

Government responds to specialist training provided to non-locally trained doctors in Hong Kong

â€œIn response to recent discussions on specialist training provided by the Hospital Authority (HA) to non-locally trained Hong Kong doctors, the Food and Health Bureau gave the following response today (February 8):

HA has been facing an ever-increasing service demand against an insufficient supply of local medical graduates for over 10 years. Along with the high attrition rate of doctors in HA, the turnover of doctors could not be adequately replaced and new service programmes could not be provided with optimal manpower over the past years.

With the increase in number of local medical graduates starting from 2018/19, HA has accordingly increased the number of Resident Trainee posts, with a view to employing all qualified local medical graduates and providing relevant specialist training. Nevertheless, HA is still facing manpower shortage of doctors. As at 2019/20, the cumulative number of doctor (Resident Trainee) shortfall is around 260, which is in addition to the attrition of around 320 full-time equivalent doctors.

According to HA, HA was not able to fill all vacant Resident Trainee posts in the past few years. Against such, further to recruitment of local graduates, HA is also recruiting non-locally trained doctors under limited registration (LR). This is also one of the measures to alleviate the heavy workload of frontline doctors. HA has been collaborating with the Hong Kong Academy of Medicine (HKAM) and its Colleges to facilitate specialist training of the non-locally trained doctors under LR. At present, a number of Colleges in HKAM have been accepting non-locally trained doctors under LR for continuation of specialist training in Hong Kong. Four specialties (Emergency Medicine, Family Medicine, Internal Medicine and Paediatrics) in HA are accepting applicants with pre-intermediate qualifications for recruitment.

In fact, the admission of more qualified non-locally trained Hong Kong doctors (especially specialists) to return to Hong Kong to work in the public healthcare settings provides an opportunity for increasing the number of trainers and expanding the overall training capacity.

The Government will schedule a meeting with the representatives of HA, HKAM and its Colleges after the Chinese New Year to discuss ways to provide more specialist training opportunities for both locally and non-locally trained Hong Kong doctors, including more training resources, training manpower and training materials.