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**CONFIDENTIAL**

25 February 2022

[Redacted]

Email: [Redacted]

Dear [Redacted]

**Official information request for NZREX Doctors - [Redacted]**

I refer to your official information request dated 02 February 2022 for responses to a series of questions, to provide data facts for a research report for [Redacted]

Please refer below the questions you have submitted, with a response directly following.

- 1 Total number of PGY1 positions filled through ACE matching process from 2015-2020? Could you please provide me those numbers broken down by year?

\* NB: Unable to access files from 2014 due to cyber-attack last year.

YEAR	PGY1s through ACE
2015	29
2016	34
2017	32
2018	33
2019	34
2020	42

- 2 Total number of PGY1 positions filled by NZREX doctors from 2014-2020? Numbers broken down by year?

\* NB: Unable to access files from 2014 due to cyber-attack last year.

YEAR	PGY1S – NZREX
2015	5
2016	2
2017	4
2018	8
2019	6
2020	6

- 3 *Total number of PGY1 positions filled by IMGs from Comparable Health countries from 2014-2020?*

*\*NB: Unable to access files from 2014 due to cyber-attack last year.*

YEAR	PGY1S – Australia
2015	0
2016	0
2017	0
2018	0
2019	0
2020	0

- 4 *How does the DHB prioritise NZREX candidates?*

Recruitment is undertaken via the Advanced Choice Employment (ACE) in the first instance. This is a national system for placing medical graduates within DHBs. TAS (<https://tas.health.nz>) manages ACE on behalf of the 20 DHBs since 2003; they have contracted the Northern Regional Alliance (NRA) to provide the service.

New Zealand medical graduates are placed through the ACE system; NZREX doctors are not included in the process. NZREX doctors PGY1 positions are available but these are advertised at local DHBs.

At the Waikato DHB, these positions are advertised through HR recruitment website as any other positions at the DHB are. Candidates who are shortlisted and interviewed are appointed according to CV merits, performance and the availability of PGY-1 positions.

As a result of a shift to interview-based appointments and CV perusal, there is no “grading system” for NZREX candidates and each application is treated on an individual basis as it would be for any other applicant for DHB employment.

It may be worth mentioning at this point, that the number of NZREX positions has dropped significantly with the SARS-Covid epidemic outbreak. NZ-based doctors have ceased overseas travel and progression through training has been delayed as colleges have struggled with assessments of trainees.

Requesting these details during the pandemic (i.e. since 2020) may not provide a realistic portrayal of NZREX doctor employment.

- 5 *Is there any support program available for NZREX doctors to get the PGY1 jobs?*

We do offer observerships that orientate the overseas graduate to the NZ health care environment. However, these have been on hold during the COVID-19 pandemic.

- 6 *Is there any support program available for the induction of new PGY1 overseas graduates? This will not include those graduates who are coming to the hospital in PGY2 or year 3.*

We do not fill PGY1 positions with overseas doctors. They would not be granted registration via the Medical Council, as all pathways for registration have a requirement to complete at least their first year (including UK and Irish graduates who must complete Foundation Year-1).

The exception is Australian graduates which are treated the same and NZ graduates.

Overseas trained doctors from a comparable health care system as defined by the Medical Council of New Zealand - <https://www.mcnz.org.nz/registration/getting-registered/registration-policy/comparable-health-system-criteria/> - are only employed to cover positions that are deemed PGY2 or above. These roles are not suitable for NZREX graduates because they involving more autonomous work (e.g. reliver roles) and night work.

7 *Does the DHB get funding from the Ministry of Health to support PGY1 and PGY2 training programs for NZREX doctors?*

- If the NZREX is a 'permanent' NZ citizen, we do receive funding.
- If the NZREX is a resident of another country or is on a NZ residency through immigration (there is a 2 year wait period after getting NZ residency before 'permanent' NZ residency is awarded), we do not receive funding.

Waikato DHB supports the open disclosure of information to assist community understanding of how we are delivering publically funded healthcare. This includes the proactive publication of anonymised Official Information Act responses on our website from 10 working days after they have been released.

You have the right to request the Ombudsman investigate and review the decision to withhold partial information, due to the inability to access files from 2014, due to cyber-attack in 2021. The Ombudsman's postal address is:

The Ombudsman  
Office of the Ombudsmen  
P O Box 10-152  
WELLINGTON

Please contact me if you require any further information.

Yours sincerely



**Dr Margaret Fisher**  
Chief Medical Officer, Secondary & Tertiary Care  
Waikato District Health Board