



MEDIA RELEASE

Whakatane Hospital the Top Choice for First Year Doctors

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Each year, final year students of our New Zealand Medical Schools rank their preferences for which hospital they wish to start work in as a qualified doctor. From this, we are able to deduce the most popular employers amongst our new doctors from the hospitals most chosen as their first preference in proportion to the actual number of positions available.

“There are a number of different factors which influence a doctor’s decision about where to work, including some unrelated to the hospital itself, such as where they want to live,” says Dr Deborah Powell, National Secretary of the NZRDA, the Union which represents Resident Doctors’. “Nonetheless, factors such as employer compliance with employment terms and conditions, safer rostering practices, appropriate training and supervision – are hugely significant to our new graduates.”

For the 2019 year (which starts December 2018), NZRDA congratulates Whakatane Hospital (BoPDHB) which has taken the top spot as the most preferred employer with twice as many applicants as positions, closely followed by Rotorua Hospital. Nelson Hospital is the third most preferred hospital.

NZRDA is not surprised that graduating doctors have chosen these hospitals as the most popular work places. Whakatane Hospital is well known for its supportiveness of RMOs from both management and Senior Medical Officers, as is Rotorua Hospital. Furthermore, all three of these hospitals introduced safer rosters promptly and have been working them for some time, which NZRDA believes is a great incentive for graduating doctors beginning their careers in medicine.

The lowest ranked hospital for the 2019 training year was Whanganui Hospital, with only one applicant choosing Whanganui as their first preference in comparison to its seven graduate positions. NZRDA is equally unsurprised as this is a reflection of Whanganui Hospital’s unsupportive management approach and failure to implement their single safer roster. These ongoing issues placed them near the bottom of the list last year and it seems no effort has been made to change, seeing Whanganui now slipping to the bottom of the list.

For the second consecutive year Waikato Hospital is the lowest ranked tertiary DHB.

NZRDA believes this is due to the ongoing high workloads of RMOs at Waikato and again, the slow uptake of safer rosters by this DHB.

Overall rankings were as follows:

1. Whakatane Hospital
2. Rotorua Hospital
3. Nelson Hospital
4. Wellington, Kenepuru, Hutt & Masterton Hospitals
5. Whangarei Hospital
6. Christchurch Hospital
7. New Plymouth Hospital
8. Middlemore Hospital
9. Tauranga Hospital
10. Auckland City Hospital
11. Gisborne Hospital
12. Palmerston North Hospital
13. Timaru Hospital
14. North Shore & Waitakere Hospitals
15. Hastings Hospital
16. Dunedin Hospital
17. Waikato Hospital
18. Invercargill Hospital
19. Wairau Hospital
20. Whanganui Hospital

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Resident Doctors

Resident doctors (RMOs, or Resident Medical Officers) are registered medical practitioners, and range in experience from first-year qualified doctors to those with more than 12 years' experience. They primarily work in the public sector, where they are employed by all 20 District Health Boards.

Resident doctors staff New Zealand's public hospital system, delivering 24/7 care to patients, and also utilise this time to gain specialist qualifications as surgeons, physicians, paediatricians, etc. Resident doctors are also employed in general practice as GP trainees.