



8 April 2013

Mr Steve Tweed
Director of Industrial Relations
Irish Medical Organisation
10 Fitzwilliam Place
Dublin 2

Dear Mr Tweed

I refer to your letters of 14 November 2012 and 29 January 2013, to Minister James Reilly, T.D., regarding the availability of places for the 2013 intake of interns, and apologise for the delay in replying to same.

Minister Reilly has asked me to say that the issue of an adequate number of intern places in the Irish medical system is a priority for this Department and for the Health Service Executive. As you are aware, the intern year is an integral part of medical training and a medical practitioner cannot be fully accredited without it. Under the provisions of the Medical Practitioners Act 2007 it is a matter for the HSE to assess, on an annual basis, the number of intern training posts required by the health service.

There were 572 intern posts available in Ireland for the July 2012 intake, an increase of almost 70 posts since 2007. All 2012 EU graduates from Irish medical schools who sought an intern post here that year, and met the HSE eligibility criteria, were successful in securing a post. Indeed, to date there have been sufficient posts for all EU graduates from Irish medical schools, and a number of additional posts for some non-EU applicants.

The Department of Health is in regular contact with the HSE in relation to the issue of intern places with the aim, in so far as is possible, of providing a sufficient number of intern places for Irish/EU graduates from Irish medical schools. It should be noted that under EU law intern posts must be open to graduates from other EU countries, and the Executive has no control over the numbers applying.

The HSE will have approximately 70 additional posts available for interns commencing their training in July 2013. In total there are 639 intern posts available for the July 2013 intake. In addition, the Department and the HSE are working towards providing an adequate number of intern posts for the 2014 intake, to cater for the increased number of Irish/EU graduates from Irish medical schools that year. The HSE consider that there will be sufficient capacity and funding to ensure that every EU graduate of the six Irish medical schools can access an internship in these years.

I trust that this information clarifies the situation for you.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Stephen Doran". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'S' at the beginning.

Stephen Doran
Private Secretary