

**To: General Dental Practitioner**Web Site:  
[www.hscboard.hscni.net](http://www.hscboard.hscni.net)

14 October 2021

Dear Colleagues

**HSC Staff Recognition Payment**

You will be aware of the Minister for Health Robin Swann's announcement to pay £500 to HSC staff in recognition of the contribution to the delivery of health and social care services during the unique and unprecedented challenges presented by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

In my letter to you on 28<sup>th</sup> July 2021, I had advised that due to the complexities involved in calculating and processing the payments for those staff not on the HSC payroll it would take more time to put the necessary processes in place. We have been working closely with colleagues from the Department of Health and the Business Services Organisation to establish eligibility criteria for staff, to establish the associated information gathering requirements from employers and determine the subsequent payment processes to employers to enable reimbursement to eligible staff.

I can now advise that a defined process has been developed to support the ultimate payment to FPS contractors. A claim template, supporting guidance and employee fact sheet have been developed and we are currently piloting this with a number of practices/contractors across the FPS sector. We intend to take the feedback from this pilot to further refine the guidance and claim template where necessary before rolling out the scheme to the wider contractor groups.

If the pilot process successfully allows HSCB to launch the process out to the wider contractor groups without further delay, our intention is to roll this out to practices/contractors beginning week commencing 1<sup>st</sup> November, to work toward a potential payment to contractors on 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2021. To achieve this payment timescale there will be a reasonably tight deadline for returns to be submitted back to HSCB. I would therefore be grateful if all practices/contractors could ensure they have their template submitted in line with the deadlines highlighted in the documentation that will be issued.

To support you to ensure the claim returns accurately reflect and calculate the payments for each eligible individual, HSCB have automated the calculation of the value of the claim as much as possible to minimise the input required from contractors, however we appreciate that we will rely on contractors to follow the detailed guidance to ensure that the information required for the claim is completed accurately.

To provide you with additional support, we are planning to run a number of “training sessions” on understanding the guidance and how to complete the claim template. Details of these sessions, which are initially planned for **Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> and Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> November from 7 – 9pm**, will be included in the documentation issued.

In the meantime may I thank you again for your patience and ongoing support as we work through this process.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Louise McMahon', written in a cursive style.

Ms Louise McMahon  
Director of Integrated Care  
Health & Social Care Board