



The New Zealand Medical Students' Association

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Debt pushing New Zealand Doctors overseas

The New Zealand Medical Students' Association is not surprised that increasing debt affects where students want to work in the future. The NZMSA is calling for the government to develop a cohesive plan for the reduction of graduates' debt and better support of young doctors.

"The level of debt faced by graduating medical students is alarming. New Zealanders should be concerned about the relative lack of support offered to young doctors to encourage them to work in New Zealand." says Elizabeth Carr, President of the Students' Association.

"With 89% of students now graduating with debt, it is unsurprising that a majority are considering the financial impact of the choices they make. Given that all graduates start work in the public health system, and most Kiwi doctors continue to work in the public health system throughout their career, the choices they make will ultimately have an impact on the retention of New Zealand trained doctors for New Zealanders."

"Dr. Perry's research revealed that 73% of students think that New Zealand is a good place to work and 95% think it is a good place to live – but it is notable that only 26% felt that they would be valued by hospital management and 25% believed they would be valued by the Government. This is a significant area of concern that needs addressing."

"The New Zealand public should be reassured that New Zealand graduates are well trained and deliver a high quality service, but they should be asking District Health Boards and the Government to ensure we take care of these graduates and ensure that we have New Zealand trained doctors for New Zealanders."

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Further information

- New Zealand is currently facing a medical workforce crisis. It is particularly severe in certain localities and specialties of training
- 36-42% of doctors in NZ are foreign-trained, many of whom stay for only short periods.
- By the third year after graduation, 30% of doctors have left New Zealand, representing a loss of \$14 million of training
- 2007 saw ~12% of newly graduated doctors leave before entering the New Zealand workforce