

Senate Committee: Education and Employment

**QUESTION ON NOTICE
Budget Estimates 2015 - 2016**

Outcome: Higher Education Research and International

Department of Education and Training Question No. SQ15-000364

Senator Carr, Kim asked on 3 June 2015, Proof Hansard page 113

Number of medical students in Western Australia between 2006 and 2014

Question

Senator KIM CARR: Can you confirm that the increase in the number of medical students in Western

Australia between 2006 and 2014 was in the order of 215 per cent.

Mr Griew: I would have to take that on notice.

Senator KIM CARR: A 94 per cent increase, sorry, in medical students between 2006 and 2014, and an increase of 215 per cent in medical graduates in Western Australia between 2014 and 2015.

Mr Griew: I would have to take that on notice.

Senator KIM CARR: If you could. Do these figures suggest a shortage of doctors in Western Australia?

Mr Griew: The work that suggested a shortage of doctors is the work conducted for Curtin University by Dr Felicity Jefferies, a former executive director of the WA Country Health Service, who argued that there was a current shortage of 915 doctors, a reliance on 1,150 more overseas-trained doctors than the national average, fewer doctors overall per head of population than the rest of Australia, fewer GPs per head of population—and on it goes. You have a former senior health official, herself a doctor, making that case. It sounds from those figures, which do not ring a bell to me but we will take on notice to confirm, that there has been some movement. The government has been convinced by the case that Curtin put.

Answer

We are unable to confirm the increase in the number of medical students in Western Australia between 2006 and 2014 because the 2014 higher education student data has not been released. Based on the latest available data from 2013, the increase in medical students in Western Australia between 2006 and 2013 was 56 per cent.

We are unable to confirm the increase in the number of medical graduates in Western Australia from 2014 to 2015 because this data is not yet available. However, the Medical Training Review Panel's Eighteenth Report (May 2015) indicates the expected increase in medical graduates from Western Australia from 2014 to 2015 is five per cent.