

30 July 2021

## **AHCPS Summer E-zine 2021**

Dear Branch Secretary

Below is an update on current issues. *Please circulate to all members.*

### **Post Covid Blended Working in the Civil Service**

DPER has issued a central policy statement for Blended Working in the Civil Service ([gov.ie - Blended Working in the Civil Service \(www.gov.ie\)](http://gov.ie-Blended-Working-in-the-Civil-Service/www.gov.ie)). The document sets out a number of principles for blended working. It is envisaged by DPER, that once the policy is finalised - in conjunction with employee representatives - it will inform the development of organisational level blended working policies, ensuring a consistency of approach across key policy areas.

The AHCPS is concerned that the absence of a central comprehensive policy document may create a vacuum leading to individual Departments and Offices adopting different approaches to blended working. The Association will continue to engage with DPER on this issue.

### **Building Momentum – A New Public Sector Agreement 2021 -2022**

Building Momentum is a two-year agreement running from 1/1/21 to 31/12/22. The balance of FEMPI cuts (pay restoration) due to AHCPS grades was paid on the 1<sup>st</sup> of July this year. This increase is worth between 1% and 2.5% in pay restoration to members. The DPER pay circular may be accessed on the following link: (<https://www.gov.ie/en/circular/5dedb-application-of-1-july-2021-fempi-pay-restoration-for-certain-civil-service-grades-with-basic-salary-of-not-more-than-150000/#> ).

A 1% Sectoral Bargaining Fund is currently being negotiated with DPER and is due to be paid by 1<sup>st</sup> February 2022. Pensions will increase in line with general round increases.

An independent body has also been established to review the additional working hours imposed under the Haddington Road Agreement.

### **Service Wide Mobility Scheme** (Assistant Principal Grade)

The Association has signed off with DPER on the extension of the ‘Service Wide Mobility Scheme’ to include the Assistant Principal Grade. We were very conscious, from the level of regular enquiries, that this was a critical issue for members and were keen to see the facility available for the AP grade at the earliest opportunity.

## Free Health Screening for Members

In June, the AHCPs announced, as part of the Association's on-going health & well-being programme, a Health Screening Programme for members. The health screening is free to ALL members and is being carried out by Medmark Occupational Healthcare. It consists of a combination of measurements, blood tests and questionnaires which will provide you with a valuable overview of your current health status. The screenings are being carried out at Medmark locations nationwide:



In addition to the comprehensive health screen, members will also be able to avail of a more advanced screening or a range of additional tests at their own cost.

To book the appointment members should click on the following link <https://medmark.fullhealthmedical.com/bookings> and use code **AHCPsHealthscreen**.

## ADC 2020/2021



The Association held a highly successful virtual ADC in May. Ahead of the Conference, the President of Ireland, Michael D. Higgins said in a message to Delegates: *“Throughout the Covid Pandemic we witnessed, once again, the outstanding dedication to public service that so defines all that you do. Despite the sudden & radical changes to the way you were required to work, you continued to deliver essential services to the highest standard possible”*.



Ciaran Rohan  
General Secretary  
Addresses AHCPS first Virtual ADC

Ciaran Rohan, AHCPS General Secretary, noted in his address to the Conference that for the first time in the Association’s almost eighty-year history, female members outnumber males. The increase in female membership reflects a dramatic shift over the last decade in women joining the senior management grades in the civil and public service.

Some 200 delegates remotely attended the ADC and over 35 motions were debated on such issues as Blend & Remote Working, the Right to Switch-Off, Flexitime etc.

The following Association Officers were elected at ADC: **Chairperson Trevor Noonan Justice & Law Reform, Vice Chairperson Orla McBreen (Foreign Affairs & Trade Branch) & Treasury Bernard O’Shea (TCAGSM Branch).**



**(Left) Trevor Noonan Justice & Law Reform: (Centre) Orla McBreen (Foreign Affairs & Trade Branch): (Right) Bernard O’Shea (TCAGSM Branch)**

## Member Engagement



Paul Malone

Deputy General Secretary

Addresses delegates at ADC  
2021

Deputy General Secretary Paul Malone reports on the significant increase in number of member engagement events held over the last two years. Member seminars were held on topics such as ‘Women in Leadership’, ‘Wellbeing’ and ‘Enhancing Your Leadership’. The Association also held its first events in the area of career development with a very successful series of seminars focussed on helping members to progress their career to Principal Officer / Assistant Secretary level. In response to Covid restrictions the Association in conjunction with Roffey Institute moved its member events to an online platform with a series of virtual modules on the challenges of working and managing remotely.

A further online seminar took place on the topic of ‘The Future of Work – Post Covid-19). In all, almost 2,000 members signed up for these engagement events. It is the intention of the Association to run more events in the future focused on professional development. Paul Malone, Deputy General Secretary would welcome the views of members in this regard.

### **On-Line Retirement Financial Planning Course:**

The Association intends to run an online retirement financial planning course for members in conjunction with Cornmarket on Wednesday 6th October next. Members will be updated nearer the time with details on how to register.

## Income Continuance Reminder &

## Pink & Blue Power Cancer Awareness Programme



Billy Thompson

Assistant General  
Secretary updates ADC  
on Pink/Blue Power  
Programme.

Our Income Continuance cover provides for a 75% level of pay and is underwritten by New Ireland Insurance at a cost of 0.57% of gross salary before tax relief. The Association successfully negotiated the inclusion of cover to retirement at age 66/67/68 for members

recruited since 1<sup>st</sup> January 2013. The new IC Scheme continues to cover Pre & Post ‘95 members to age 65.

All members are urged to check that they have ICP cover. If not, application forms can be accessed [here](#). The pay slip deduction should record as Ahcps Icp or similar and equate to gross salary x 0.57%.

If you are transferring from a FORSA scheme you must sign up to the AHCPS scheme or you may **not be covered** please see this link to an [ICP Application Form](#).

Billy Thompson AGS, reports there has been an excellent take up from members in the AHCPS Income Continuance Scheme of the 2021 Pink Blue Cancer Awareness Programme. The Programme was run in conjunction Cornmarket for AHCPS ICP members with 27% of female and 24% of male invited booking an appointment. Almost all GP clinics are booked out. It is hoped that some additional clinics will be arranged for later in the year. Cornmarket will contact members when this comes about.

GP clinics are well underway and running smoothly. Reminder messages will be issued closer to the actual appointment date for greater efficiency. Currently 88 members have had their GP appointment, with 27 of these receiving a referral for further investigation with the Bons or Beaumont. 266 members are still to have their GP appointment.

## **Website Re-development**

Plans for the new website are advancing to include a new user-friendly members area and the facility for on-line member applications. We hope to have this operational in Q4 of 2021 at the latest.

## **New Industrial Relation Officer**



Larry Dunne

Industrial Relations Officer monitors the “Chat Box” at ADC 2021

Larry Dunne (former treasurer) has joined the Head Office staff in a part time role as an Industrial Relations Officer. Larry has been working with members in Revenue and other branches over the last few months where his long experience has been invaluable.



## **HSF Health Plan – Affordable Health Cover for AHCPS members**

Please see the below a short video for further information on the plans available to you:  
<https://vimeo.com/559025402/5ae2caef90>

If you would like to receive a booklet or have a chat about the cover that is available to you please feel free to contact: Craig Broome, mobile; 0876765171, email: [craig.broome@hsf.ie](mailto:craig.broome@hsf.ie).

*Legal Disclaimer:*

The Executive Committee and the Association accept no legal responsibility for the services provided to members under the various schemes and arrangements in operation

## **Staycation Photo Competition for members**



We want to see the lovely scenic photos you have taken on your staycation this summer in Ireland. Anyone can be a photographer, so no fancy equipment needed! Think you have taken a spectacular photo of a setting sunset, have an image of beautiful beach, or a breath-taking picture from the top of a mountain? We want to see them!

There will be Just Eat vouchers worth a **100, 70 and 50 euro** for the top three photos selected. **To enter: Tweet your photos and tag the us @AHCPS or emailing them to [info@ahcps.ie](mailto:info@ahcps.ie).** Remember to include your name, location, and a caption for the image.

The competition will run until September 30<sup>th</sup> and photos may be shared on the Association's twitter account @ahcps and web site [www.ahcps.ie](http://www.ahcps.ie).

## Twitter

Members are reminded of the Association's twitter account @ahcps Please follow and retweet etc.

This circular will be placed on the Association's website [www.ahcps.ie](http://www.ahcps.ie).

[Best regards](#)



Ciaran Rohan  
General Secretary