



National Doctors Training and Planning
Health Service Executive
Sancton Wood Building, Heuston South Quarter
St John's Road West, Dublin 8

Oiliúint agus Pleanáil Náisiúnta na nDochtúirí
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30th June 2021

Deputy Róisín Shortall
Dáil Eireann
Leinster House
Kildare Street
Dublin 2

Ref: PQ 22516/21

To ask the Minister for Health if the number of specialist training positions in Ireland are currently adequate to meet the projected number of specialists required by the HSE national doctors' training and planning specialty workforce reviews; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Shortall

Each year the HSE approves the number of training posts, at both Basic Specialist Training (BST) and Higher Specialist Training (HST) level, that are required by the health service for the subsequent training year. A number of factors are included in the deliberations;

- Medical workforce planning projections
- Health service policy
- The size of the intern cohort from the previous year
- The specific implications of the introduction of streamlined training
- The attrition rate in the relevant training programme
- The number of training places in HST
- The type and range of HST programmes that each BST programme potentially supplies.

The number of approved training places available for basic and higher specialist training have increased annually since 2015 in line with workforce planning projections. Please find the most recent data on postgraduate training places within the Medical Workforce Report 2020 available here <https://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/leadership-education-development/met/ed/rep/medical-workforce-report-2020-21.pdf>. For the July 2021-22 training year, training places have further increased through the conversion of suitable non-training posts. The largest increases were seen within General Practice, BST Surgery and BST Psychiatry places, in line with workforce planning projections. Further increases across some of the training programmes will be required. For example NDTP Psychiatry and General Practice workforce demand reports recommend significant increases in training numbers over the next number of years.



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In order to enable the appropriate sustained growth in trainee numbers required, the HSE continues to collaborate with the postgraduate training bodies, on an annual basis, to create additional training posts to reflect national policy, workforce planning recommendations and capacity for training.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Leah O'Toole".

Leah O'Toole
Assistant National Director