

# PARLIAMENTARY BRIEFING

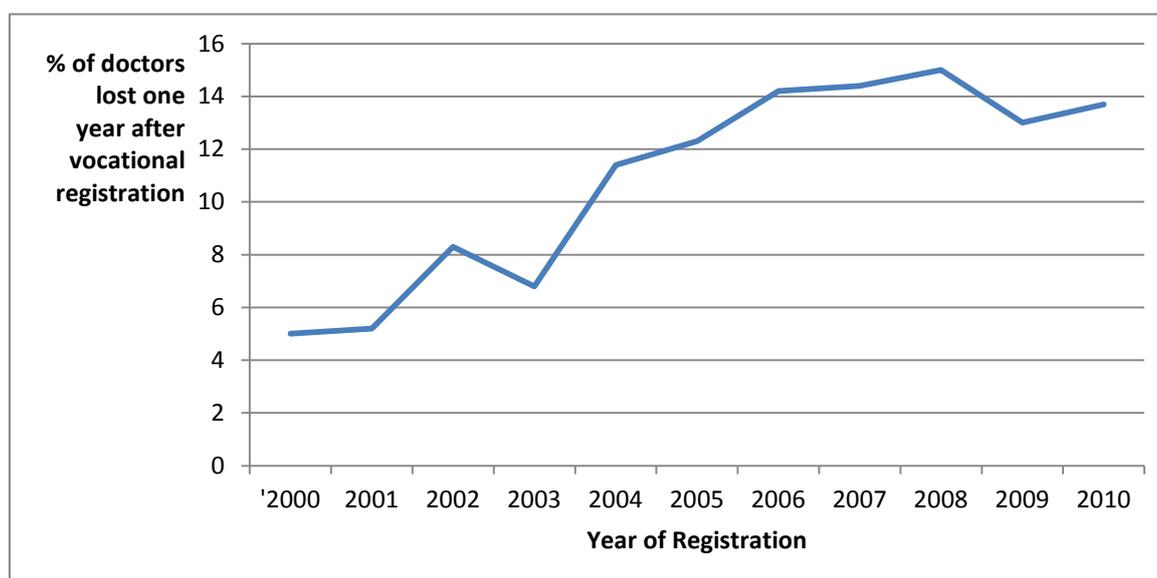
NO: 13-2

16 April 2013

## NEWLY QUALIFIED NEW ZEALAND SPECIALISTS QUITTING AT AN INCREASED RATE

Helping Explain why Entrenched Shortages are the Norm in DHBs

**Figure: New Zealand Doctors Lost One Year after Vocational Registration**



Source: Medical Council of New Zealand, 2012

New Zealand's newly qualified specialists are quitting practice in this country at an increasing rate. The Medical Council's latest medical workforce report (for 2011) shows that of the New Zealand doctors who gained vocational registration in 2010, 13.5% were no longer practising here one year post-registration, compared to 5.5% in 2000 (see above graph). Hospital specialists account for around two-thirds of new vocational registrations.

### **General direction towards increasing loss of doctors and largely not returning; a general worsening**

The retention trends fluctuate more in subsequent post-vocational registration years but the general direction is towards an increasing loss of doctors. For example: six years post-registration, 11.5% of those who registered in 2005 were not practising here compared with 5% of those who registered in 2000.

It is often argued that many doctors who leave New Zealand tend to return eventually. The data show that over recent years some specialists (not many) have indeed returned, at least for the short to medium term. However, by eight to 10 years post-registration the numbers tend to drift away again and the eventual loss is greater than in the early post-registration years.

As well as a worsening retention rate, the actual number of New Zealand doctors gaining vocational registration in a hospital specialty, notwithstanding annual fluctuations, has not grown over the past decade

and has declined on a per-population basis. In the five years 2002-06, an average of 155 New Zealand doctors gained registration in a hospital specialty annually, compared with 158 in the five years 2007-11. That equates to an average drop of 3% per head of population (18.9/100,000 to 18.3/100,000).

[BACK TO TOP](#)

Ian Powell  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

*The Association of Salaried Medical Specialists (ASMS) represents salaried senior doctors and dentists. The large majority of our members are employed by DHBs. Outside the College of GPs we are the largest organisation representing doctors in New Zealand. Central to our existence is to promote the right of equal access for all New Zealanders to high quality public health services.*

*The ASMS publishes the ASMS Parliamentary Briefing to provide considered advice to MPs of issues and concerns where we believe we have the experience and expertise.*

*If your email address has recently changed or is about to change, will you please inform Joanne Jourdain at [jj@asms.org.nz](mailto:jj@asms.org.nz)*

Level 11, The Bayleys Building, Cnr Brandon St & Lambton Quay, PO Box 10 763, Wellington  
Telephone 04 499 1271 Fax 04 499 4500  
Email [asms@asms.org.nz](mailto:asms@asms.org.nz) [www.asms.org.nz](http://www.asms.org.nz)