



22<sup>nd</sup> November 2021

Deputy David Cullinane  
Dáil Eireann  
Leinster House  
Kildare Street  
Dublin 2

Ref: PQ 54530/21

**To ask the Minister for Health the number of doctors by level, that is, from trainee to consultant who leave the HSE within one, five and five years of taking up employment.**

Dear Deputy Cullinane,

Trainee doctors are enrolled on a postgraduate training programme and during their training programme are recommended for appointment to employment posts with the HSE. The initial or basic training programmes are generally two-three years long followed by higher specialty training which is 4-6 years in length. Entry to higher specialist training is gained through a competitive process managed by the postgraduate training bodies. Many graduates of the initial or basic training programmes may gain further experience before applying to higher specialist training by undertaking research positions outside of the HSE. During higher specialist training many trainees will undertake research positions outside of the training programme for a period of time – generally a minimum of one year or undertake an overseas Fellowship before returning to complete their training.

Due to the fluid nature of the postgraduate training pathway the data sought is not tracked to allow for an accurate response. However, the table below provides data on the percentage of trainees across basic and higher training programmes who have exited training programmes within the last 5 years. Please note that trainee doctors who withdraw from a particular training programme may remain working within the HSE or apply for another postgraduate training programme and continue to be employed by the HSE.

Training Year	% of trainees who exit basic or higher training programmes
2016	1.7%
2017	2.8%
2018	1.3%
2019	2.5%
2020	1.6%

Leah O'Toole  
Assistant National Director