

## National Survey on Medical Officers and Dental Surgeons to Identify the Distribution of Medical Officers and Dental Surgeons

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Ministry of Health appoints Medical Officers (MOs) and Dental Surgeons (DS) based on the existing cadre norms. However, discrepancy in the distribution and the shortage of doctors are reported frequently. To identify the distribution of MOs and DS, an island wide survey was conducted on 2019.04.01, from 8.00 am – 4.00 pm. In 182 institutions, 325 management assistants collected the data from personal files and payrolls using predefine data extraction form. The collected data was uploaded to electronic form on survey day. Including postgraduate (PG) trainees, there were 17910 MOs and 1510 DS in the country. 11000 (61.42%) MOs were under the line ministry and 6910 (38.58%) were under the provincial ministry. Uva province had the lowest number (772 (5.09%)) of MOs and Western province had the highest number (5347 (35.28%)) of MOs which were distributed among the provinces (n=15155). Doctor patient ratio for Sri Lanka was 0.81 per 1000 individuals; which was also highest in Colombo Regional Director of Health Services (RDHS) area (1.35) and lowest in Nuwara Eliya RDHS Area (0.37). Male MOs (n=9011,50.31%) were slightly higher than females (n=8899,49.69%). 698 (46.23%) DS were under the line ministry and 812 (53.77%) were under the provincial ministry. North Central Province had the lowest number 87 (6.3%) of DS and Western province had the highest number of 360 (26.09%) DS out of which were distributed among provinces (n=1390). 645 (42.72%) DS were males and 865 (57.28%) were females. Distribution of medical officers over the island is inequitable. Rural retention of the MOs were comparatively low. MOs were predominantly males while DS showed female predominance

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