to practise medicine safely?
- ☐ Requires treatment, ongoing support, or adjustments to your practice?
- ☐ Includes mental health conditions or substance misuse (e.g. alcohol or drugs)?

If you ticked **yes** to any of the above, you will need to **disclose this information** and provide supporting documentation if requested. Not all disclosures result in refusal—many are manageable with appropriate insight and support.

6. Declaring a Health Condition (Relevant Medical Disability)

Under **Section 53(1) of the Medical Practitioners Act 2007**, you must declare any **relevant medical disability (RMD)**—a physical or mental condition, including addiction to alcohol or drugs, that **may impair** your ability to practise medicine safely. This includes:

- Conditions you currently have or previously had.
- Conditions under treatment or management.
- Conditions that may require adjustments in how or where you practise.

How Health Information Is Considered

Each case is reviewed individually, based on:

- The nature and seriousness of the condition.
- Whether it is managed effectively (e.g. through treatment, monitoring, or workplace adjustments).
- The doctor's insight, understanding, and compliance with medical advice.
- The presence of any risk to patient safety.

A diagnosis alone does not automatically prevent registration.

Confidentiality

All health information is treated with strict confidentiality and only used to assess your ability to practise safely, we do not make judgments about a person's overall health. Information is not shared beyond those directly involved in the decision-making process.

7. Character: Why It Matters in Medicine

Doctors hold a position of trust. Patients depend on your honesty, judgment, and professionalism. The Medical Council considers your **character** as a fundamental part of your suitability to practise. You must confirm you are of **good character** and declare any issues that may raise concern.

8. Character Assessment Factors

Convictions for serious offences (e.g., violence, dishonesty, sexual misconduct) may result in refusal of registration.

Each case is considered individually. No issue automatically leads to refusal, but the following factors will be considered:

- ☐ The seriousness and nature of any offences
- ☐ Whether there was a pattern of behaviour or repeated offences
- ☐ Time passed since any incident
- ☐ Evidence of rehabilitation and change in conduct
- ☐ The impact on public trust and safety
- ☐ The nature of your work (e.g. working with vulnerable people)

Applications **may be refused** where there is a conviction for:

- Violence or abuse
- Sexual misconduct
- Drug trafficking or serious drug offences
- Child pornography
- Fraud or dishonesty
- Any offence resulting in a prison sentence

These examples are not exhaustive.

9. Pending Matters and Prior Findings

Convictions or Findings

- Findings by courts or regulators are treated as final. The Council will not re-examine them but will consider whether they affect your ability to practise safely.

Ongoing Investigations

- If you are under active investigation, you are advised to **wait** until the matter is concluded before applying.

Driving Offences

- Drink or dangerous driving convictions are assessed case by case.
- You do **not** need to declare fixed-penalty motoring offences that didn't go to court.

10. Spent Convictions (Ireland & NI)

Some minor convictions become “spent” after 7 years. If a conviction is **legally spent**, you are not required to declare it. The Council:

- Will not consider legally spent convictions when assessing fitness to practise
- Will not penalise an applicant for failing to declare a spent conviction
- You are responsible for checking whether your conviction qualifies as spent

11. Skills and Knowledge

The Medical Council must be satisfied that you:

- Have recognised **medical qualifications**
- Have completed a **satisfactory internship**
- Are **proficient in English**
- Have relevant **experience or recent practice**

If there are concerns about outdated skills or gaps in practice, the Council may request:

- Updated references
- Evidence of recent CPD or re-entry to practice
- Additional assessments

Checklist: Are You Professionally Ready?

- ☐ Have your qualifications been verified?
- ☐ Has your internship or equivalent experience been completed?
- ☐ Is your knowledge current and up to date?

12. Falsification or Misrepresentation

The Medical Council takes **fraud or dishonesty** in applications extremely seriously.

Registration will be refused (or revoked) if:

- You submit false documents
- You make false declarations
- You misrepresent qualifications, history, or language test results

This is a **criminal offence** under Section 41 of the Medical Practitioners Act 2007 and may lead to:

- A fine
- Imprisonment
- Referral to An Garda Síochána or other regulators

13. Need Help?

If you're unsure whether to declare something or need guidance on your fitness to practise:

- Email: registration@mcirl.ie
- Visit: www.medicalcouncil.ie

Appendix - What Can I Do to Prepare?

Here is a preparation checklist to help ensure your application goes smoothly:

Application Preparation Checklist

- ☐ Review your registration history (in Ireland and abroad).
- ☐ Obtain a **Certificate of Good Standing** from previous regulators, if applicable.
- ☐ Collect any relevant documents (e.g. legal reports, medical letters, regulatory decisions).
- ☐ Be honest and thorough in your self-declaration.
- ☐ Seek support from a GP, occupational health, or a medical colleague if you have a health condition that may impact your practice.
- ☐ Contact the Medical Council in advance if unsure about what to declare.