

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES
BY DEPUTY G.P. SOUTHERN OF ST. HELIER
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON MONDAY 12th SEPTEMBER 2011**

Question

- a) Will the Minister inform members what vacancy rates for nurses have existed in Jersey over the years 2008 - 2010 along with numbers of applicants for vacancies and the comparable corresponding figures for the UK as outlined in her briefing paper of February 2011 for the States Employment Board (SEB)?
- b) Will she further inform members of the levels of nursing staff turnover and the impact of retirement projections on the predicted vacancy rates and supply of nurses over the next decade?
- c) Will the Minister explain to members where the “extra funds” required to “fund additional nursing posts” as outlined in the Human Resources proposals to representatives of States nurses is to be found in the draft Annual Business Plan 2012 which, on page 59 of the Annex, show a rise of only 0.4% for Staff Costs from £126.4m to £126.9m?
- d) What is the Minister’s assessment of the impact on recruitment and retention of nurses following the refusal of the SEB to implement the recommendation of the independent IDS report of January 2011 for a 5% increase for nursing grades 5 to 8?

Answer

- a) The average number of nurses and midwives vacancies in 2008 was 12.53 full time equivalents (1.9% of the registered workforce). In 2009 the number was 32.22 (4% of the registered workforce) with the average number of vacancies in 2010 rising to 48.93 (7.4% of registered workforce).

The average number of applicants for vacancies was nine in 2008, three in 2009 and four in 2010.

The UK target for vacancies is around 2.5% of the workforce, a target which was achieved for three consecutive years and temporarily rose to 3% for 9 months of the year in 2009

- b) Since 2008 the turnover of Registered Nurses has been greater than 10% per year (up to 10.66%). This turnover rate will increase over the next 5 – 10 years due to retirement levels. In 2011 around 34 nurses aged 60 or over will be eligible for retirement if they choose. This number is set to continue by around 13 nurses per year until 2016 when there will be a further increase.

HSSD pre-registration nurse training programme is set to provide 15 nurses in 2013 and 18 nurses in 2015 (note: this does not allow for pre-registration programme attrition rates, which are generally around 15-30%).

There may potentially be minimal change in turnover rates if retention of existing staff is improved and pre-registration training provides sufficient nurses to replace those who are retiring. Turnover will inevitably increase however if HSSD is unable to train nurses in sufficient numbers to backfill the ageing workforce and ensure an adequate skill mix of experienced and junior nurses is in place.

- c) The £800k funding allocated by SEB is outlined on Page 60 of the Annex to the Draft Business Plan 2012. This includes £500k for changes to pay scales and £300k to manage the increased risk within Older Peoples Mental Health services by increasing their nursing establishment.
- d) Neither SEB or HSSD accepted all the recommendations outlined in the IDS report on differing grounds. HSSD believe that a targeted approach to recruitment and retention is more appropriate than a percentage increase across the board on the basis that the issues associated with recruitment and retention differing for each Grade.

SEB has subsequently accepted alternative recommendations put forward by HSSD that outline targeted revisions to existing pay structures. HSSD believe that these proposals, will better support recruitment and retention.