



17th June 2022

Deputy David Cullinane
Dáil Eireann
Leinster House
Kildare Street
Dublin 2

Ref: PQ 29871/22

To ask the Minister for Health the estimated cost of increasing medical intern places by 10% and the number of places that this would create; the additional staffing requirements to facilitate such an expansion and the estimated cost of same.

Dear Deputy Cullinane,

Figure 4.4 within the Medical Workforce Report 2021-22 <https://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/leadership-education-development/met/> outlines the number of intern posts over the past 10 years. Over the past ten years the number of intern posts has expanded by 284, at an average growth rate of 4.6% per year, in order to align with the number of BST Training Posts available and future medical workforce planning requirements of the health service.

For the 2022-23 training year, there are 854 Intern posts available. The cost of increasing medical intern places by 10%, to 939, would be approximately €4.2 million per year. This figure is based on annual Intern salaries, training allowances, and the costs associated with the provision of Intern training through each of the six Intern Networks for these posts.

The Medical Council, as the regulator of the medical profession in Ireland, sets out the minimum requirements for Intern training within their Standards for the Training and Experience required for the granting of a Certificate of Experience to an Intern available at the following link <https://www.medicalcouncil.ie/education/career-stage-intern/quality-assurance/standards-for-granting-cert-of-experience.pdf>.

The six Intern Training Networks that organise and oversee intern training in Ireland, are responsible for the allocation of intern posts. An expansion of Intern training posts would require Intern Networks to identify and approve Intern posts, which provide the most appropriate training opportunities in line with the minimum requirements as set out by the Medical Council. This includes but is not limited to ensuring: Intern posts are allocated within clinical sites accredited and approved for Intern training by the Medical Council; posts are a minimum of 12 months including 3 months in general surgery and 3 months in general medicine; and posts provide adequate supervision of Interns training and clinical practice in accordance with the Medical Council's standards.

Leah O'Toole
Assistant National Director