

MEDIA RELEASE

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INTERN PLACES ESSENTIAL TO ALLEVIATE DOCTOR SHORTAGE

Reports yesterday that New South Wales medical graduates are unable to obtain internships in New South Wales is cause for serious concern says the Australian Medical Students' Association (AMSA).

AMSA President, Ross Roberts-Thomson said "local graduates must be guaranteed internships in order to further their training and contribute back to the healthcare system."

In 2009, there were 469 medical graduates from New South Wales medical schools for an estimated 670 intern places. However, this figure will more than double to 891 graduates in 2012, and action must be taken.

Mr Roberts-Thomson said "Without sufficient numbers of intern places, the community will not gain the full benefit from increases in medical student numbers intended to alleviate the current doctor shortage.

"The New South Wales Government must act now to ensure the people of New South Wales are not left stranded with an inadequate supply of doctors" he said.

AMSA calls on all state and territory governments to guarantee that every locally trained doctor will be able to complete an internship in their graduating state.

Importantly, both the New South Wales Government and the state's medical schools need to take responsibility for the predicted shortage of intern places and demonstrate appropriate foresight by ensuring that the number of students accepted into New South Wales medical courses can be accommodated as interns by the state's healthcare system.

"In Australia, a medical graduate cannot enter any form of clinical practice or further training without first completing an internship. The fact remains that medical student numbers are on still on the rise, and the New South Wales Government has refused to explicitly guarantee internship places for all local medical graduates, and this must be a priority" said Mr Roberts-Thomson.

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