



Our Ref: 4-49033

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MINISTER FOR HEALTH

ATTORNEY GENERAL: ELECTORAL AFFAIRS

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FOR WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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Mr Michael Bonning  
President  
Australian Medical Student's Association  
National Office  
PO Box 6099  
KINGSTON ACT 2604

Dear Mr Bonning

Thank you for your letter dated 6 July 2008 concerning intern training capacity in Western Australia.

As you may be aware, I have made a commitment that all Western Australian medical students who are permanent Australian residents or citizens will be guaranteed an internship in Western Australia (WA), which includes Commonwealth supported, bonded and domestic full fee paying students until 2013 and beyond. Since 2005, WA Health has gradually increased its intern numbers by recruiting graduates from interstate, to prepare for the first significant increase in 2009 which will see the first cohort of Notre Dame medical school graduates to be employed as interns.

This is a challenging and exciting period where WA Health and the Postgraduate Medical Council of WA have been working collaboratively to ensure that there is appropriate education, training and supervision in place to cater for the increased number of interns next year and in future years. This will require significant funding which has been secured for 2009, and work is well underway to secure funding from 2010 onwards.

WA will continue to offer core terms in general medicine, surgery and emergency medicine. Each of the Primary Allocation Centres, i.e. Fremantle Hospital, Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital and Royal Perth Hospital has developed plans to cater for the increased intern numbers so that surgery and medicine terms are provided to all interns. PMCWA is currently investigating the capacity for all interns to participate in an emergency medicine rotation. In 2009, there is capacity for all interns to conduct an emergency term, and there are plans to ensure from 2010 onwards that interns rotate through an emergency department.

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From 2008, interns have been provided with an opportunity to rotate in a broader based competency program that offer a range of experiences not previously offered. This serves a twofold purpose exposing interns to disciplines such as Sexual Health, Radiology, and Infectious Diseases and to provide increasing number of rotations to meet the increased number of intern positions.

In the past, WA has been able to offer interstate and international graduates intern positions, which has always been welcomed. However the number of intern positions that can be offered to these two groups in subsequent years is highly dependent on the number of Western Australian graduates who choose to stay in the state on graduation. Previously, 10 to 20 percent of Western Australian medical students have declined WA intern positions to reside interstate. However, with the first cohort of Notre Dame graduates being offered intern positions, it is not known whether this number will increase or decrease. In accordance with priority groupings which are consistent with other jurisdictions, interstate students who are Australian permanent residents and citizens will have priority for intern positions over international students.

I thank you for your commitment and proactive approach to consider the interests of your fellow medical students and their future employment and training. I would encourage you to contact the Postgraduate Medical Council of WA if you would like to discuss these matters further. The Postgraduate Medical Council can be contacted by post at, PO Box 8172, Perth Business Centre WA 6849; by e-mail at, [pmcwa@health.wa.gov.au](mailto:pmcwa@health.wa.gov.au) or by phone on 08 9222 4125.

Yours sincerely



JIM McGINTY MLA  
**MINISTER FOR HEALTH**

12 AUG 2008