

09 February 2024

Chrystal Hill
fyi-request-24962-68a07379@requests.fyi.org.nz

Tēnā koe Chrystal,

Your request for official information, reference: HNZ00033240

Thank you for your email on 30 November 2023, asking for the following which has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). Please see outlined below a response to each part of your request.

1/ Annual Departure Data: Please provide the number of junior doctors (categorised as house officers and registrars) who have left the New Zealand healthcare system annually for the past five years, specifically those leaving before completing their specialist training.

2/ Stage of Training at Time of Departure: For these doctors, could you provide a detailed breakdown indicating at which stage of their training (e.g., Postgraduate Year 1 (PGY1), Postgraduate Year 2 (PGY2), Registrar, Senior Registrar) they chose to leave?

3/ Destination Post-Departure: Specifically, how many of these doctors relocated to Australia for further career opportunities? If possible, include any available data on the types of positions or roles they pursued in Australia.

4/ Reasons for Departure: Do you have any qualitative or survey data indicating the primary reasons for these doctors choosing to leave New Zealand for Australia? This may include factors such as better pay, working conditions, or career advancement opportunities.

5/ Policies on Retention vs New Employment: Are there any policies or strategies that Health New Zealand has implemented or is considering to retain existing house officers and registrars, as opposed to employing new ones?

6/ District Health Board Breakdown: Additionally, could the provided information be summarised by district or District Health Board (DHB), as well as overall? This would greatly assist in understanding regional variations and specific challenges faced by different DHBs in retaining junior doctors.

This information is vital to understand the dynamics of medical workforce migration between New Zealand and Australia, especially concerning the retention of junior doctors within the New Zealand healthcare system. I request that the information be provided in a direct reply and in an electronic format.

Response

Note – any workforce data ≤ 5 is suppressed to ensure we maintain the privacy of individuals under section 9(2)(a) of The Official Information Act 1982.

1/ Annual Departure Data: Please provide the number of junior doctors (categorized as house officers and registrars) who have left the New Zealand healthcare system annually for the past five years, specifically those leaving before completing their specialist training.

Resident Medical Officers (RMO) who have not renewed their Annual Practicing Certificate (APC).

The information below is provided to us by the Te Kaunihera Rata o Aotearoa – Medical Council of New Zealand (MCNZ) who are the Responsible Authority for doctors in New Zealand. MCNZ are responsible for the registration and oversight of practitioners.

The table below details the number and last reported location of New Zealand medical graduate RMOs that did not renew their APC.

New Zealand Medical Graduate (NZMG)

<u>District at departure date</u>	<u>2018/2019</u>	<u>2019/2020</u>	<u>2020/2021</u>	<u>2021/2022</u>	<u>2022/2023</u>
Unknown	55	85	=<5	=<5	=<5
Northland			=<5	=<5	12
Auckland Metro			29	44	91
Waikato			7	=<5	14
Lakes			=<5	=<5	=<5
Bay of Plenty			=<5	9	18
Tairāwhiti			=<5	=<5	=<5
Hawkes Bay			=<5	=<5	12
Taranaki			=<5	=<5	=<5
MidCentral			=<5	=<5	8
Whanganui			=<5	=<5	=<5
Wellington Metro			10	18	35
Nelson Marlborough			=<5	=<5	=<5
West Coast			=<5	=<5	=<5
Canterbury			=<5	17	36
South Canterbury			=<5	=<5	=<5
Southern			6	9	15
Total	55	85	76	121	266

Notes:

- We have used the number of doctors who have not renewed their Annual Practicing Certificate (APC) as proxy for doctors leaving the health system.
- Please note that there are a range of reasons for not renewing APC such as retirement, parental leave, overseas training. MCNZ are unable to break down the exact reasons why APCs are not renewed.
- RMOs are defined as those without a vocational scope.
- Grey cells indicate that figures are unavailable.
- District at departure date is based on the location data held by the MCNZ. This represents a geographical area and is not necessarily the (now former) DHB of employment. District numbers are only available for the last 3 years.
- Districts may be unknown for some doctors.
- It should also be noted that not all doctors elect to undertake vocational training and may remain RMOs indefinitely.

2/ Stage of Training at Time of Departure: For these doctors, could you provide a detailed breakdown indicating at which stage of their training (e.g., Postgraduate Year 1 (PGY1), Postgraduate Year 2 (PGY2), Registrar, Senior Registrar) they chose to leave?

For the last five years captured in our response to question one, please see the further breakdown below.

New Zealand Medical Graduate (NZMG) 2018- 2023

Years since medical degree obtained	
0	=<5
1	15
2	46
3	101
4	71
5	46
6	41
7	32
8	35
9	33
10	30
11	19
12	15
13	10
14	=<5
15	6
16	=<5
17	=<5
18	=<5
19	=<5
20+	85
Total	603

3/ Destination Post-Departure: Specifically, how many of these doctors relocated to Australia for further career opportunities? If possible, include any available data on the types of positions or roles they pursued in Australia.

We have the below information available, which utilises information from the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) and MCNZ. This analysis is based on AHPRA registration data as at end of Nov 2023.

NZ medical graduate RMOs registered with AHPRA as at end of Nov 2023 by first registered year

<u>District as at First AHPRA registration year</u>	<u>2018/2019</u>	<u>2019/2020</u>	<u>2020/2021</u>	<u>2021/2022</u>	<u>2022/2023</u>
Unknown	20	33	=<5	=<5	=<5
Northland			=<5	=<5	=<5
Auckland Metro			6	26	38
Waikato			=<5	=<5	9
Lakes			0	=<5	=<5
Bay of Plenty			=<5	6	=<5
Tairāwhiti			0	=<5	=<5
Hawkes Bay			0	=<5	=<5
Taranaki			0	=<5	=<5
MidCentral			0	=<5	=<5
Whanganui			0	=<5	=<5

Wellington Metro			=<5	=<5	10
Nelson Marlborough			0	=<5	=<5
West Coast			=<5	=<5	=<5
Canterbury			0	=<5	12
South Canterbury			0	=<5	=<5
Southern			0	=<5	7
Total	20	33	16	50	90

Notes:

- We have joined the Medical Council of New Zealand Te Kaunihera Rata o Aotearoa (MCNZ) dataset to the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) dataset.
- Grey call indicate figures are unavailable.
- District at departure date is based on the location data held by the MCNZ. This represents a geographical area and is not necessarily the (now former) DHB of employment. District numbers are only available for the last 3 years.
- Districts may be unknown for some doctors.

4/ Reasons for Departure: Do you have any qualitative or survey data indicating the primary reasons for these doctors choosing to leave New Zealand for Australia? This may include factors such as better pay, working conditions, or career advancement opportunities.

The majority of Health New Zealand Districts do not collect this data. Waitaha Canterbury has been able to provide the below information, and all other Districts information is declined under section 18(e) of the Act, as this information does not exist.

Waitaha Canterbury

RMOs resigning with the reason of returning/moving to Australia*

Returning back to Australia for training (Aus citizen)	5
Moving to Australia (NZ trainee)	22
Moving to Australia as a requirement of training (Australasia training programme)	6
Moving to Australia at the end of RMO training for an SMO/Fellow position	10
Moving to Australia to study	1

*Notes

- Waitaha Canterbury only started collecting this information in 2020 and often a RMO will not provide a reason for their departure.

5/ Policies on Retention Vs New Employment: Are there any policies or strategies that Health New Zealand has implemented or is considering to retain existing house officers and registrars, as opposed to employing new ones?

Retaining the health workforce is a key priority for Health New Zealand. We have implemented several initiatives through the Health Workforce Plan 2023/24 focused on retention of all workforces and have several specific initiatives, including the establishment of a National RMO support service, targeting the retention of RMOs. You can find this plan on our [website](#).

6/ District Health Board Breakdown: Additionally, could the provided information be summarised by district or District Health Board (DHB), as well as overall? This would greatly assist in understanding regional variations and specific challenges faced by different DHBs in retaining junior doctors.

District level breakdowns have been provided wherever possible.

How to get in touch

If you have any questions, you can contact us at h.nzOIA@health.govt.nz.

If you are not happy with this response, you have the right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman. Information about how to do this is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or by phoning 0800 802 602.

As this information may be of interest to other members of the public, Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora may proactively release a copy of this response on our website. All requester data, including your name and contact details, will be removed prior to release.

Nāku iti noa, nā



Andrew Slater
Chief People Officer
People & Communications