

Primary Care Crisis: Call for Training Support



A new study has shown that the average cost to train a resident at a Teaching Health Centre is estimated at \$157,602 per year. The report, "The Cost of Residency Training in Teaching Health Centres", was published by the *New England Journal of Medicine* as, on July 1, existing Teaching Health Centres began what could be their final year of existence.

Established in 2010, the Teaching Health Centre Graduate Medical Education (THCGME) was a 5-year initiative, aimed at increasing the number of primary care residents and dentists trained in community-based settings.

Last year, THCGME was extended for a further 2 years, expiring in autumn 2017.

Although the programme has been extended, funding has dropped almost 40 percent with programmes now operating at \$95,000 per resident.

Many programmes have struggled to find additional funding and are facing closure. Others that are withstanding the funding loss for now have acknowledged that they cannot operate at a loss indefinitely and say they hope the report highlights what costs are involved in producing a primary care physician.

"We are in the midst of a primary care crisis," said Senator Bernie Sanders. "At a time when millions of Americans lack access to health care, we must protect and expand Teaching Health Centre programmes that train much-needed primary care providers."

The programme has garnered wide bi-partisan support owing to its financial transparency and success in recruiting and retaining primary care physicians in areas of need.

Source: http://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2016-06/aaot-rhc063016.php

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