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### **Deans welcome PM Rudd's announcement**

Australia's peak medical university body has welcomed Prime Minister Kevin Rudd's announcement, but has warned there still will be not enough training places for medical graduates in two years.

'We welcome the announcement today by the Prime Minister, as these improvements in GP training places and graduate specialists places are significant and substantial,' said the President of Medical Deans Australia and New Zealand, Professor James Angus.

'The expansion in community/rural settings is especially welcomed, as this initiative will increase the capacity of the non-hospital sector to reduce expensive avoidable admissions.'

'However, unless action is taken urgently, we will be about 500 intern training places short in two years, meaning many medical graduates may never become fully qualified doctors and will never gain access to these new training places,' said Professor Angus.

Professor Angus said all medical graduates were required to spend a year as an intern, usually in a metropolitan hospital, in order to be registered as a doctor.

'By 2012, Victoria, for example, will be short 144 intern places,' said Professor Angus, who is Dean at Melbourne University.

He said this was because the number of training places funded by government was not keeping pace with a big increase in medical graduates.

'We need to ensure all intern places are funded, which we estimate will cost about \$25 million for about 500 extra places across the country, so all medical graduates can become fully qualified doctors, and help tackle the medical shortages across the community.'

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