

## **Appendix One: Sources of Funding for Higher Surgical Trainees in Ireland**

In Ireland, as the RCSI directly administers surgical training in Ireland, it receives funding from the HSE to provide surgical training. This includes covering the cost of the JCST fee and delivering the curriculum, including human factors and operative skills training days. However, other elements essential for CCT such as a leadership course, train the trainers course and good clinical practice are currently not directly provided. There are three funding streams available to trainees on higher specialist training, equivalent to the UK “study budget”- the current funding available to HST trainees are:

1. Mandatory Fund- this is provided by the HSE/NDTP and administered by RCSI. It provides funding of up to 1500 euros for approved mandatory courses while in full-time training in Ireland. This fund does not carry forward year on year and cannot be used if for example, on an overseas fellowship. However, its scope is limited as only approved mandatory courses are funded (1).
2. Specialist training fund- this is a fund of 500 euros per year, which accumulates over the course of HST. It can be used for course fees, equipment costs and books etc. It excludes time spent out of full time training, e.g. on an overseas fellowship (1).
3. There is an additional clinical courses and exams fund, where trainees can claim 450 euros for exams or courses on a definitive list of those deemed relevant to the speciality. This includes a narrow list, for example Advanced Trauma Life Support (ATLS). For exams undertaken outside of Ireland, 650 may be claimed. This is directly administered by the HSE/MET (2). The fund will only cover the cost once per trainee per examination.

At the time of this survey, many trainees would have spent time prior to commencing HST completing courses to make themselves competitive to apply for HST at considerable personal cost. In addition, the range of courses covered by the above list currently excludes many courses undertaken by trainees in their surgical training.

It is worth noting that the fund does not adequately cover the cost of courses. For example, the clinical course and examination refund scheme will cover ATLS if undertaken in Ireland. The current cost of ATLS is 875 euros, but the scheme will only cover 450 euros. This does not include travel and accommodation costs to regional centres to complete the course. Similarly, for membership and intercollegiate examinations, this fund does not fully cover the cost, and as these are often held in the UK there are additional travel and accommodation expenses.

#### References Appendix 1:

1. RCSI Training Funds for SpR Trainees. [http://rcsi.ie/files/surgery/docs/20161019040654\\_Funding-Information-2016.pdf](http://rcsi.ie/files/surgery/docs/20161019040654_Funding-Information-2016.pdf) Accessed 16th January 2017
2. HSE-National Doctors Training and Planning. Specialist Training Fund Guidance Document. July 2016.