



## Factsheet

# Medical Specialists – CME (COVID)

### Background information

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to limit access to national and international conferences, travel and educational activities. This has impacted Medical Specialists CME entitlements. Monash Health continues to update this documentation and advice, in consultation with the Dept of Health and other Health Services in Victoria, throughout this situation.

### What is happening

The Department of Health (department) acknowledges the impacts of COVID-19 on the health system, due to which Medical Specialists' Continuing Medical Education (CME) activities have continued to be disrupted during the 2021-22 financial year. Accordingly, the department is now authorising a carry-over of unused CME Support Entitlement under the AMA Victoria - Victorian Public Health Sector – Medical Specialists Enterprise Agreement 2018-2021 subject to the following guidance.

### Who the change will affect

- Medical Specialists (Senior Medical staff)

### When the change will take effect

- Updated changes become effective 1 July 2022 for FY2022-23 entitlement year

### What action do you need to take?

- Continue to check for updates to this advice.
- Raise any concerns or questions with Monash Doctors Workforce CME team.

Please contact [monashdoctors\\_cme@monashhealth.org](mailto:monashdoctors_cme@monashhealth.org) with any queries.

### Overseas Travel

- For the latest and current outward bound overseas travel advice, check the [smart traveller website](#)
- All new business related travel including CME related travel overseas, must comply with state quarantine requirements.  
*Please refer to [Department of Health website](#) for further information.*
- Any financial implications and additional leave requirements due to disruptions of travel plans will be borne by the individual. Please ensure adequate insurance is in place.  
Leave is to be approved by Unit Director as per usual to ensure operational requirements are met.

### Frequently asked Questions

**1. If I attend a virtual conference, can my conference days be taken as Conference leave?**

- **Yes**, you can book conference leave to attend conferences online, as you would if you were attending in person. No travel days can be taken as leave for virtual conferences.  
*NB. Conference Leave will be not granted to watch recorded webinars/ conference.*

**2. Will my unused CME balance rollover to the next financial year?**

Medical Specialists may carry over up to \$10,000 of unclaimed/unused CME Support Entitlement from the 2021-22 financial year into the 2022-23 financial year. However, the carried-over amount: cannot exceed their CME Support Entitlement 'cap' for 2021-22 financial year (inclusive of any unclaimed CME Support carried over from a previous financial year); and can only be used for CME-related activities that involve multiple participants. This includes conferences, seminars or workshops, including those conducted online and/or require interstate or overseas air travel (including for Sabbatical Leave purposes).



**3. What happens if a Medical Specialist carried over unused CME Support entitlement from 2020-21 into 2021-22? Can they carry over that amount as well as any amount from 2021-22 into 2022-23 FY?**

**Yes**, However Medical Specialists can only carry over the balance of unused CME up to a maximum amount of \$10,000 into 2022-23 from previous years including carried over balance.

**Example** : If a medical specialist has remaining balance of \$13,000 in 2021-22 Financial Year including roll over amount from 2020-21 Financial Year. The total roll over amount for 2022-23 Financial Year is \$10,000 cap.

**4. What happens to a Medical Specialist's CME Support where an overseas or interstate conference (or similar) or Sabbatical Leave event is cancelled?**

Medical Specialists are expected to ensure they have appropriate travel insurance that covers cancellations due to COVID-19. Where a Medical Specialist had approval to undertake a CME-related activity involving overseas travel and that activity is cancelled due to COVID 19, they may be reimbursed by their Employer for the amount they are out-of-pocket for travel expenses that would have formed part of a CME Support claim, but only after all refunds from travel insurers, airlines, hotels, conference organisers, etc have been sought and obtained.

Where this occurs:

- If the approval was in 2021-22 the reimbursement will be drawn against the Medical Specialist's CME Support cap for the 2021-22 financial year; and
- an equivalent amount of CME Support can be carried over into 2022-23 (adding to the CME Support cap for that year) to be claimed only for overseas travel expenses in 2022-23.

The above arrangements apply equally where interstate travel has been cancelled – or approval to attend has been withdrawn – because of issues relating to the coronavirus