

NURSES, NUMBER AND RESIGNATIONS

1170. Mr C.J. Barnett to the Minister for Health

- (1) How many registered nurses were employed by the Health Department in the following financial years –
- (a) 1999-2000;
 - (b) 2000-2001; and
 - (c) 2001-2002?
- (2) How many registered nurses were employed by the Health Department as at –
- (a) 1 January 2000;
 - (b) 1 January 2001;
 - (c) 1 January 2002; and
 - (d) 1 January 2003?
- (3) How many registered nurses left the employ of the Health Department in the following financial years –
- (a) 1999-2000;
 - (b) 2000-2001; and
 - (c) 2001-2002?

Mr R.C. KUCERA replied:

I assume that these questions relate to the number of Registered Nurses employed in the Government Health Services as the Department of Health does not directly employ any Registered Nurses in the capacity of a Registered Nurse.

For the purpose of this response the following Registered Nurse numbers have been collected from a 'head count' as opposed to full time equivalent Registered Nursing positions. It is important to note that a registered nurse may be employed at two or more different health sites but will appear in these figures as one Registered Nurse.

1.
 - (a) 10840
 - (b) 11178
 - (c) 11475
2.
 - (a) 8593
 - (b) 8907
 - (c) 9503
 - (d) 9976
3. It should be noted that the overall nursing workforce is ageing. At the 1986 census, 23.3% of nurses were aged under 25. This figure had fallen to 7.7%, while the proportion of nurses aged 45 years or more had increased to 30.3% by 1999 as reported in the Australian Institute of Health Workforce (2001) Nursing Labour Force 1999, AIHW Catalogue No. HWL 20, Canberra. It is also shown in the AIHW data that the average age of Registered Nurses increased from 39.1 years in 1994 to 41.6 years in 1999.

Health workers, including Registered Nurses may leave the employ of one public health service but commence work with another. The number of Registered Nurses who have left the employ of public health services entirely are:

- (a) 1204
- (b) 1278
- (c) 1326