



12 December 2022

Deputy Thomas Gould
Dáil Éireann
Kildare Street
Dublin 2

PQ Number: 59071/22

Question: *To ask the Minister for Health the estimated cost to increase the number of number of higher specialist training posts by 3%; the estimated number of additional posts that would result; and the extra workforce requirements incurred by same – Thomas Gould*

Dear Deputy Gould,

The costs of postgraduate medical training are complex and include salaries, delivery of training through professional bodies, financial supports, scholarship and fellowship opportunities and other hidden costs to complement medical training.

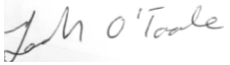
Every training post is a salaried post within which service is also delivered. Trainees may occupy any of the following grades – Intern, Senior House Officer, Registrar, Specialist Registrar with salaries currently ranging between €38,572- €85,520 depending on the grade held <https://healthservice.hse.ie/staff/pay/pay-scales/>. Increasing the number of training posts required to ensure the appropriate supply of suitably trained specialists, primarily through the conversion of existing non-training posts to training posts, remains a key priority of the HSE in order to move towards a consultant delivered health service. Figure 4.10 within the most recently published Medical Workforce Report 2021-22 <https://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/leadership-education-development/met/ndtp-workforce-report-2021-20221.pdf> shows that there has been a steady annual increase in the Higher Specialist Training (HST) intake over the last 5 year period up to 2022. The intake into HST programmes has been increasing at a rate of 3.4% per year on average over the last five years. For the 2022-23 training year HST programmes have grown by a further 9%. Continued increases in the number of HST posts, by conversion of suitable non-training posts, to reflect national policy, workforce planning recommendations and capacity for training, are planned for 2023/24. These increases are targeted predominately within Surgery, General Practice, and Psychiatry HST programmes for the 2023 training year.

Other costs associated with the provision and delivery of training through the medical schools and postgraduate training bodies vary depending on medical specialty and stage of training. Trainees can also avail of a number of financial schemes to complement their medical training:

- The Training support scheme provides for reimbursement of €2000 per annum for Higher Specialist Trainees for approved exams, courses or conferences. Further information on this scheme is available here [Training Support Scheme Guidance Document](#)
- The Higher Specialist training fund is open to higher specialist trainees and 3rd/4th year GP trainees only. The funding available to each trainee is €500.00 per year of training and the fund rolls over if not claimed in a particular year. Further information available here <https://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/leadership-education-development/met/ed/fin/ndtp-specialist-funding-guidance-document-july-2023.pdf>

- Trainees can claim the full costs of approved examination/courses under the Clinical Course Exam Refund Scheme (CCERS). Further information available here [CCERS Guidelines 2022 to 2023](#)

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Leah O'Toole". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'L'.

Leah O'Toole

Assistant National Director