

**Senate Community Affairs Committee**

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

**Budget Estimates 2017 - 2018, 29 May 2017**

**Ref No:** SQ17-000961

**OUTCOME:** 2 - Health Access and Support Services

**Topic:** GP Shortages

**Type of Question:** Written Question on Notice

**Senator:** Griff, Stirling

**Question:**

Over the past decade, only 1 in 11 junior doctors are going into GP training. Does the Department consider there will be a shortage of GPs in the foreseeable future? If not, why not?

**Answer:**

Between 2005 and 2015 there has been a significant growth in the number of GP training places available to new medical graduates, rising from 600 to 1,500 places. Over that period, an additional 5,165 GPs were added to the health workforce.

The latest available data indicates that of 3,904 first year advanced training positions in 2015, 39%, or 1,529, were in general practice (through the Australian GP Training Program). Overall, the largest number of medical trainees went into general practice, followed by adult medicine and emergency medicine.

In order to assess whether there is likely to be a future shortage of GPs, it is necessary to consider both supply and demand projections. The most recent such study was released in 2014, by the COAG Health Council, and is available on the department's website as *Australia's Future Health Workforce - Doctors (AFHW - Doctors)*. Medium to long-term workforce planning projections to 2030 indicate a likely future oversupply of medical practitioners nationally. However, the report also acknowledges that there remains an undersupply of doctors in rural and remote areas. An updated report is expected to be available in 2018.