

COUNTRY HEALTH SERVICES, NURSING VACANCIES

311. Mr P.D. Omodei to the Minister for Health

I refer the Minister to the topic of nursing vacancies in the Country Health Services, and ask, what is the number of vacancies that exist for -

- (a) registered nurses;
- (b) enrolled nurses; and/or
- (c) directors, managers or chief executives; in the following areas -
  - (i) the South West Area Health Service;
  - (ii) the Goldfields South East region of the Western Australian Country Health Service;
  - (iii) the Great Southern region of the Western Australian Country Health Service;
  - (iv) the Kimberley region of the Western Australian Country Health Service;
  - (v) the Midwest Murchison region of the Western Australian Country Health Service;
  - (vi) the Pilbara Gascoyne region of the Western Australian Country Health Service; and
  - (vii) the Wheatbelt region of the Western Australian Country Health Service?

Mr J.A. McGINTY replied:

The number of all health professional positions varies due to changes in clinical demand. The number of nursing staff required to meet hospital needs is governed by the Nursing Hours per Patient Day (NHpPD) workload management model. The model identifies the number of nurses required based on bed occupancy and the profile of the patients in those beds.

Seasonal factors such as the winter influenza places demands on hospital emergency departments and in-patient areas and therefore alters the number of nursing positions required to meet patient need.

In some of the country locations, such as the Kimberley and Pilbara Gascoyne, there is a high staff turnover, due to the harsh climate and remoteness and the need to employ transient clinical staff, those who have elected to have a working holiday and therefore usually only accept short term or temporary contracted work.

In other regions, such as the Wheatbelt and Great Southern, some of the nursing staff do not wish to be either part time or full time permanent employees as they wish to have the personal flexibility to only work when they wish to, as a casual employee. The local hospitals are often reliant on these staff to form part of the core 24-hour roster coverage. This same group of casual nursing staff is also called upon when additional staffing is required to meet increased clinical demand.

- (i) South West Area Health Service
  - (a) 30.5 (RNs)
  - (b) 3.5 (ENs)
  - (c) 4 (Directors, Managers, CEOs)

Average usage of nursing staff over previous 13 months for South West Area Health Service is 359.49 FTE Registered Nurses, 101.08 FTE Enrolled Nurses and casual nursing usage 46.7 FTE (majority RNs, no breakdown figure available.)
- (ii) Goldfields South East
  - (a) 25.0 FTE vacant                      239.5 total RN FTE
  - (b) 1.0 FTE vacant                        42.3 total EN FTE
  - (c) 1.0 FTE vacant                        N/A
- (iii) Great Southern
  - (a) 10.0 FTE vacant                      232.9 total RN FTE
  - (b) 3.0 FTE vacant                        80.0 total EN FTE
  - (c) 0.0 FTE vacant                        N/A
- (iv) Kimberley
  - (a) 16.0 FTE vacant                      222.5 total RN FTE
  - (b) 2.0 FTE vacant                        43.7 total EN FTE
  - (c) 1.0 FTE vacant                        N/A
- (v) Midwest Murchison
  - (a) 6.6 FTE vacant                        179.2 total RN FTE
  - (b) 4.0 FTE vacant                        59.6 total EN FTE

