

**November 17, 2009**

The establishment of Medical Education England (MEE) has this year enabled professional stakeholders to become involved at an earlier stage in proposals for medical specialty training numbers and recruitment for 2010.

MEE's view will be shaped by an understanding that the NHS needs professionals in the right numbers, in the right places and with the right skills to meet future needs and to ensure high quality services for patients.

Equally, we are clear that we need to consider the position of the medical trainees as well – it is not right to train people for whom there is no realistic chance of a job. It would be inappropriate and unfair for people to go through the system if that was the likely outcome. It would also be a waste of taxpayers' money if we trained people to Certificate of Completion of Training (CCT) and then they were unable to get consultant posts.

Specific professional stakeholder support for the 2010 medical recruitment process has been provided by the Medical Programme Board (MPB). This is one of MEE's four sub-committees.

The MPB, and a working group set up specifically to look at issues for 2010 and beyond, has been part of joint working with the NHS, via the Strategic Health Authorities, and the Department of Health to look at the numbers and types of doctors the service will need in the future.

The MEE Board will not see final proposals until its meeting on 4 December but we understand and support the principles behind thinking for 2010.

These include the need to review specialist numbers to ensure we are not training doctors who do not have a realistic prospect of a post in the NHS of the future and, as a separate issue, to increase the number of GP training posts as a result of the increasing demand for primary and community care services.

MEE was only established this year and so this is only the start of what will be an ongoing process. I am pleased that for 2011 we will additionally have the benefit of the Centre for Workforce Intelligence (CWI) that will be set up shortly and should ensure a sound basis on which we can review training requirements by specialty for the future.

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