

Higher Specialist Training in Intensive Care Medicine

The National Intensive Care
Medicine Training Programme
in Ireland

August 2026

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 ICM 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, within the context of a formal training programme, in JFICMI-accredited training hospitals in Ireland
2. successfully completed the Final exam of the JFICMI
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 posts for the National ICM Training 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 of Ireland (RCPI) and the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI).

Doctors in their first year of ICM training will 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 programme, the curriculum and examination can be found on 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 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*
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
Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital, Drogheda**
Letterkenny University Hospital**

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

(** Hospitals recognised only for 2 months modular training during the SAT programme)

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 programmes in that training in intensive care medicine (ICM) is a mandatory component of the programme and is a consistent element of training exposure throughout the 6 year programme, 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, an opportunity may exist to acquire additional modules, providing that suitable modules are available in the JFICMI-accredited centres to which the trainee is allocated during the SAT programme.

Specialty Modular Units: <i>a longer period in a subspecialty or dual specialty area. This concerns four distinct disciplines</i> - Anaesthesiology and Analgesia for Obstetric Care (6 months with 6 months on call commitment) - Anaesthesiology for Paediatric Surgery (6-month module) - Intensive Care Medicine (3x2-month modules) - Pain Medicine (2-month module) - A further 2-month ICM module is awarded for 18 months of ICM on-call in Model 4 hospitals during the SAT programme	
Out of Hours Rostering:	
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	12-18 months Senior (3 rd) on-call

Table 2: CAI Anaesthesiology SAT programme 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 ICM training. During this period a trainee should develop clinical skills in ICM in a continuum of training of 6 months to one year within the context of a formal training programme and should sit the Final exam of the JFICMI. An award of CSCST and/or entry onto the Specialist Division of the Medical Register is *not* required to take up a clinical fellow post.

Recognition of CAI Anaesthesiology SAT programme ICM training modules for Year 1 of ICM training:

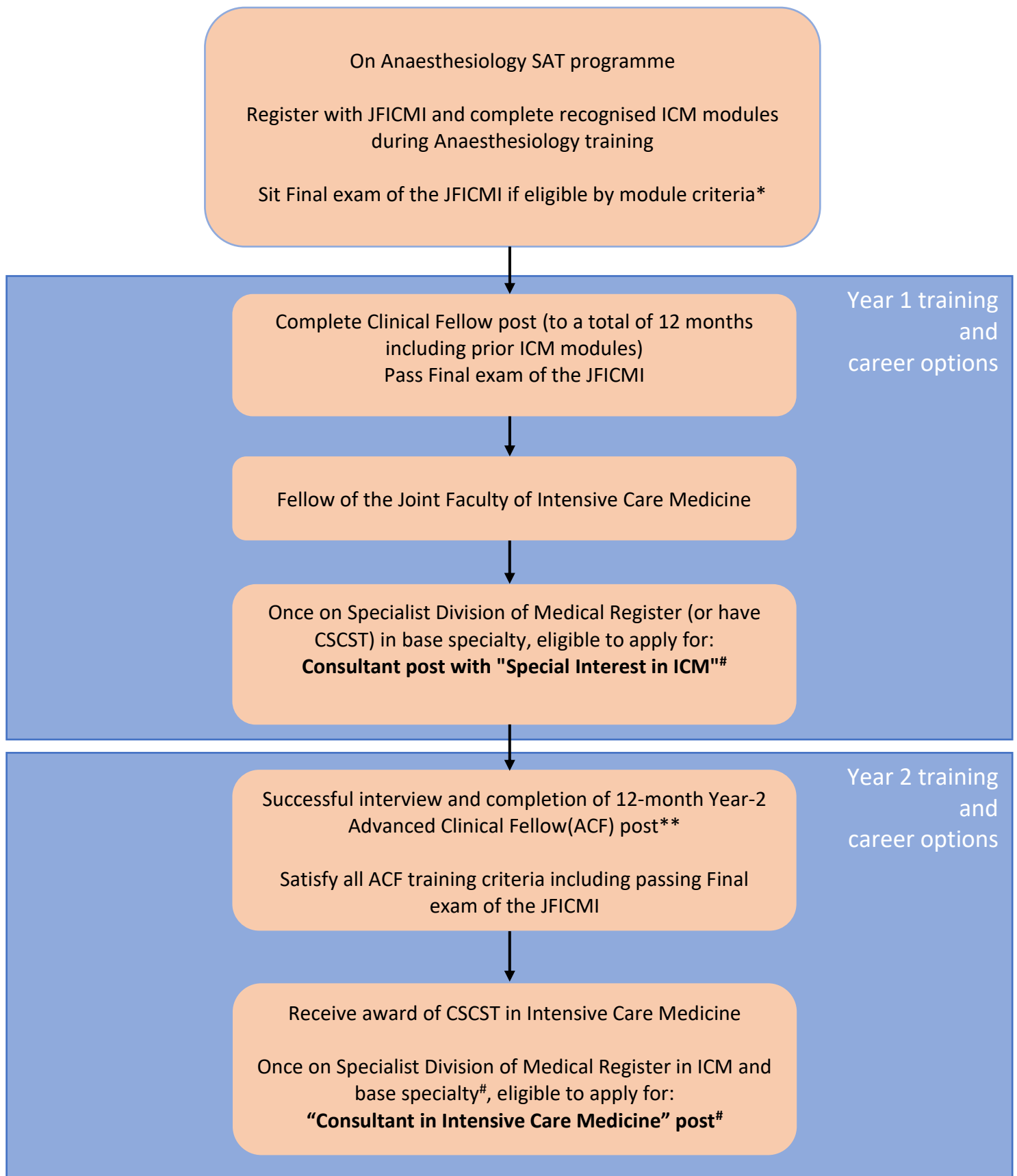
Up to 12 months of ICM modules can be submitted to the JFICMI for recognition of training. *At least 4 of these 12 months must be in the last 2 years of the SAT programme.* Where a trainee has not completed 12 months of recognised training within their SAT programme, competitive entry to a post of JFICMI Clinical Fellow in ICM in blocks of 6 months to one year affords the trainee the opportunity to complete one year of training and to sit the Final exam of the JFICMI. The doctor at this stage will have CSCST (or equivalent) in Anaesthesiology plus at least one year of ICM training and will have sat or passed the Final exam of the JFICMI and is therefore eligible to apply for 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”. Note to apply for a Consultant with a Special Interest post the doctor will be required to have passed the Final exam of the JFICMI

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 either 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 sat or passed the Final exam of the JFICMI.

2. *Advanced Clinical Fellow in Intensive Care Medicine* – this applies to trainees in Year 2 of dedicated full time ICM training within the context of a formal training programme. 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 of the following criteria have been satisfied:
 - a. Currently on the Specialist Division of the Medical Register (or in possession of a CSCST, or eligible for an award of CSCST) in anaesthesiology
 - b. A total of 12 months ICM training 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. Final exam of the JFICMI 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)



*Final exam of the JFICMI: see Examinations section on website regarding eligibility and the application process. The JFICMI exam must be attempted within the first 12 months of recognised accredited JFICMI training. Trainees must have completed a minimum of 8 months of ICM in JFICMI recognised centres 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. Currently on the Specialist Division of the Medical Register (or in possession of a CSCST or eligible for an award of CSCST) in anaesthesiology

b. A total of 12 months ICM training 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 Anaesthesiology training.

c. Final exam of the JFICMI 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 for more information)

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 ICM 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, within the context of a formal training programme, and should sit the Final exam of the JFICMI. 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 onto the Specialist Division of the Medical Register is *not* required to take up a clinical fellow post.

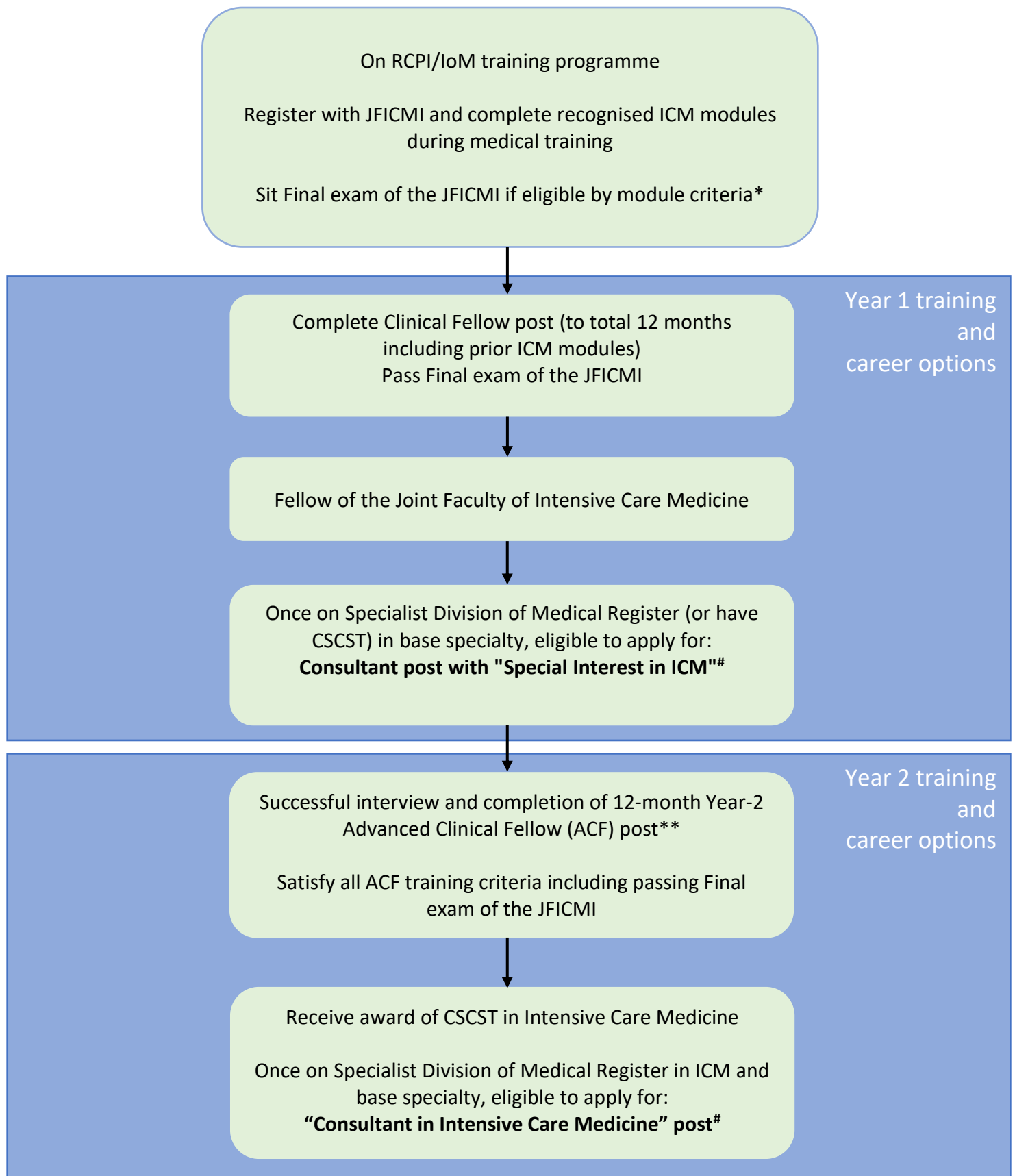
Recognition of RCPI Internal Medicine HST programme ICM training modules for Year 1 of ICM training:

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 programme, 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 Final exam of the JFICMI. 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 Final exam of the JFICMI, they would be eligible to apply either for an Advanced Clinical Fellow post in ICM or apply for the post of an “Internal Medicine Consultant with a Special Interest in ICM.” (see figure 2). Note to apply for a Consultant with a Special Interest post the doctor will be required to have passed the Final exam of the JFICMI.

2. *Advanced Clinical Fellow in Intensive Care Medicine* - this applies to trainees in Year 2 of dedicated full time ICM 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 of the following criteria have been satisfied:

- a) Currently on the Specialist Division of the Medical Register (or in possession of a CSCST or eligible for an award of CSCST) in a medical speciality
- b) A total of 12 months ICM training 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) Final exam of the JFICMI 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)



*Final exam of the JFICMI: see Examinations section on website regarding eligibility and the application process. The JFICMI exam must be attempted within the first 12 months of recognised accredited JFICMI training. Trainees must have completed 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. Currently on the Specialist Division of the Medical Register (or in possession of a CSCST or eligible for an award of CSCST) in 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. Final exam of JFICMI 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 for more information)

Anaesthesiology experience for RCPI trainees:

Centres accredited for ICM training must include one day per week (or equivalent) of dedicated anaesthesiology training for internal medicine trainees during their ICM training. The trainee must achieve 100 endotracheal intubations over the 2-year ICM training programme, 50 per year of training. 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 total 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 the RCPI Higher Specialty Training programme, 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

Surgical/Emergency Medicine (EM) 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 Surgical/EM trainees interested in ICM:

1. *Clinical Fellow in Intensive Care Medicine* – this applies to trainees in Year 1 of dedicated full time ICM 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 Final exam of the JFICMI. 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 onto the Specialist Division of the Medical Register is *not* required to take up a clinical fellow post.

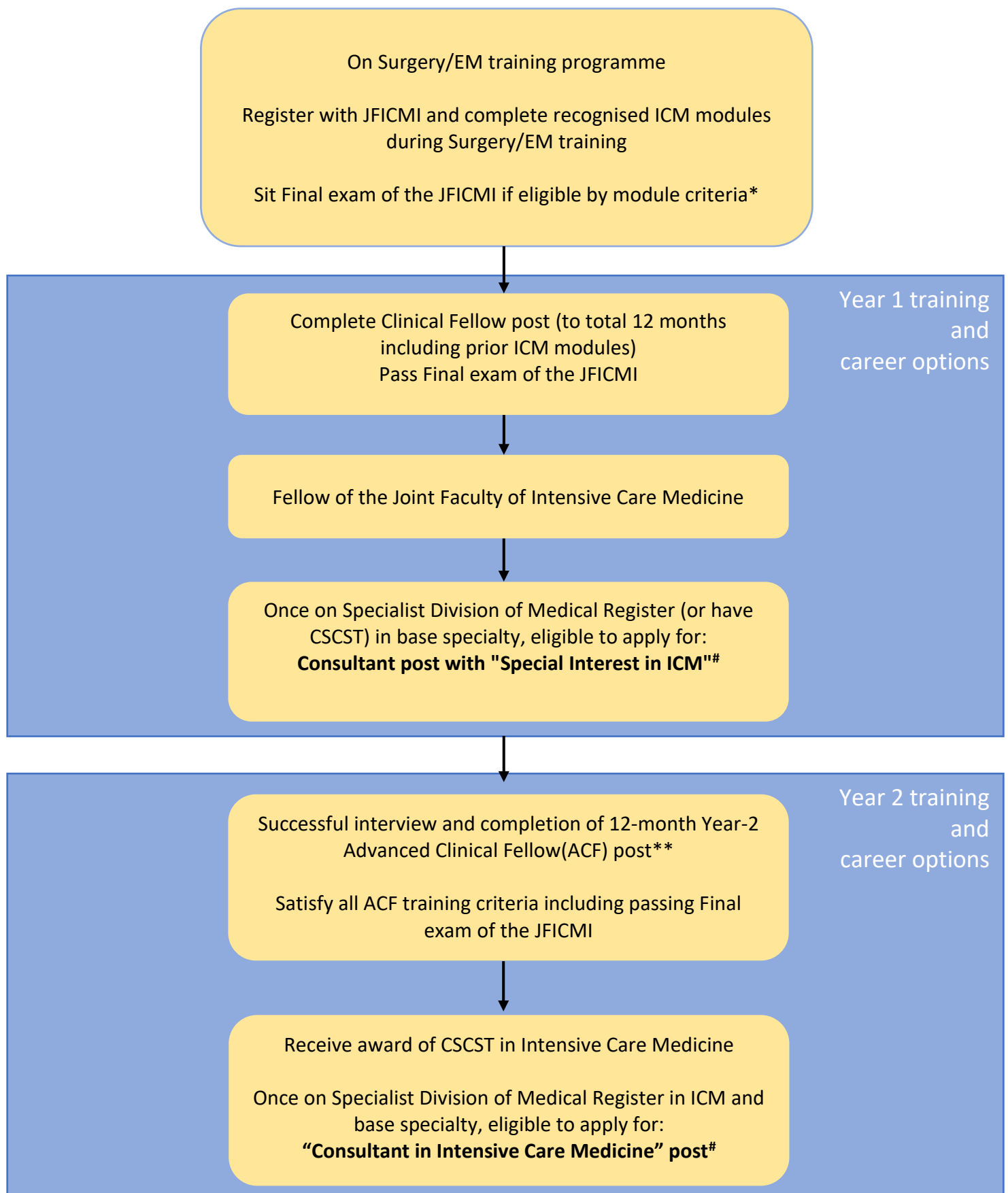
Recognition of RCSI Surgical and Emergency Medicine Training Programme ICM training modules for Year 1 of ICM training:

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 or Emergency Medicine Training Programme, 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 Final exam of the JFICMI, they would be eligible to apply for an Advanced Clinical Fellow post in ICM (see figure 3) or apply for the post of “Consultant Surgeon or Emergency Medicine Physician with a Special Interest in ICM”. Note to apply for a Consultant with a Special Interest post the doctor will be required to have passed the Final exam of the JFICMI.

2. *Advanced Clinical Fellow in Intensive Care Medicine* - this applies to trainees in Year 2 of dedicated full time ICM 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) Currently on the Specialist Division of the Medical Register (or in possession of b. A CSCST or eligible for an award of CSCST) in EM or a surgical speciality
- b) A total of 12 months ICM training 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 Surgical/EM training
- c) Final exam of the JFICMI sat and/or passed

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



*Final exam of the JFICMI: see Examinations section on website regarding eligibility and the application process. The JFICMI exam must be attempted within the first 12 months of recognised accredited JFICMI training. Trainees must have completed a minimum of 8 months of ICM training in JFICMI accredited units 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. Currently on the Specialist Division of the Medical Register (or in possession of a CSCST or eligible for an award of CSCST) in EM or a surgical speciality

b. A total of 12 months ICM training 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. Final exam of the JFICMI 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 for more information)

Anaesthesia experience for Surgery and Emergency Medicine trainees:

Anaesthesia experience for Surgery and Emergency Medicine trainees:

Centres accredited for ICM training must include one day per week (or equivalent) of dedicated anaesthesiology training for surgery and EM trainees during their ICM training. The trainee must achieve 100 endotracheal intubations over the 2-year ICM training programme, 50 per year of training. 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 total duration of training for a surgery or emergency medicine trainee who wishes to complete specialty accreditation in intensive care medicine shall be governed by the duration of training of the RCSI Higher Specialist Training Programme, with the added years of supra-specialty intensive care medicine training.

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 programme in Ireland can apply to enter the National Intensive Care Medicine Training programme. Generally, these doctors are pursuing training in Ireland along a “credentials” or “equivalence” pathway, 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, within the context of the JFICMI training programme, in JFICMI-accredited training hospitals in Ireland (retrospective ICM rotations are not accepted for a CSCST award)
2. Success at the Final exam of the JFICMI
3. Satisfactory completion of all training requirements (including clinical competencies, professionalism competencies, mandatory courses, research project, ICM logbook and in-training assessments)
4. Satisfactory exit interview from the National Training Programme

Important notes for doctors following the credentials/equivalence pathway of training:

- While retrospective ICM rotations *cannot* be used towards the award of CSCST in ICM, 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 who successfully complete 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 their base speciality. In awarding the CSCST, the JFICMI makes no distinction between those doctors entered onto the Specialist Division of the 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 onto 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 (See table 1 for full details)

