



EDUCATION AND HUMAN RESOURCE TRAINING COMMITTEE

NATIONAL PARLIAMENT OF SOLOMON ISLANDS

Responses to Committee Question 4

Question Noticing Details

Question No.26 Interim Programme for Cuban Graduate Doctors

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS (Abstracted from the Daily Hansard, NPSI)

Interim Programme for Cuban Graduate doctors

Mr NESTOR GHIRO (*Central Makira*) to the Minister for Health and Medical Services: Can the Minister inform Parliament on the progress of the Ministry's efforts in providing Interim Programme for our Cuban Graduate doctors?

Hon TAUTAI KAITU'U (*Minister for Health and Medical Services*): The program for doctors graduating from Cuba is in place and is in progress at the moment. The plan of the ministry of the first group is to put them into an internship training program for 8months at our National Referral Hospital (NRH). Once they complete the training successfully they can then do their internship. After they complete their internship training then they are posted out to hospitals in other provinces or the NRH. After that their do their internship proper for two years.

Mr DEREK SIKUA (*Leader of Independent*): With the first group that graduated, how many months have they been trained so far and how soon are they going to be deployed to hospitals and our clinics around the country?

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Hon TAUTAI KAITU'U: The first group have already done their internship training and now they are doing their internship for two years. In two years' time they will be working as normal doctors and posted to provinces.

Mr ISHMAEL AVUI (*East Central Guadalcanal*): After they completed their internship they need to be certified by the medical and dental board. The medical and dental board is very powerful in the ministry. Is this board still functioning or not?

Hon TAUTAI KAITU'U: Yes, the medical and dental board will have to certify them when they complete their internship. However, this board is not functioning for many years but just a few years ago this board has been revitalised and we have all doctors across the country registered. Any doctor that does not register with the medical board now cannot practise in Solomon Islands.

Mr RICK HOUENIPWELA (*Small Malaita*): The Minister stated that after the doctors complete their training and are registered they are going to be posted out in hospitals and clinics. Has the Ministry identified any hospitals or clinics already and which ones?

Hon TAUTAI KAITU'U: Thank you for the supplementary question. The planning to post doctors to the provinces and hospitals depends on the Posting Committee. They will go through the normal as to which places hospitals, area health centres and mini hospitals that need doctors.

Mr Derek Sikua: Can the Minister briefly inform Parliament on the problem with regards to our doctors as compared to doctors that train in other medical schools in the region or other metropolitan countries. Why has this problem come up?

Hon TAUTAI KAITU'U: I think what we have realised is the language problem. With the doctors training in Cuba, the problem is the practical. Maybe in their training facilities, they are not doing it practically, like touching patients. This is what we are trying to do here. I think they do oral theory. They know what their stuff is but practically, I think that is what we are trying to link when they come and do their internship training here.

Mr Matthew Wale: What level in the Public Service do you take the Doctors in when you take them into the internship training?

Hon TAUTAI KAITU'U: When they finish their internship, they will be on the same level as the other Doctors that graduated from Fiji or Papua New Guinea. I do not have that level, maybe level 9, I do not know but they will be the same as the other doctors.

Mr Culwick Togamana: Listening to the honourable Minister for Health in regard to rigorous training that medical doctors that are trained in Cuba are subjected to is a bit painful from my point of view, knowing that they will be undergoing these eight months of training under the program supervised by the Ministry of Health and then two years of internship. I think that is a bit lengthy. The supplementary question I want to ask the honourable Minister is, has there been any attempt from the Ministry to send our qualified doctors to Cuba just to assess the training program that our students gone through before this program is made for them on their return?

Hon TAUTAI KAITU'U: The program is not painful. Normally doctors are trained for six years. They have done four years there, one year here and two years internship. It is a normal process. There is a new plan now for our doctors. We have two doctors who went overseas earlier this year to talk with the Cuban Government on how to refine the program and they have agreed to have the doctors finished the four years training there and they will come back to Honiara and do one year training as student internship and then they go back and do the graduation.

Mr Nestor Giro: I wish to thank the Minister for Health and Medical Services for his insightful answers and other colleague Members who have contributed by way of Supplementary questions and answers. Those of us who are members of the Education and Human Resource Training Committee we really need this to make our report as it was requested by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Hence, thank you once again Honourable Colleague Minister for your good response