

The Hon Lara Giddings MP
Tasmania Minister for Health and Human Services
Level 10
15 Murray Street
Hobart
TAS 7000

6 July 2008

Dear Minister,

Re: Intern training capacity in Tasmania

We write to you on behalf of the Australian Medical Students' Association, the Tasmania University Medical Students' Society to discuss Tasmania's capacity to provide intern training positions for medical graduates in the future.

As you may be aware the number of doctors graduating from The University of Tasmania each year is due to increase by 59 percent, from 80 to 127 between 2007 and 2012. Each state in Australia faces similar increases with the total number of medical graduates each year predicted to increase from 1913 in 2007 to 3375 by 2012¹.

The increasing number of medical students and medical graduates will place considerable demand on Tasmania's existing hospital based clinical training resources. Without adequate planning the quality of Tasmania's medical student and junior doctor training will be compromised, to the point where Tasmania may no longer be able to offer intern positions to all of the medical students graduating locally each year.

Given the significant investment of local resources into each Tasmanian medical student during their training, we feel that such a situation would be to the detriment of the Tasmanian Health Service and would be inconsistent with community expectations.

In light of these concerns we are hoping you would be able to address the following questions:

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How is the Tasmanian Government planning to accommodate the increasing number of medical students and junior doctors?

Will the Tasmanian Government guarantee intern positions for commonwealth supported, bonded and domestic full-fee paying graduates from The University of Tasmania until 2013? If yes, will these places be guaranteed in subsequent years?

Will the Tasmanian Government guarantee intern positions for international student graduates from The University of Tasmania until 2013? If yes, will these places be guaranteed in subsequent years?

What capacity will Tasmania have to offer intern positions to interstate medical graduates?

We look forward to hearing from you in regards to these matters.

We would be happy to further discuss strategies to increase capacity and ensure ongoing quality of clinical training in Tasmanian hospitals.

Yours Sincerely

Michael Bonning
President
Australian Medical Students' Association

Ryan Thomas
President
Tasmania University Medical Students' Society

¹ Medical Deans of Australia and New Zealand. Submission to the Medical Training Review Panel Clinical Training Sub Committee. 2007.