



NZMSA Statement on Graduating Doctors Without Jobs

The New Zealand Medical Students' Association (NZMSA) is deeply disappointed by the failure to employ all doctors graduating from New Zealand Medical Schools in 2024.

The New Zealand health system is currently facing a workforce crisis. Every day, we hear new stories of the urgent need for more doctors across the country, and the dire consequences these shortages have for both patients and staff.

Medical students have often been presented as a long-term solution to this problem. Domestically trained doctors understand our communities, are familiar with our healthcare system, and are dedicated to the health and wellbeing of their friends and whānau here in Aotearoa. Despite this, when we are finally ready to begin our careers as doctors, we are being shut out of employment in a system that insists it needs us.

NZMSA has been campaigning for change in this area for years. In preparation for this year's job matching process, we contacted Te Whatu Ora [Health NZ] and the Minister of Health well in advance to inform them of the need for changes that would ensure that all doctors trained in Aotearoa could stay in Aotearoa.

Despite our early warnings and our willingness to be a part of the process, it is clear that no meaningful changes have been made.

Despite having completed a minimum of six years of intensive study, dedicating countless hours (including nights and weekends) to learning, and spending hundreds of thousands of dollars to complete our training, an estimated 25 graduates have been informed that they do not have a job offer. They have been condemned to wait in limbo, hoping that someone else will turn down a job offer or quit, in order for them to be employed.

The situation is deeply distressing and completely unnecessary. We need these young doctors, yet our system continues to treat them with disregard.

NZMSA calls on the government to immediately address this issue by creating positions for ALL New Zealand Graduates who are unmatched, and to begin immediately making changes to the process of matching to ensure this does not continue to happen.

For further comments or questions please email vpadvocacy@nzmsa.org.nz