

23 January 2025

Sandra Anderson  
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Tēnā koe Sandra

**Your request for official information, reference: HN200066740**

Thank you for your email on 26 September 2024, asking Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora for the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

*Specifically, I request the following information:*

1. *The number of General Medicine Registrars in New Zealand per district for each of the last five years.*
2. *The number of Junior Registrars in New Zealand per district for each of the last five years.*
3. *The number of registrars who progressed to registrar positions as PGY3 (Postgraduate Year 3) versus PGY4 and above for each of the last five years.*
4. *The number of Senior Registrars per district, broken down by specialty, for each of the last five years.*
5. *Data on the distribution and equity of Senior Registrars across all districts over the past five years.*
6. *For each of the last five years, please provide the average number of weeks of annual leave actually taken by Medical Registrars, categorized by Junior and Senior Registrars, and broken down by district.*
7. *For each of the last five years, please provide the following information regarding annual leave for Medical Registrars, categorized by Junior and Senior Registrars, and broken down by district:*
  - a. *The total number of annual leave requests submitted.*
  - b. *The total number of annual leave requests that were denied.*
  - c. *The total number of weeks of annual leave requested.*
  - d. *The total number of weeks of annual leave that were denied.*

*Additionally, if there is a shortage of registrars, I would like to understand how PGY1 positions are being managed to ensure that the pipeline allows for an appropriate number of General Medicine Registrars by district. Specifically:*

8. *For each of the last five years, please provide the number of PGY1 (Postgraduate Year 1) positions available versus the number of applicants in each district, to determine if PGY1 positions are oversubscribed in certain districts.*
9. *What specific measures have been taken or are planned to align the number of PGY1 positions with the future needs for General Medicine Registrars across all districts? Please provide details of any workforce planning strategies or programs implemented in the past five years.*
10. *How does the distribution of PGY1 positions across districts impact the availability and recruitment of General Medicine Registrars in subsequent years? Please provide any analyses or data that illustrate this impact over the past five years.*

On 21 October 2024, you clarified the request as below:

*My request specifically refers to General Medicine Registrars, who are training under the Royal Australasian College of Physicians (RACP). These registrars include those in general internal medicine and its subspecialties, aligning with roles outlined in the NZRDA run descriptions, such as those found on the Auckland Doctors website for Internal Medicine & Medical Specialties.*

*For context, examples of relevant registrar roles include:*

- 1. General Medicine Registrars (e.g., General Medicine, Cardiology, Respiratory, Renal, Gastroenterology)*
- 2. Internal Medicine Specialties (e.g., Haematology, Infectious Diseases, Endocrinology, Neurology, Rheumatology)*
- 3. Other roles within internal medicine, like Older People's Health, Rehabilitation, and Medical Relief Registrars.*

*These positions are clearly defined in the Te Toka Tumai Registrar Run Descriptions provided by NZRDA. For further reference, here is a link to the relevant run descriptions: Auckland Doctors Internal Medicine & Medical Specialties.*

*<https://aus01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.aucklanddoctors.co.nz%2Fmos%2Fcurrentemployees%2Fnzrdarundescriptions%2Finternalmedicinalspecialties%2F&data=05%7C02%7COCPO%40tewhatauora.govt.nz%7Cfcfcfcab75446d0832e08dcf20c5dd1%7Cbed4da513cdb4d0dbaf8fb80d53268e3%7C0%7C0%7C638651382123413149%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjojMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjojV2luMzliLCJBTiI6IkhWwiLCJXVCi6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=wTVjozV3oQ2PViXUQnrWG7IBAXbypTBwmHnGTyA0Zu0%3D&reserved=0>*

*Regarding Junior and Senior Registrars:*

- 1. Junior Registrars are those who have not yet passed both RACP exams.*
- 2. Senior Registrars have passed both exams and are progressing through advanced training, which corresponds with a step-up in pay as defined by NZRDA SECA.*

## **Response**

I apologise for the delay in providing our response. The time taken is not what we aspire to. This is something we are working to get on top of as we deal with a high volume of requests and the understandably high public interest in our work.

For clarity, I will address each question in turn.

- 1. The number of General Medicine Registrars [as clarified above] in New Zealand per district for each of the last five years.*

The Health Workforce Information Programme (HWIP) holds data on the district employed workforce providing a national, regional and local picture of the health and disability sector workforce. Further information about HWIP is available at [www.tewhatauora.govt.nz/for-health-professionals/health-workforce-development/health-workforce-initiatives/health-workforce-information-programme/](http://www.tewhatauora.govt.nz/for-health-professionals/health-workforce-development/health-workforce-initiatives/health-workforce-information-programme/)

Unfortunately, HWIP cannot provide a number of Registrars to answer this question as Resident Medical Officers (RMO) data is not collected in a way to be able to discern Registrars from House Officers and Senior House Officers.

Our RMO team also does not have this level of information available at this stage but is working on improved data and intelligence for the RMO workforce. Given the specificity of your request, this information is not held by any other team in a form that enables us to provide it without creating new information, or without substantial collation. This part of your request is therefore refused in accordance with section 18(g) and 18(f) of the Act.

However, the Medical Council of New Zealand does provide some data for the entire doctor workforce which may be of interest, and is publicly available at [www.mcnz.org.nz/assets/Publications/Workforce Survey/Workforce Survey Report 2024.pdf](http://www.mcnz.org.nz/assets/Publications/Workforce%20Survey/Workforce%20Survey%20Report%202024.pdf)

2. *The number of Junior Registrars in New Zealand per district for each of the last five years. "Junior Registrars are those who have not yet passed both RACP exams"*
3. *The number of registrars who progressed to registrar positions as PGY3 (Postgraduate Year 3) versus PGY4 and above for each of the last five years.*
4. *The number of Senior Registrars per district, broken down by specialty, for each of the last five years. Senior Registrars have passed both exams and are progressing through advanced training, which corresponds with a step-up in pay as defined by NZRDA SECA."*
5. *Data on the distribution and equity of Senior Registrars across all districts over the past five years.*

As outlined above, our HWIP data cannot determine Registrars and our RMO team does not currently hold this level of information, we are therefore unable to provide information about 'Junior' or 'Senior' Registrars. As such, this part of your request would require a significant amount of collation and consultation across Health NZ's various districts. In order to provide the information, we would need to divert personnel from their core duties. Therefore, your request is refused under section 18(f) of the Act.

We have considered whether fixing a charge for the supply of the information or extending the timeframe for response would enable Health NZ to respond; however, we do not consider that either option would remove the impact that supplying the information would have on our other operations.

6. *For each of the last five years, please provide the average number of weeks of annual leave actually taken by Medical Registrars, categorized by Junior and Senior Registrars, and broken down by district.*
7. *For each of the last five years, please provide the following information regarding annual leave for Medical Registrars, categorized by Junior and Senior Registrars, and broken down by district:*
  - a. *The total number of annual leave requests submitted.*
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  - d. *The total number of weeks of annual leave that were denied.*

When Health NZ was established, it inherited 20 separate payrolls. Each payroll was set up differently, with different practices and local arrangements in place. Like many public and private organisations across New Zealand, the size of our workforce, the hours our people work and the variety of their employment arrangements, as well as our payroll systems and processes, make it difficult to produce a consistent, timely and stable picture of our workforce demographic data.

Health NZ continues to operate multiple payroll systems which are responsible for ensuring that more than 90,000 health workers are paid each week or fortnight. Projects to standardise the way we work, including how we pay our staff and report on workforce demographic data are a priority at Health NZ, however, these will take time.

As such, providing a response to this part of your request, even without the specificity of Junior or Senior Registrars, would require a significant amount of collation and consultation across Health NZ's various payroll teams. In order to provide the information, we would need to divert personnel from their core duties. Therefore, your request is refused under section 18(f) of the Act.

We have considered whether fixing a charge for the supply of the information or extending the timeframe for response would enable Health NZ to respond; however, we do not consider that either option would remove the impact that supplying the information would have on our other operations. We acknowledge this is frustrating; however, our response reflects the nature of the payroll systems we are currently working with.

HWIP collects data on the district-employed workforce providing a national, regional and local picture of the health and disability sector workforce, including leave. HWIP publishes quarterly reports which contain average sick leave and annual leave by occupation groups, including RMOs. You can find these and more information about HWIP via [www.tewhātuora.govt.nz/for-health-professionals/health-workforce-development/health-workforce-initiatives/health-workforce-information-programme/](http://www.tewhātuora.govt.nz/for-health-professionals/health-workforce-development/health-workforce-initiatives/health-workforce-information-programme/).

*Additionally, if there is a shortage of registrars, I would like to understand how PGY1 positions are being managed to ensure that the pipeline allows for an appropriate number of General Medicine Registrars by district. Specifically:*

*8. For each of the last five years, please provide the number of PGY1 (Postgraduate Year 1) positions available versus the number of applicants in each district, to determine if PGY1 positions are oversubscribed in certain districts.*

Please refer to the **Appendix A** enclosed with this response letter.

*9. What specific measures have been taken or are planned to align the number of PGY1 positions with the future needs for General Medicine Registrars across all districts? Please provide details of any workforce planning strategies or programs implemented in the past five years.*

The Health Workforce Plan 2024 has recently been published and confirms priority workforce actions for this profession and others, going forward. Further information can be found at [www.tewhātuora.govt.nz/corporate-information/planning-and-performance/health-workforce/health-workforce-plan-2024/workforce-context](http://www.tewhātuora.govt.nz/corporate-information/planning-and-performance/health-workforce/health-workforce-plan-2024/workforce-context).

For measures that have previously been taken, please refer to the Health Workforce Plan 2023/24 and the Quarter 4 report on its achievements, at [www.tewhātuora.govt.nz/publications/health-workforce-plan-202324](http://www.tewhātuora.govt.nz/publications/health-workforce-plan-202324).

*10. How does the distribution of PGY1 positions across districts impact the availability and recruitment of General Medicine Registrars in subsequent years? Please provide any analyses or data that illustrate this impact over the past five years.*

The purpose of the Act is to provide access to official information held by the Government, in order to enable participation in law-making and promote the accountability of Ministers and officials. There is no requirement under the Act for agencies to create new information, compile information they do not hold, provide legal advice, respond to hypothetical questions, or provide or prove an opinion.

The first part of this question is not a request for information under the Act, as it has not been made with due particularity or specificity. The second part for analysis and data is refused under section 18(g) of the Act, as the information you have requested is not held by Health NZ and we have no grounds to believe that the information is held by another entity subject to the Act.

## How to get in touch

If you have any questions, you can contact us at [h.nzOIA@tewhatuora.govt.nz](mailto:h.nzOIA@tewhatuora.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](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or by phoning 0800 802 602.

As this information may be of interest to other members of the public, Health NZ 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



**Fiona McCarthy**  
Interim Chief Human Resources Officer

[TeWhatuOra.govt.nz](http://TeWhatuOra.govt.nz)

Health NZ, PO Box 793,  
Wellington 6140, New Zealand



## Appendix A – HN200066740

The below table outlines the number of RMO applicants to available positions, broken down by hospital, via the Advanced Choice of Employment (ACE) process. The ACE scheme was developed to simplify the application process for new graduates wanting to apply for their first positions within New Zealand. It simplifies the recruitment process for graduates by using a centralised match process which simultaneously considers the applicant's workplace (District) preference as well as the District's preference of applicants. It is beneficial for applicants as they only need to apply once to ACE for any position within the Districts and are placed only into positions with Districts that they have expressed their interest in joining. It is beneficial for the Districts as they see applications only from those graduates who have expressed interest in joining them.

Further information about ACE can be found at [https://www.kiwihealthjobs.com/campaign/ace?in\\_organid=19737](https://www.kiwihealthjobs.com/campaign/ace?in_organid=19737).

Please note that:

- as part of an RMO's application, applicants must state a preference for a number of Districts. They can select up to 20 preferred employers (Districts), but must select a minimum of six. **Therefore the sum of the applicants at each District will not equal the total number of applicants at the bottom of the table as some applicants will have noted multiple Districts on their application.**
- applicant numbers include all three categories eligible to apply via the ACE match process;
  - o Category 1 - Have graduated from a New Zealand medical school and hold citizenship or permanent residency of New Zealand or Australia
  - o Category 2 - Have graduated from an Australian medical school and hold citizenship or permanent residency of New Zealand or Australia
  - o Category 3 - Have graduated from a New Zealand medical school and not hold permanent residency of New Zealand or Australia
- the number of positions noted are those that were included in the ACE match. Districts will have had subsequent positions become available following the match process enabling them to employ additional applicants.

District	2020		2021		2022		2023		2024	
	Number of applicants ranked/applied to the districts	Positions available	Number of applicants ranked/applied to the districts	Positions available	Number of applicants ranked/applied to the districts	Positions available	Number of applicants ranked/applied to the districts	Positions available	Number of applicants ranked/applied to the districts	Positions available
<b>Auckland City Hospital</b>	407	64	400	63	378	62	390	62	397	62
<b>Christchurch Hospital</b>	347	53	340	66	390	61	343	62	347	62
<b>Dunedin Hospital</b>	256	26	208	26	227	26	206	26	196	26
<b>Gisborne Hospital</b>	229	10	243	10	208	10	140	10	130	10
<b>Hastings Hospital</b>	275	19	297	20	276	20	225	19	227	19
<b>Southland Hospital</b>	392	9	374	10	266	10	374	10	391	10
<b>Middlemore Hospital</b>	242	63	269	62	240	61	203	61	208	61
<b>Nelson Hospital</b>	252	12	303	12	284	12	257	12	230	12
<b>New Plymouth Hospital</b>	388	15	381	15	370	14	387	14	388	14
<b>North Shore &amp; Waitākere Hospitals</b>	232	63	225	63	232	62	203	62	146	62
<b>Palmerston North Hospital</b>	342	19	343	21	315	21	285	20	252	20

District	2020		2021		2022		2023		2024	
	Number of applicants ranked/applied to the districts	Positions available	Number of applicants ranked/applied to the districts	Positions available	Number of applicants ranked/applied to the districts	Positions available	Number of applicants ranked/applied to the districts	Positions available	Number of applicants ranked/applied to the districts	Positions available
<b>Rotorua Hospital</b>	140	13	136	13	152	13	142	13	98	13
<b>Tauranga Hospital</b>	365	22	413	22	345	21	353	21	385	21
<b>Timaru Hospital</b>	158	7	124	7	146	7	126	7	124	7
<b>Waikato Hospital</b>	374	42	395	45	393	44	388	44	384	44
<b>Wairau Hospital</b>	146	5	132	5	138	5	89	4	92	4
<b>Wellington, Kenepuru, Hutt &amp; Masterton Hospitals</b>	393	57	347	58	328	55	321	58	307	58
<b>Whakatāne Hospital</b>	219	6	212	6	192	6	161	6	167	6
<b>Whanganui Hospital</b>	130	7	164	8	122	8	110	7	106	7
<b>Whangārei Hospital</b>	300	17	317	20	280	20	261	20	270	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>561</b>	<b>529</b>	<b>583</b>	<b>552</b>	<b>559</b>	<b>538</b>	<b>543</b>	<b>538</b>	<b>563</b>	<b>538</b>