

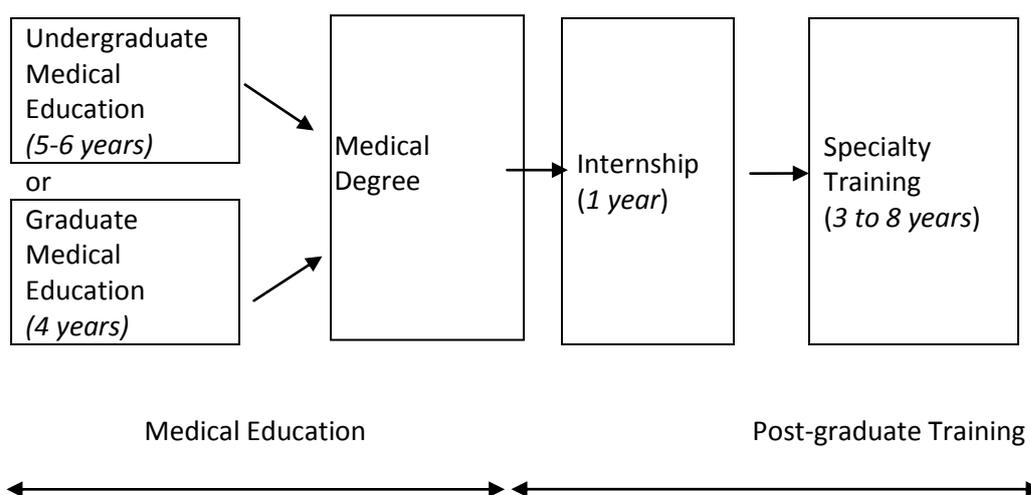


Trends in Medical Education and Training in Australia

1. Brief Overview of Medical Education and Training Pathways

- Entry to initial medical education in Australia can either occur directly following the completion of secondary school (entry to undergraduate medical education) or following the completion of a bachelor degree in any field (entry to graduate medical education). In 2014, 18 medical schools offered medical education programs in Australia. While Australia abandoned a few years ago its *numerus clausus* policy (i.e., annual quota of students admitted) for most university programs, it has maintained a *numerus clausus* for entry into medical education.
- After completing their medical degree, new graduates receive a provisional registration as junior doctors. This enables them to start an internship. The internship lasts for one year and is generally done in a public hospital. As an intern, the junior doctor will carry out a series of rotations in different clinical departments of the hospital, being exposed to various types of clinical situations and environments.
- Once the internship has successfully been completed, junior doctors can register with the Medical Board of Australia (MBA). But to practice independently, these junior doctors must still complete their post-graduate specialty training, which can last three to eight years depending on the area of specialisation (Australian Medical Association, 2014).
- To become a doctor in Australia, a student can therefore expect nine to fifteen years of higher education and post-graduate training (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Medical education and training path, Australia

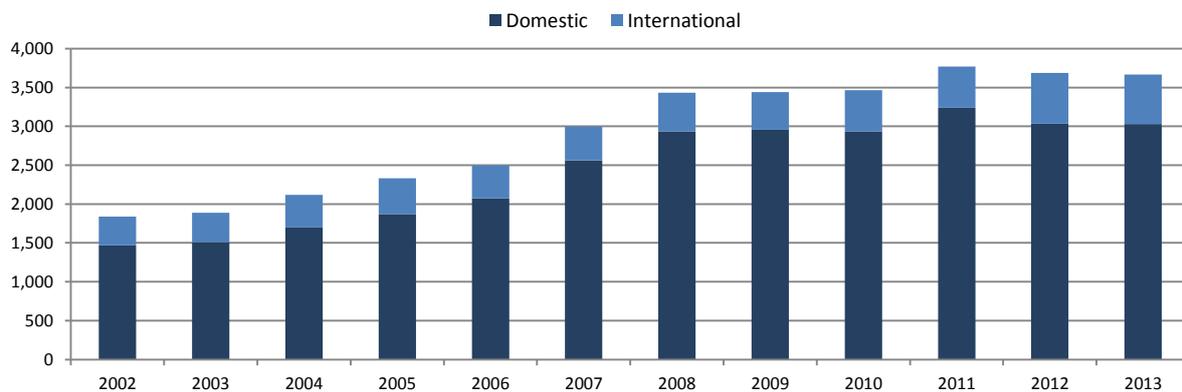


Source: Australian Medical Council (2014), www.amc.org.au.

2. Trends in Admissions to Medical Schools

- Figure 2 shows trends in admissions to medical schools in Australia from 2002 to 2013, distinguishing domestic and international students. Overall, admissions to medical education in Australia increased strongly over that period, at least up until 2011 after which the numbers have come down slightly. Still, the number of students admitted in medical schools in 2013 was two times greater than in 2002. The growth rate was slightly greater among domestic students (including New Zealand citizens), but there was also a fairly strong growth in the number of international students pursuing their medical studies in Australia. In 2013, 636 international students were admitted in Australian medical schools, up from 367 in 2002.

Figure 2. Admissions to Medical Education, Australia, 2002-2013

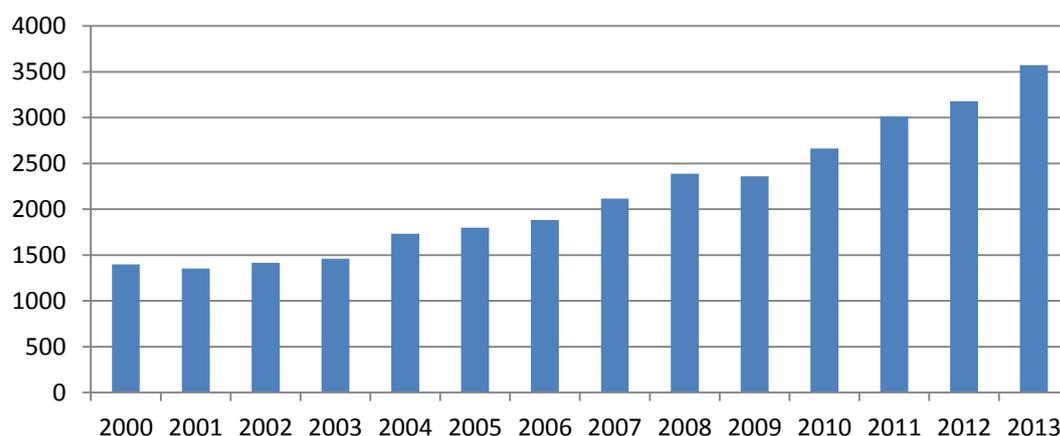


Note: Domestic student numbers include New Zealand citizens.

Source: Medical Deans, www.medicaldeans.org.au.

- The increase in student admissions in Australia has been supported by a number of factors: 1) an increase in number of medical schools beginning (with six new medical schools opening up since 2000; 2) change in policies regarding international students to enable them to remain in Australia after graduation and obtain access to general medical registration; and 3) an increase since 2004 in the number of domestic students paying full tuition fees that medical schools can admit (with the number going up from 10% of all domestic student places before 2004 to 25% by 2007) (Joyce et al., 2007).
- Figure 3 shows the annual number of graduates from medical education in Australia from 2000 to 2013. While the number of graduates remained relatively constant from 2000 to 2003 (reflecting the lower admission rates in the late 1990s), the number of graduates more than doubled between 2003 and 2013. In 2013, 3 573 students graduated from medical schools in Australia, up from 1 463 in 2003.

Figure 3. Graduates from medical education, Australia, 2000 to 2013



Source: OECD Health Statistics 2015.

REFERENCES

Australian Medical Association (2014), *Becoming a Doctor and Bonded Medical School Places – A Guide For Prospective Medical Students*, <https://ama.com.au/>.

Joyce, C. et al. (2007), “Riding the Wave: Current and Emerging Trends in Graduates from Australian University Medical Schools”, *Medical Journal of Australia*, Vol. 186, p. 311.

Read the report online:

<http://www.oecd.org/health/health-workforce-policies-in-oecd-countries-9789264239517-en.htm>

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