

# Higher Specialist Training in Intensive Care Medicine

The National Intensive Care  
Medicine Training Programme in  
Ireland  
October 2024

## Introduction

Intensive Care Medicine (ICM) training in Ireland is a supra-speciality training programme. Doctors can only complete ICM training and apply for consultant posts in intensive care medicine if they are on the Specialist Division of the Medical Register (or in possession of a CSCST) in their base speciality. A mono-speciality ICM training programme does not currently exist in Ireland.

A CSCST in Intensive Care Medicine (ICM) is awarded by the Joint Faculty of Intensive Care Medicine (JFICMI) to those trainees who:

are on the Specialist Division of the Medical Register in Ireland in their base specialty  
*or*  
have a CSCST in their base specialty

*and have:*

1. completed 24 months higher specialist ICM training, in the context of a formal training scheme, in JFICMI-accredited training hospitals in Ireland
2. success at the Fellowship JFICMI examination
3. satisfied all criteria for completion of training (including clinical competencies, professionalism competencies, mandatory courses, research project, ICM logbook and in-training assessments)
4. a satisfactory exit interview from the National Training Programme

*Table 1: Criteria for the award of CSCST in Intensive Care Medicine from the JFICMI*

All ICM training posts for the National ICM Programme are filled through an annual recruitment strategy. All posts are advertised, interviewed and allocated by the Joint Faculty of Intensive Care Medicine of Ireland, in collaboration with the College of Anaesthesiologists of Ireland (CAI), the Royal College of Physicians in Ireland (RCPI) and the Royal College of Surgeons of Ireland (RCSI).

Doctors in their first year of ICM training may be required to apply and interview for their second year through the annual recruitment strategy. Progression to a year-2 post is not guaranteed and is subject to the criteria shown below.

All details of the training scheme, the curriculum and examination can be found at the Joint Faculty's website at <https://jficmi.anaesthesia.ie/>

For further details about training pathways and applications, please contact the Joint Faculty at [jficmi@coa.ie](mailto:jficmi@coa.ie) or the Chair of the Training Committee.

This document should be read in conjunction with the JFICMI Curriculum and Minimum Standards document, available at <https://jficmi.anaesthesia.ie/standards-and-documents/>

The following hospitals are recognised for training in intensive care medicine:

Beaumont Hospital, Dublin\*  
Cork University Hospital\*  
Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital Drogheda (2 Month module)  
Galway University Hospital\*  
Limerick University Hospital  
Mater Misericordiae University Hospital, Dublin\*  
Children's Health Ireland at Crumlin\*  
St James's Hospital, Dublin\*  
St Vincent's University Hospital, Dublin\*  
Tallaght University Hospital, Dublin  
Children's Health Ireland at Temple Street  
University Hospital Waterford

(\*Hospitals recognised for both year 1 and year 2 ICM training)

## Training pathways

### A. Higher Specialist Training in Intensive Care Medicine – Anaesthesiology Pathway

The Specialist Anaesthesiology Training programme run by the College of Anaesthesiologists of Ireland is currently unique amongst the postgraduate training body schemes in that training in intensive care medicine is a mandatory component of the programme and is a consistent element of training exposure throughout the 6 year scheme, including a minimum 18 months of ICM on-call scheduling (see figure 1).

The current curriculum for the anaesthesiology SAT programme includes a minimum of 6 months ICM training in 2-month modules. For trainees interested in broadening their postgraduate ICM experience, the opportunity exists to acquire more modules, providing that suitable modules are available in the JFICMI-accredited centres to which the trainee is allocated during the SAT programme.

<b>Specialty Modular Units:</b> <i>a longer period in a subspecialty or dual specialty area. This concerns four distinct disciplines</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Anaesthesiology and Analgesia for Obstetric Care (6 months with 6 months on call commitment)</li><li>- Anaesthesiology for Paediatric Surgery (6-month module)</li><li>- Intensive Care Medicine (3x2-month modules)</li><li>- Pain Medicine (2-month module)</li><li>- A further 2-month ICM module is awarded for 18 months of ICM on-call during the SAT programme</li></ul>	
<b>Out of Hours Rostering:</b>	
SAT 1-2	12-24 months Theatre on-call
SAT 2-5	18-24 months Intensive Care Medicine on-call One ICM 2-month module prior to commencing on-call and an ICM module each year of call
SAT 5-6	18 months Senior (3 <sup>rd</sup> ) on-call

Table 2: CAI Anaesthesiology SAT scheme requirements ICM

For anaesthesiology doctors interested in pursuing a career in ICM, the JFICMI offers 2 training grades in accredited ICM training posts:

1. *Clinical Fellow in Intensive Care Medicine* – this applies to trainees in Year 1 of dedicated full time Intensive Care training. During this period a trainee should develop clinical skills in ICM in a continuum of training of 6 months to one year in the context of a formal training scheme and should sit the JFICMI examination. An award of CSCST and/or entry on the Specialist Division of the Medical Register is *not* required to take up a clinical fellow post.

### **Recognition of CAI Anaesthesiology SAT scheme ICM training modules for Year 1 of ICM training:**

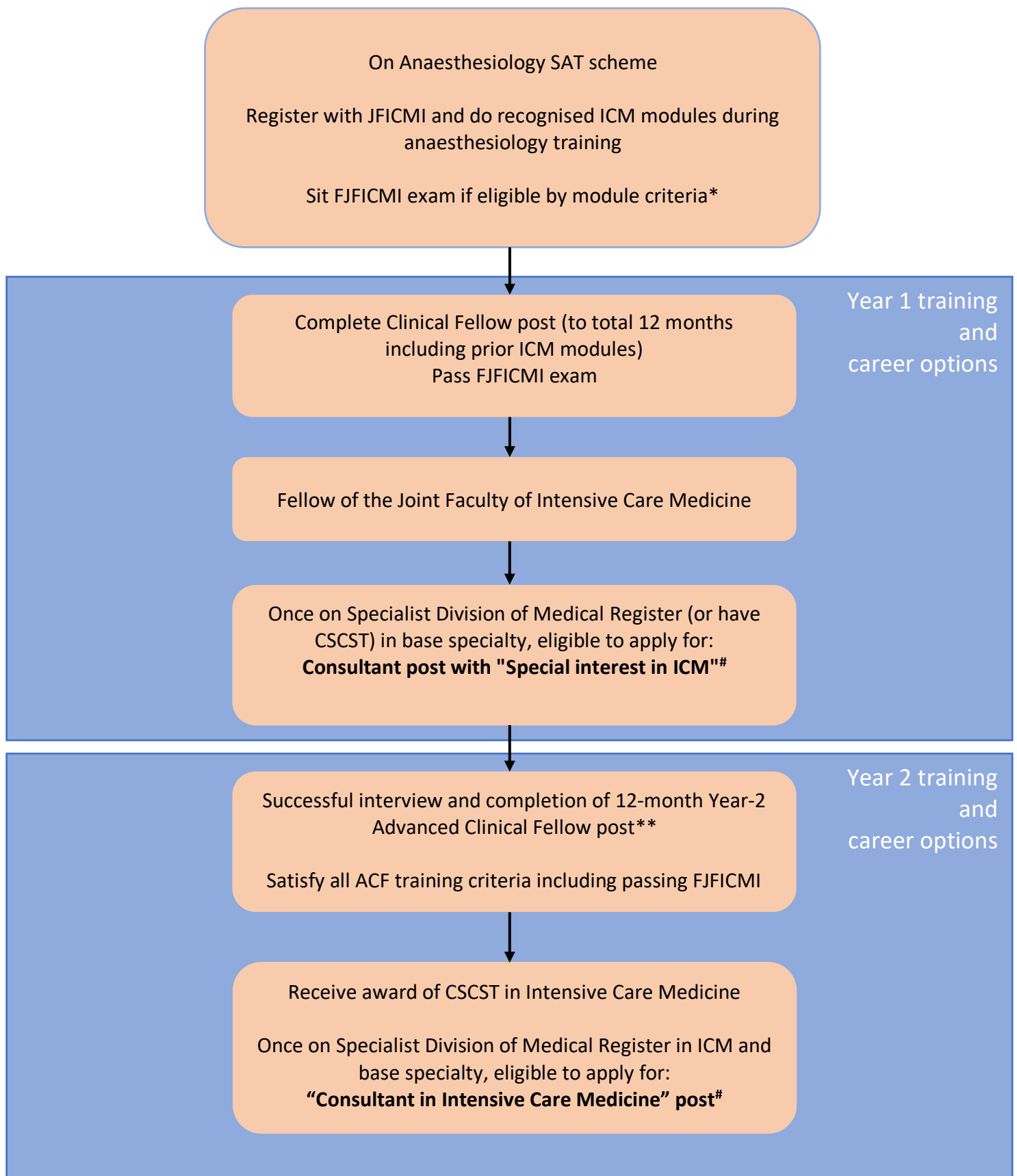
Up to 12 months of ICM modules can be submitted to the JFICMI for recognition of training. *At least 4 of these 12 months must be in the last 2 years of the SAT programme.* Where a trainee has not completed 12 months of recognised training within their SAT scheme, competitive entry to a post of JFICMI Clinical Fellow in Intensive Care Medicine in blocks of 6 months to one year affords the trainee the opportunity to complete one year of training and to sit the JFICMI Fellowship examination. The doctor at this stage will have CSCST (or equivalent) in Anaesthesiology plus at least one year ICM training and will have sat or passed the FJFICMI examination, and is therefore eligible to progress to an Advanced Clinical Fellow post in ICM (see figure 1) or apply for the post of “Consultant Anaesthesiologist with a Special interest in Intensive Care Medicine”.

### **SAT 7 Year:**

The SAT 7 year at the end of Anaesthesiology, Intensive Care and Pain Medicine training, where the candidate elects to apply for an intensive care medicine SAT 7 year, shall be deemed to be a Clinical Fellow or Advanced Clinical Fellow post depending on the duration of the trainee’s previous accredited modular training and whether the trainee has passed or sat the FJFICMI examination.

2. *Advanced Clinical Fellow in Intensive Care Medicine* – this applies to trainees in Year 2 of dedicated full time Intensive Care training in the context of a formal training scheme. During this period a trainee should develop advanced clinical skills in ICM in a continuum of training of up to one year and complete advanced training modules/special interests consistent with the HST programme and curriculum. Anaesthesiology trainees can only proceed to Year 2 of training if all the following criteria have been satisfied:
  - a. Holds an award of CSCST from an Irish Postgraduate Training body in their base specialty OR is eligible for an award of CSCST from an Irish Postgraduate Training body in their base specialty OR is listed on the Specialist Division of the Medical Council Register in their base specialty
  - b. A total of 12 months ICM completed in accredited ICUs in Ireland (with satisfactory in-training assessments) and at least 4 of these months in the last 2 years of SAT training
  - c. FJFICMI examination sat and/or passed

**Figure 1: Pathway for completion of higher specialist training in Intensive Care Medicine and Anaesthesiology (see Table 1 for full details)**



\*FJFICMI examination: see Examinations section on website regarding eligibility and the application process. The FJFICMI exam must be attempted within the first 12 months of recognised accredited JFICMI training. Trainees must have done a minimum of 8 months of ICM to apply to sit the exam. The examination rules allow that a candidate can progress into the advanced clinical fellow grade provided one attempt has been made at the examination.

\*\*Criteria for interview and entry into year-2 advanced clinical fellow post: a. Holds an award of CSCST from an Irish Postgraduate Training body in their base specialty OR Is eligible for an award of CSCST from an Irish Postgraduate Training body in their base specialty OR Is listed on the Specialist Division of the Medical Council Register in their base specialty) in anaesthesiology

b. A total of 12 months ICM completed in accredited ICUs in Ireland (with satisfactory in-training assessments) – for modular training, 4 of these months must be in the last 2 years of EM/Surgical training.

c. FJFICMI examination sat and/or passed

#Candidates interviewing for consultant posts have 180days to be in possession of CSCST or to be on Specialist Division of the Medical Register (see [www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie) for more information)

ACF=Advanced Clinical Fellow

## **B. Higher Specialist Training in Intensive Care Medicine – Internal Medicine Pathway**

Physician trainees interested in pursuing ICM training should register with the Joint Faculty of Intensive Care Medicine of Ireland. The JFICMI offers 2 training grades in accredited ICM training posts for physician trainees interested in ICM:

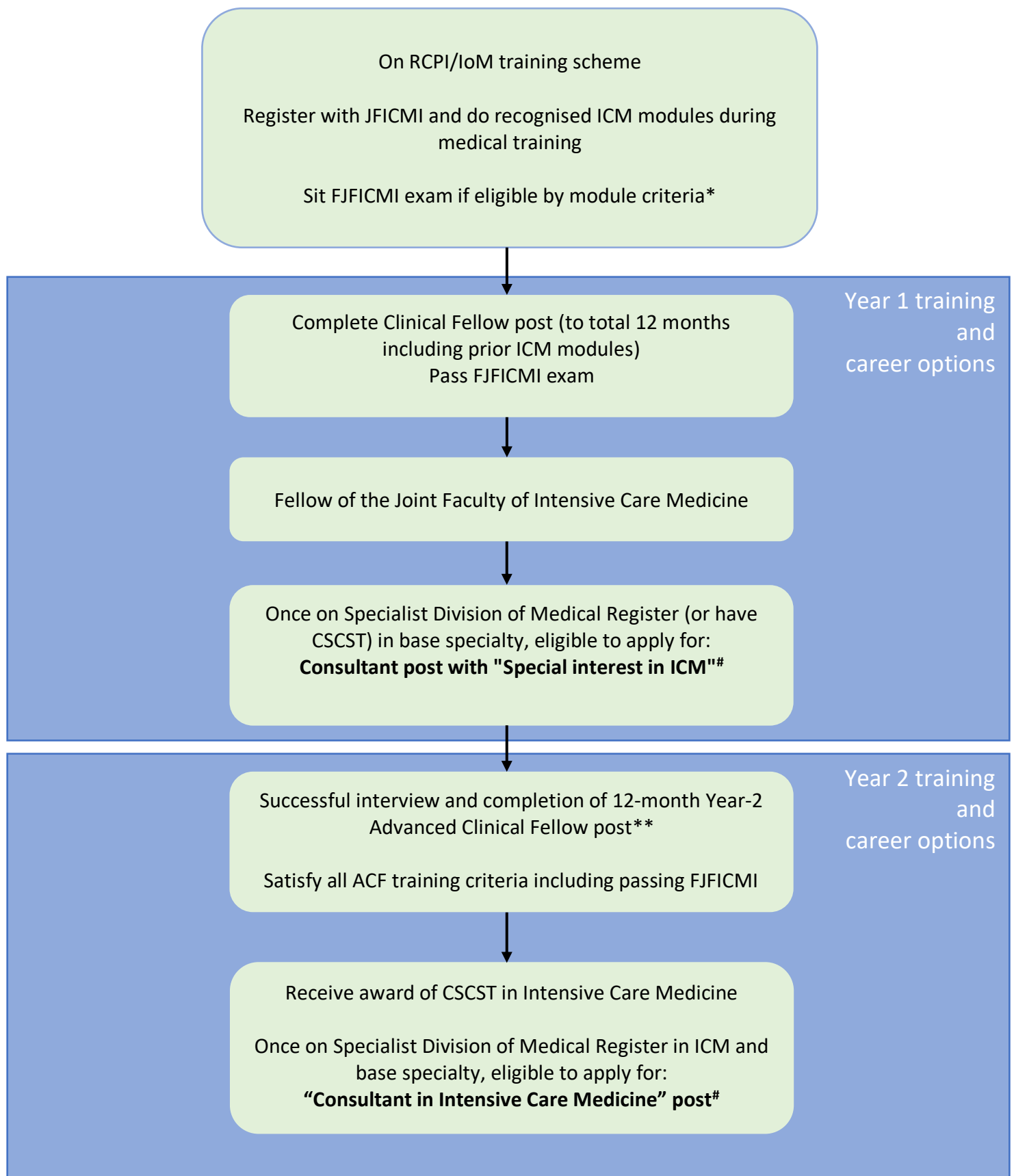
1. *Clinical Fellow in Intensive Care Medicine* – this applies to trainees in Year 1 of dedicated full time Intensive Care training. During this period a trainee should develop clinical skills in ICM in a continuum of training of a minimum of 2 months up to one year, in the context of a formal training scheme, and should sit the FJFICMI examination. In line with anaesthesiology training, a maximum of 2 months *without on-call duties* can be recognised for ICM training. An award of CSCST and/or entry on the Specialist Division of the Medical Register is *not* required to take up a clinical fellow post.

### **Recognition of RCPI Internal Medicine HST scheme ICM training modules for Year 1 of ICM training:**

Up to 12 months of ICM modules can be submitted to the JFICMI for recognition of training. These can be a combination of ICM modules during internal medicine training, at least 4 of which must be in the last 2 years of training. If a trainee has not completed 12 months of recognised training within an RCPI HST scheme, competitive entry to a post of JFICMI Clinical Fellow in Intensive Care Medicine in blocks of 6 months to one year affords the trainee the opportunity to complete one year of training and to sit the FJFICMI examination. On completion of this Clinical Fellow year, the doctor will have CSCST (or equivalent) in a recognised specialty of internal medicine plus at least one year ICM training. If they have also sat and/or passed the FJFICMI examination, they would therefore be eligible to apply either for an internal medicine consultant post with a special interest in ICM or for an Advanced Clinical Fellow post in ICM (see figure 2).

3. *Advanced Clinical Fellow in Intensive Care Medicine* - this applies to trainees in Year 2 of dedicated full time Intensive Care training. During this period a trainee should develop advanced clinical skills in ICM in a continuum of training of up to one year and advanced training modules / special interests consistent with the HST programme and curriculum. Physician trainees can only proceed to Year 2 of training if all the following criteria have been satisfied:
  - a. Holds an award of CSCST from an Irish Postgraduate Training body in their base specialty OR Is eligible for an award of CSCST from an Irish Postgraduate Training body in their base specialty OR Is listed on the Specialist Division of the Medical Council Register in in a medical specialty
  - b. A total of 12 months ICM completed in accredited ICUs in Ireland (with satisfactory in-training assessments) – for modular training, 4 of these months must be in the last 2 years of physician training.
  - c. FJFICMI examination sat and/or passed

**Figure 2: Pathway for completion of higher specialist training in Intensive Care Medicine and Internal Medicine (see Table 1 for full details)**



\*FJFICMI examination: see Examinations section on website regarding eligibility and the application process. The FJFICMI exam must be attempted within the first 12 months of recognised accredited JFICMI training. Trainees must have done a minimum of 8 months of ICM to apply to sit the exam. The examination rules allow that a candidate can progress into the advanced clinical fellow grade provided one attempt has been made at the examination. IOM: Institute of Medicine

\*\*Criteria for interview and entry into year-2 advanced clinical fellow post: a. Holds an award of CSCST from an Irish Postgraduate Training Body in their base specialty OR Is eligible for an award of CSCST from an Irish Postgraduate Training body in their base specialty OR Is listed on the Specialist Division of the Medical Council Register ) in a Medical Specialty  
b. A total of 12 months ICM completed in accredited ICUs in Ireland (with satisfactory in-training assessments) – for modular training, 4 of these months must be in the last 2 years of internal medicine training  
c. FJFICMI examination sat and/or passed

#Candidates interviewing for consultant posts have 180days to be in possession of CSCST or to be on Specialist Division of the Medical Register (see [www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie) for more information)

### Anaesthesiology experience for RCPI trainees:

An accredited centre for ICM training must include one day per week (or equivalent) of dedicated anaesthesia training for internal medicine trainees in ICM training. The trainee, over the course of year 1 of ICM training must achieve 100 intubations. Of these 100 intubations, at least 20 must be undertaken in emergency circumstances (emergency anaesthesia, emergency department, cardio-pulmonary resuscitation, intensive care patients). Competence with general airway management is required and attendance at a Difficult Airway Course is mandatory.

### Duration of Training for Internal Medicine trainees in ICM:

The duration of training for an internal medicine trainee who wishes to complete specialty accreditation in intensive care medicine shall be governed by the duration of training of the Higher Specialty Training scheme with the RCPI, with the added year(s) of supra-specialty intensive care medicine training.

## C. Higher Specialist Training in Intensive Care Medicine – Surgery or Emergency Medicine Pathway

EM/Surgical trainees interested in pursuing ICM training should register with the Joint Faculty of Intensive Care Medicine of Ireland. The JFICMI offers 2 training grades in accredited ICM training posts for EM/surgery trainees interested in ICM:

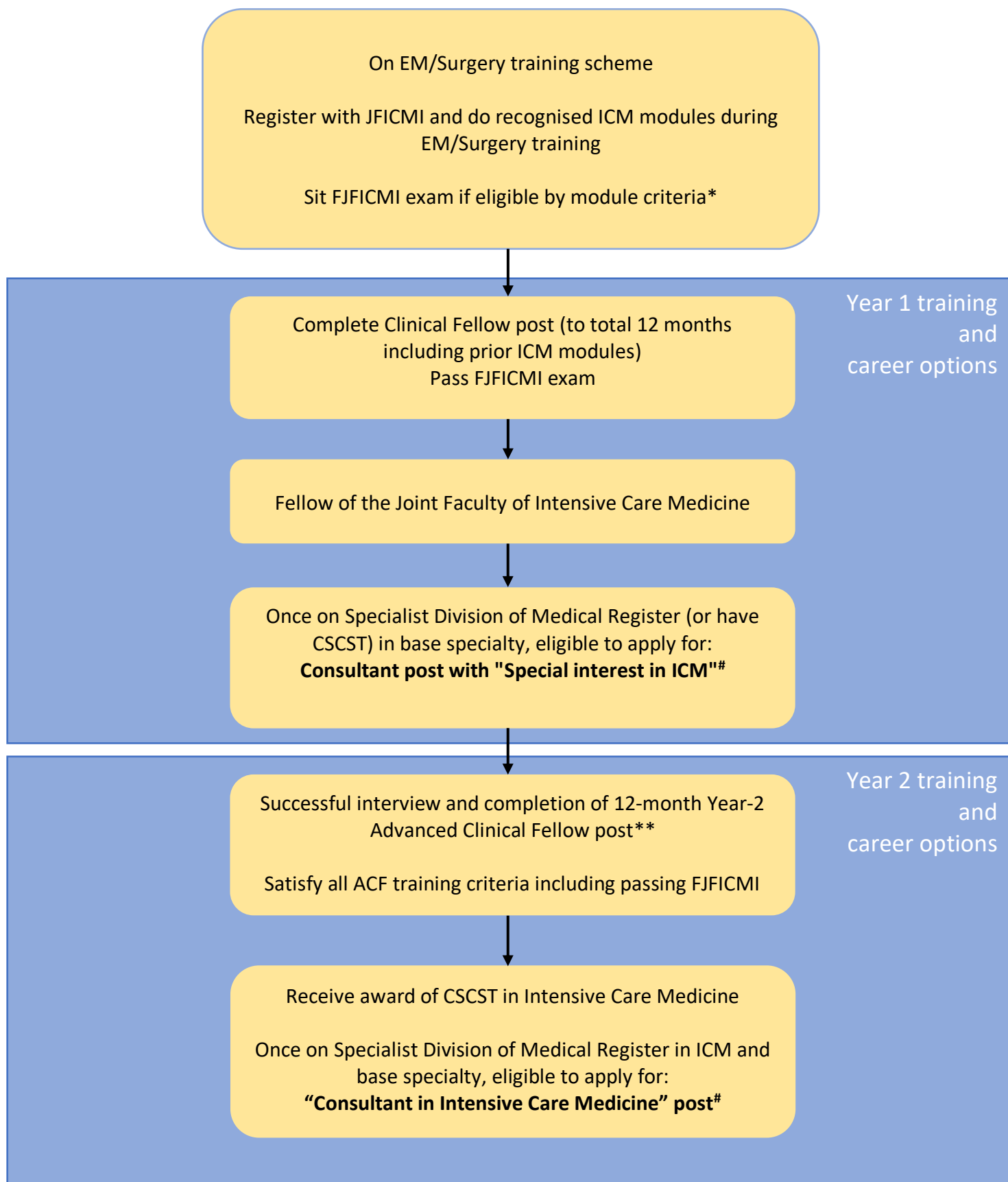
2. *Clinical Fellow in Intensive Care Medicine* – this applies to trainees in Year 1 of dedicated full time Intensive Care training. During this period a trainee should develop clinical skills in ICM in a continuum of training of a minimum of 2 months up to one year and should sit the JFICMI examination. In line with anaesthesiology training, a maximum of 2 months *without on-call duties* can be recognised for ICM training. An award of CSCST and/or entry on the Specialist Division of the Medical Register is *not* required to take up a clinical fellow post.

### **Recognition of RCSI Surgical Training Programme and Emergency Medicine scheme ICM training modules for Year 1 of ICM training:**

Up to 12 months of ICM modules can be submitted to the JFICMI for recognition of training. At least 4 of these 12 months must be in the last 2 years of training. Where a trainee has not completed 12 months of recognised training within an RCSI Surgical Training Programme or Emergency Medicine scheme, competitive entry to a post of JFICMI Clinical Fellow in Intensive Care Medicine in blocks of 6 months to one year affords the trainee the opportunity to complete one year of training and examination. The doctor at this stage will have CSCST (or equivalent) in a recognised surgical specialty or in emergency medicine plus at least one year ICM training. If they have also sat and/or passed the JFICMI examination, they would therefore be eligible to progress to an Advanced Clinical Fellow post in ICM (see figure 3) or apply for an EM/surgical consultant post with a “Special Interest in ICM”.

4. *Advanced Clinical Fellow in Intensive Care Medicine* - this applies to trainees in Year 2 of dedicated full time Intensive Care training. During this period a trainee should develop advanced clinical skills in ICM in a continuum of training of up to one year and advanced training modules / special interests consistent with the HST programme and curriculum. Surgery/EM trainees can only proceed to Year 2 of training if all the following criteria have been satisfied:
  - a. Holds an award of CSCST from an Irish Postgraduate Training body in their base specialty OR Is eligible for an award of CSCST from an Irish Postgraduate Training body in their base specialty OR Is listed on the Specialist Division of the Medical Council Register in EM or a Surgical specialtyA total of 12 months ICM completed in accredited ICUs in Ireland (with satisfactory in-training assessments) – for modular training, 4 of these months must be in the last 2 years of EM/Surgical training.
  - b. JFICMI examination sat and/or passed

**Figure 3: Pathway for completion of higher specialist training in Intensive Care Medicine and Emergency Medicine (EM) or Surgery (see Table 1 for full details)**



\*FJFICMI examination: see Examinations section on website regarding eligibility and the application process. The FJFICMI exam must be attempted within the first 12 months of recognised accredited JFICMI training. Trainees must have done a minimum of 8 months of ICM to apply to sit the exam. The examination rules allow that a candidate can progress into the advanced clinical fellow grade provided one attempt has been made at the examination.

\*\*Criteria for interview and entry into year-2 advanced clinical fellow post Holds an award of CSCST from an Irish Postgraduate Training body in their base specialty OR Is eligible for an award of CSCST from an Irish Postgraduate Training body in their base specialty OR Is listed on the Specialist Division of the Medical Council Register in EM or a Surgical

b. A total of 12 months ICM completed in accredited ICUs in Ireland (with satisfactory in-training assessments) – for modular training, 4 of these months must be in the last 2 years of EM/Surgical training.

c. FJFICMI examination sat and/or passed

#Candidates interviewing for consultant posts have 180 days to be in possession of CSCST or to be on Specialist Division of the Medical Register (see [www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie) for more information)

### Anaesthesia experience for Surgery and Emergency Medicine trainees:

An accredited centre for ICM training must include one day per week (or equivalent) of dedicated anaesthesia training. The trainee, over the course of year 1 of ICM training must achieve 100 intubations. Of these 100 intubations, at least 20 must be undertaken in emergency circumstances (emergency anaesthesia, emergency department, cardio-pulmonary resuscitation, intensive care patients). Competence with general airway management is required and attendance at a Difficult Airway course is mandatory.

### Duration of Training for Surgery and Emergency Medicine trainees in ICM:

The duration of training for a surgical or emergency medicine trainee who wishes to complete specialty accreditation in intensive care medicine shall be governed by the duration of training of the choice of Higher Specialty Training scheme with the RCSI and Faculty of Emergency Medicine, with the added supra-specialty intensive care medicine training duration.

## **D. Higher Specialist Training in Intensive Care Medicine – Doctors not on a recognised training pathway in Ireland**

Doctors who are not on a formal postgraduate training scheme in Ireland can apply to enter the National Intensive Care Training programme. Generally, these doctors are pursuing training in Ireland along a “credentials” or “equivalence” scheme, applying for individual posts in training hospitals, rather than being allocated to training posts under the supervision of a postgraduate training body. *For these doctors to be awarded a CSCST in intensive care medicine*, the following criteria must be satisfied (see figure 4):

1. Prospective completion of 24 months higher specialist ICM training, in the context of the JFICMI training scheme, in JFICMI-accredited training hospitals in Ireland (retrospective ICM rotations are not accepted for a CSCST award<sup>^</sup>)
2. Success at the Fellowship JFICMI examination
3. Satisfactory completion of all training requirements (including clinical competencies, professionalism competencies, courses, research project, ICM logbook and in-training assessments)
4. Satisfactory exit interview from the National Training Programme

Important notes for doctors following a credentials/equivalence route of training:

- <sup>^</sup>While retrospective ICM rotations *cannot* be used towards a CSCST award in intensive care medicine, they can be used to support an application, via the credentials/equivalence pathway, for entry onto the Specialist Division of the Medical Register in Intensive Care Medicine. These applications are made to the Medical Council. Full details are on their website at <https://medicalcouncil.ie/>
- For doctors to advance to the second year (advanced clinical fellow) of ICM training, they must be on the Specialist Division of the Medical Register in Ireland at the time of interview and post allocation. For this reason, doctors are strongly advised to submit their application for recognition of training to the Medical Council as early as possible, ideally at the time of interviewing for their year-1 ICM clinical fellow post.
- Doctors completing all the training requirements of the National Intensive Care Medicine Training Programme (see Table 1 above) are eligible for an award of CSCST in Intensive Care Medicine if they are on the Specialist Division of the Medical Register in the base speciality. In awarding the CSCST, the JFICMI makes no distinction between those doctors entered on the Specialist Division Register in their base specialty via a CSCST pathway (from the base speciality postgraduate training body in Ireland) or via the credentials/equivalence pathway (from an application for equivalence with the Medical Council in Ireland)
- Doctors awarded a CSCST from the JFICMI are eligible for entry on the Specialist Division of the Medical Register in Intensive Care Medicine as per the Medical Council Guidelines
- The Medical Council Recognition of Intensive Care Medicine is as follows:

FRAMEWORK OF PROGRAMME FOR HIGHER SPECIALIST TRAINING IN INTENSIVE CARE MEDICINE IN IRELAND is defined as follows:

Programme Duration: The programme duration is ordinarily seven years of specialist training. This comprises satisfactory completion and accreditation to CSCST level in the candidate's primary speciality (Anaesthesia, Medicine, Emergency Medicine or Surgery) and 2 years dedicated, supervised higher specialty (supra-specialty) training in Intensive Care Medicine. The total duration will be variable for candidates of differing specialty background as determined by the CSCST requirements of their primary specialty; two years of competency-based, specialty training in Intensive Care Medicine is required of trainees of all specialty backgrounds.

**Figure 4: Pathway for completion of higher specialist training in Intensive Care Medicine for doctors on an equivalence/credentials pathway**

