



Doctor Emigration Project Participant Information

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You are being invited to take part in a research study carried out at RCSI by Professor Ruairi Brugha, Sophie Crowe and Nick Clarke. As a medical doctor, 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.

What is this study and why is it being done?

As our earlier research showed, over the last 8 years doctors have been emigrating from Ireland in greater numbers than before. This research study, undertaken by the RCSI health workforce research group and funded by the Health Research Board, aims to develop a better understanding of the emigration intentions, motivations and long-term plans of current and recent trainees. This information will help workforce planners to develop measures to retain and attract back doctors into the Irish health system.

This study – which has been welcomed by the Department of Health and is being enabled by the Medical Council – will produce essential knowledge for retaining Irish trained doctors in Ireland. We aim to identify not only why doctors are leaving, but which career measures are most likely to encourage doctors to make their long term careers in Ireland.

Why am I being approached?

As an NCHD undertaking postgraduate training in 2014, you completed the initial Doctor Emigration Survey (a short set of questions nested in the Medical Council's annual trainee survey). Most of the 1,400 doctors who completed the survey shared their responses with us; and 900 – including you – agreed that the project team could contact them again.

In 2015, the research team followed up and undertook in-depth interviews about emigration with 50 Irish trained doctors, some of whom had already emigrated. The results of this second phase of the study were analysed, presented to the HSE, Dept of Health and NCHD reps in 2016, and are being written up now for publication.

We greatly appreciate your contribution to the Doctor Emigration Project and we are asking you to complete an online survey on doctor emigration, which draws on the responses and themes that emerged in the interviews and will give doctors' representatives and workforce planners a representative picture of emigration by Irish-trained doctors.

How will the study be carried out?

The survey is being rolled out in April and May 2016 through emailing those doctors, like you, who agreed to be tracked and who gave us their email addresses in 2014. The results will help explain how doctors make decisions about emigration or remaining in Ireland, and how these decisions change over time.

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

This on-line survey focuses on doctors' future career and migration plans, including doctors still working in Ireland and those working abroad, and asks if they are interested in making their long-term careers in Ireland. We expect the survey to take about 10-15 minutes to complete.

After reading this, if you decide to take part you should click the link to the survey which was sent to you through your email. When you finish the survey click on the done button and we will receive your completed survey.

What are my protections?

You are free to withdraw from the study at any time. We will delete your contact details on request.

How will my contact details be used?

- (i) While you provided your contact details to, completed the initial survey and agreed to be contacted again, you are free to decline to undertake such a survey at any time.
- (ii) Your contact details are being kept under secure conditions in a separate password protected file, for the purposes of this research study; they are not connected to any information held about you; and are only available to the RCSI Doctor Emigration project team.
- (iii) Your contact details will be used only for the research purposes to which you have agreed, in line with the ethics approval obtained from the RCSI Ethics Committee. Your details will not be divulged to anyone else; you will retain the full protection of the Data Protection Act; and you can request at any time that we destroy your contact details.

What are the benefits?

Taking part in this research study will enable us to inform medical workforce planners about the experiences of NCHDs who emigrate, and those who remain; and their motivations for doing so. We will use the research findings to support policy makers and workforce planners to develop strategies to retain and attract doctors back into the Irish health system.

What are the risks?

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 Doctor Emigration Project team will be kept in a secure, private and confidential manner. Where contact information is collected, it will be stored securely and will be held only for as long as required. All research data will be held for 7 years and then destroyed.

When we communicate the research results in journals or reports or conferences, no identifying information about you will be used. 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 Doctor Emigration Project or if you need any further information now or at any time in the future, please contact: doctoremigration@rcsi.ie. Our website is located here – www.healthworkforceireland.com – and is under reconstruction.