



Katy Gallagher MLA

DEPUTY CHIEF MINISTER

MINISTER FOR HEALTH

MINISTER FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

MINISTER FOR DISABILITY AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

MINISTER FOR WOMEN

MEMBER FOR MOLONGLO

Mr Michael Bonning and Ms Olivia Millay
Australian Medical Students' Association
PO Box 6099
KINGSTON ACT 2604

Dear Mr Bonning and Ms Millay

Thank you for your letter of 25 July 2008 regarding the capacity to provide adequate intern training positions within the ACT in the future. I have requested that the Director of the Medical Appointments and Training Unit for ACT Health provide me with advice on this matter.

I am advised that ACT Health is aware of the projected increases in the number of medical graduates from both the ANU Medical School and nationally.

ACT Health has had a longstanding medical workforce shortage and sees the increasing number of medical graduates as an opportunity to address this shortage. ACT Health has already responded by increasing the number of employment positions for junior doctors from 249 in 2005 to 325 in 2008. There are plans for a further substantial increase in 2009 and subsequent years.

As you will be aware, positions for junior doctors must be accredited and there must be in place appropriate supervision, education, training, assessment and remediation systems. I understand that ACT Health, through the Medical Appointments and Training Unit, has increased the number of accredited prevocational positions and has also increased the number of vocational training positions, as well as achieving accreditation in two surgical specialties that had not previously been accredited in the ACT. ACT Health has also played a key role in establishing training positions for junior doctors in general practice in the ACT.

In response to your subsequent questions, I am advised that ACT Health can not guarantee intern positions to ANU graduates or graduates of other Australian or international medical schools. However ACT Health will be monitoring the situation and will be taking every opportunity to address our medical workforce issues in the context of the increasing output, from the ANU Medical School in particular.

ACT Health acknowledges that the ACT is likely to contribute to the national pool of interns which is believed to be a healthy situation. ACT Health is also committed to maintaining medical workforce diversity, at the same time as embracing merit-based appointments.

ACT Health will continue to offer interns core terms in medicine, surgery, and emergency medicine.

Thank you for bringing this matter to my attention.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Katy Gallagher".

Katy Gallagher MLA

Minister for Health

7/9/08