

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES  
BY SENATOR S.C. FERGUSON  
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 1ST NOVEMBER 2016**

**Question**

Will the Minister provide the following information in respect of social workers employed by Health and Social Services, listed by year since 2013 and including the current year?

- (a) the number of social workers employed in total;
- (b) the number of social workers employed from agencies;
- (c) the total annual cost of agency social workers;
- (d) the number of social workers employed through their own company;
- (e) the number of agencies used, whether any of these have connections with existing or past States employees and, if so, how many;
- (f) the total amount paid by the Department on social workers' rents and the percentage of the market rental of the properties occupied; and,
- (g) whether commissions are being paid to past and current employees of the Department for the procurement of social worker staff.

**Answer**

- a) the number of social workers employed in total:

At December 2013	December 2014	December 2015	September 2016
79	84	81	81

- b) the number of social workers employed from agencies:

2013	2014	2015	2016 (to 30 September)
9	21	54	57

There is an ongoing need for agency social workers to be employed across the service so that the needs of service users can be met. Without agency workers, the current permanent staffing establishment would face unmanageable caseloads within the teams.

- c) the total annual cost of agency social workers:

2013	2014	2015	2016 (to 30 September 2016)
£180,531	£608,021	£1,599,488	£1,799,600

- d) the number of social workers employed through their own company:

We are not aware of any social workers employed through their own company; all such social workers are employed through agencies

- e) the number of agencies used, whether any of these have connections with existing or past States employees and, if so, how many:

Seven agencies are currently being used to recruit social workers and there is no information to suggest that they have links to present or past employees. These agencies are well-known companies that have been used by local authorities in the UK.

- f) The total amount paid by the department on social workers' rents and the percentage of the market rental of the properties occupied:

The Department does not usually pay for social worker accommodation. Agency social workers do not have a qualification to rent accommodation when they arrive on Island, therefore they are provided with staff accommodation, which they pay for themselves.

The accommodation ranges from bedsits with ensuite bathroom, bedroom with shared facilities, or 1-bedroom flats. The rent is determined by the property size and location.

However, this year the Department has paid for staff accommodation on two occasions. This was more cost effective than paying expenses for these appointments.

Costings are included in the table below:

Type of unit	Month	Rent paid	Monthly rent	Fair rent	% of fair rent
1-bed flat /staff accommodation	Jan 2016	£644.89	£644.89	£785.63 (2015 figure)	82%
	Feb 2016	£644.89			
	Mar 2016	£228.83			
Total:		£1,518.61			
1-bed flat/ staff accommodation	June 2016	£550.84			
	July 2016	£635.59			
	August 2016	£635.59			
	September 2016	£635.59			
	October 2016	£635.59	£635.59	£842.66 (as at 1 <sup>st</sup> Oct 2016)	75%
	Total:		£3,093.20		
Total for 2016:		£4,611.81			

Note: The flats in the table above are not identical and therefore attract slightly different rents. Please note also that the flat referenced between January and March 2016 was at 2015 costings; the flat referenced from June 2016 to present was subject to a 5% rental increase from 1 June 2016.

- g) Whether commissions are being paid to past and current employees of the department for the procurement of social worker staff

No commissions are being paid to past or present employees for the procurement of social worker staff

Further to the written answer 9678 this week regarding social workers, and some confusion in the media coverage which followed, HSSD would like to make the following additional points to clarify the position:

1. The figures for agency social workers given in section b) of the answer are additional to those permanent employees listed in section a)
2. The figures in section b) cover the total number of agency social workers employed during that year. This would be at various points, and for varying lengths of time, through the year in question. At any one point in time, a lower number of agency social workers would be working for HSSD. For example, the current figure is 18 agency social workers

HSSD trusts this helps clarify the position about the proportion of our social workers who are employed through an agency.