



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
Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Sancton Wood Building, Ceathrú Heuston Theas
Bóthar Eoin Thiar Baile Atha Cliath 8

Tel: (01) 7959924
E-mail: doctors@hse.ie
www.hse.ie/doctors

9th April 2021

Deputy Nash
Dáil Éireann
Leinster House
Kildare Street
Dublin 2

Ref: PQ 16428/21

To ask the Minister for Health the number of newly-qualified doctors at Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital, Drogheda as a result of intern posts created in April 2020 which were designed to bolster the health service during an unprecedented pandemic; if he plans to retain all of the newly-qualified doctors and related posts as whole-time equivalents at the stated hospital given the continued seriousness of Covid-19 and the consequent backlog in terms of treatment waiting lists; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Nash

In 2020, in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, a temporary increase in the number of intern posts was introduced for one year. Thirty-four Interns were designated to Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital, Drogheda for the 2020-21 training year. The Minister for Health, has recently announced (<https://www.gov.ie/en/press-release/5adc3-minister-for-health-approves-increase-in-number-of-medical-intern-and-postgraduate-training-places/>) an increase of 120 medical intern posts for July 2021, similar to the emergency measure put in place in July 2020. The increase in the number of intern places will be supported with accompanying increases in postgraduate training places, to ensure these doctors can avail of the next step in the training pathway following completion of an internship. The six Intern Training Networks, that organise and oversee intern training in Ireland, are responsible for the allocation of intern posts within their particular networks. The networks are now working on the most appropriate allocation of these additional posts within their networks. Over the next number of months, the HSE will be undertaking a formal review of the number of intern posts to ensure the number of intern places are in line with future medical workforce planning requirements of the health service. As part of this review, the clinical sites where additional intern posts are most needed will be considered to ensure that the current configuration provides the most efficient and educationally appropriate model.

Leah O'Toole
Assistant National Director