



MedTrack: Irelands Medical Career Tracking Study
Costs of postgraduate training to NCHDs
Participant Information

Principal Investigator

Prof Ruairi Brugha,
Head, Epidemiology & Public Health Medicine
Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI)
rbrugha@rcsi.ie
(01) 4022424

Researcher

Dr Nicholas Clarke
Researcher
Population Health Sciences, RCSI
nicholasclarke@rcsi.ie
(01) 4022711

You are being invited to take part in a research study carried out at RCSI by Professor Ruairi Brugha. As a NCHD, you will be aware that consent to participate in research must be informed and freely given, and that you can withdraw your consent at any point.

Why is this study being done?

Many doctors choose to pursue their careers abroad. Our research aims to develop a better understanding of NCHDs' career aspirations, specialty choices and long-term career plans. This information will help workforce planners to develop more effective measures to retain and provide stable careers for doctors in the Irish health system.

We are contacting you, supported by the Lead NCHD Initiative, requesting you to complete a survey on what a NCHD priority: the **costs of postgraduate training**. The survey asks you to estimate the direct and indirect training costs you have incurred in the last 12 months, and your satisfaction levels with training and working conditions.

This study is supported by the HSE National Doctor Training and Planning (NDTP) and Forum of Irish Postgraduate Medical Training Bodies; and is welcomed by the Department of Health. The study has been approved by the RCSI Research Ethics Committee.

Who is organising and funding this study?

The research project is funded by the Health Research Board, and has been designed and is being run by the RCSI MedTrack Project Team. Our partner who is leading on this component of MedTrack is Professor Brenda Gannon and researcher Dr David Rowell, economists from the University of Queensland (UQ) in Australia.

Why am I being asked to take part?

As a NCHD, you are much better placed than anyone else to estimate the full costs of postgraduate training in Ireland; and to tell us about your career plans.

How will the study be carried out?

The online survey is being administered by the NDTP, on behalf of the RCSI research team. If you complete the survey, your responses will form part of a dataset that the NDTP will anonymise (neither your email address, the hospital you work in, your name, date of birth will be retained in the dataset), which the NDTP will transfer to the RCSI researchers.

The survey can be completed on various platforms: computers, laptops, tablets, iPads, iPhone and android smart phones. You will be able to complete the survey from two different devices, if you return to it through the specific link sent to your email address.

The information you provide will enable the researchers to estimate the costs to doctors of undertaking postgraduate training in Ireland; and to develop a microeconomic model estimating the impact of direct and indirect training costs, income, costs of rotations and other factors on doctors decisions in relation to specialty choice and practice location.

What will happen to me if I agree to take part?

Once you have completed the survey and clicked *submit*, your anonymised data will be aggregated with the data of the other NCHDs who participated. When the survey is closed, a dataset will be generated that will include your responses. This will be stored and transmitted to the researchers at the University of Queensland, under secure conditions. While we will not collect any personal information, we are collecting information on your specialty choice, costs and education as well as satisfaction levels with key factors such as training and working conditions. We would like to assure you that all information is collected in strictest confidence, securely stored and will not be divulged to anyone outside of the research team.

How will my contact details be used?

- (i) As the invitation to take part in this study is through the Lead NCHD/ NDTP Fellow the RCSI research team do not hold any contact details about you.
- (ii) You are free to decline to undertake the survey at any time.
- (iii) Your anonymised data and will be kept under secure conditions in a separate password protected file and will only be available to the RCSI and UQ MedTrack project team.
- (iv) The information you provide will be used only for the research purposes outlined here, in line with the ethics approval obtained from the RCSI Ethics Committee. Your information will not be divulged to anyone else and you will retain the full protection of the Data Protection Act.

What are the benefits?

The results of this research study will provide evidence on the scale and range of costs incurred by NCHDs through undertaking training in Ireland; and how costs, migration intentions and satisfaction levels vary by discipline / specialty and stage of training.

We will communicate the findings in the first instance to NCHDs through representatives of the Lead NCHD Initiative and the Forum of Irish Postgraduate Medical Training Bodies. We will also bring them to the attention of national decision-makers, especially medical workforce planners in the HSE, the MacCraith group, the Dept of Health; and the Forum.

We will also disseminate findings to scientific audiences (e.g. through journal articles). The ultimate aim is to effect positive change in the costs of training and other dimensions of the working lives and opportunities available to NCHDs.

What are the risks?

Taking part in the survey will take approximately 10 minutes. Given the stringent confidentiality and data security controls, we believe there are no risks associated with your participating.

Is the study confidential?

All information collected by the MedTrack Project will be kept in a private and confidential manner. No contact information will be collected. All research data will be held for 7 years and then destroyed. We would be delighted to share the results of the study with you (journals, conference presentations). If you would be interested in receiving updates, please email us and we will add your details to our mailing list.

Where can I get further information?

If you have any further questions about the study, if you want to opt out of the MedTrack Project or if you need any further information now or at any time in the future, please contact:

Prof Ruairi Brugha,
Head, Division of Population Health Sciences
Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI)
rbrugha@rcsi.ie (01) 4022424

Dr Nicholas Clarke
Researcher
Population Health Sciences, RCSI
nicholasclarke@rcsi.ie (01) 4022711