



National Doctors Training and Planning
Health Service Executive
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Deputy David Cullinane
Dáil Éireann
Leinster House
Kildare Street
Dublin 2

Ref: PQ 29873/22

To ask the Minister for Health the estimated cost of increasing higher specialist training 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,

Increasing the number of higher specialist places by 10% would create, approximately, an initial 39 extra places (excluding the General Practice training programme). Higher specialist training programmes are between 4 – 6 years in duration. An increase intake of 10% would equate to approximately an increase of 175 trainees enrolled in higher specialty training after six years.

The costs of 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://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/resources/hr-circulars/1-october-2021-consolidated-salary-scales.pdf>.

Increasing the number of higher training posts required to ensure the appropriate supply of suitably trained specialists, predominantly 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 Medical Workforce Report 2021-22 <https://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/leadership-education-development/met/> shows the intake number of doctors to Higher Specialist Training (HST) posts since 2017. The intake into HST posts has been increasing at a rate of 3.4% per year on average over the last five years. Further growth across a number of postgraduate training programmes in line with workforce planning projections are planned. The HSE works in close collaboration with the training bodies and National clinical programmes to determine, on an annual basis, the number of medical training posts required by the health service.

Yours sincerely,

Leah O'Toole

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Assistant National Director