

5 May 2026

Hannah H

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Tēnā koe Hannah

## Your request for official information, reference: HN200201848

Thank you for your email on 16 March 2026, that was transferred from the Office of Hon Simeon Brown in his capacity as Minister of Health, asking Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora (Health NZ) for information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the OIA). You requested:

1. *Current and recent (past 12 months) data on RMO vacancies across Auckland Metro districts, including both permanent and locum roles (by level and specialty where available).*
2. *The number of NZ-trained doctors who have applied for RMO or locum positions within this period, and how many were successfully placed.*
3. *Any data, reporting, or internal analysis relating to NZ-trained doctors who remain unplaced or underutilised.*
4. *Any internal communications, reports, or briefings discussing workforce shortages alongside recruitment constraints or unmet applicant demand.*
5. *Policies or processes governing recruitment outside of the ACE matching system, including locum engagement pathways.*
6. *Any identified barriers (administrative, financial, or operational) to employing available NZ-trained doctors within Auckland Metro districts.*

## Response

Health NZ experiences ongoing workforce pressure across a range of clinical roles, including Resident Medical Officers (RMOs), both nationally and within the Auckland Metro districts. RMO vacancies may arise due to factors such as workforce turnover, leave cover, rotation timing, and short-term service pressures. These vacancies do not necessarily indicate persistent unfilled positions.

Health NZ is addressing longer-term workforce pressures through national workforce planning initiatives focused on retention, training, recruitment, and improving workforce data and planning.

For clarity, I will respond to each question in turn.

1. *Current and recent (past 12 months) data on RMO vacancies across Auckland Metro districts, including both permanent and locum roles (by level and specialty where available).*

We have interpreted your request as referring to the most recent data available on RMO position vacancies across the Auckland Metro districts, from 1 March 2025 to 28 February 2026. Please refer to the data and caveats provided in **Appendix One**.

2. *The number of NZ-trained doctors who have applied for RMO or locum positions within this period, and how many were successfully placed.*
3. *Any data, reporting, or internal analysis relating to NZ-trained doctors who remain unplaced or underutilised.*

Health New Zealand does not hold information that identifies the number of New Zealand-trained doctors who applied for, or were successfully placed into, RMO or locum positions during the period requested.

While some application and appointment data is held across separate systems, this information cannot be reliably linked at an individual level, and Health New Zealand does not hold data identifying whether applicants are New Zealand-trained doctors. Producing the information requested would require the creation of new data through analysis and reconciliation of multiple data sources.

Therefore, this part of your request is refused under section 18(g) of the OIA, as the information is not held as requested.

- 4. Any internal communications, reports, or briefings discussing workforce shortages alongside recruitment constraints or unmet applicant demand.*

On 30 March 2026, we contacted you to refine this part of your request to reports provided to the Regional Director regarding workforce shortages. On 6 April 2026, you agreed to the suggested refinement.

Following reasonable searches, we have not identified any reports held by Health NZ that fall within the scope of the refined request. Therefore, this part of your request is refused under section 18(e) of the OIA, as the information requested does not exist.

- 5. Policies or processes governing recruitment outside of the ACE matching system, including locum engagement pathways.*

Health NZ does not hold separate policies specific to recruitment outside of the ACE matching system or locum engagement pathways. All information regarding the recruitment process is publicly available on our website: [Our application and recruitment process | Careers](#).

- 6. Any identified barriers (administrative, financial, or operational) to employing available NZ-trained doctors within Auckland Metro districts.*

No specific administrative, financial, or operational barriers have been identified. Health NZ works within approved RMO FTE and appointment parameters to employ available NZ-trained and overseas doctors into RMO positions.

Therefore, this part of your request is refused under section 18(g) of the OIA, as the information is not held.

## **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

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Matthew McLay', is positioned above the printed name.

**Matthew McLay**

**Manager Government Services  
Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora**