

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES  
BY DEPUTY G.P. SOUTHERN OF ST. HELIER  
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 20TH JUNE 2017**

**Question**

In relation to nurses and midwives, will the Minister inform members of –

- (a) the current vacancy rate for nurses and midwives in the public sector, and, if it has changed from the previous figure reported to the States of 12%, will he explain the change;
- (b) a breakdown of the distribution of nursing positions in grades 1 to 8 along with the vacancy rate in each grade;
- (c) whether any consideration has been given to the use of recruitment and retention bonuses and, if such bonuses are paid, what these are;
- (d) what different rates are on offer in the 4-year pay offer to nurses across grades 1 to 8 (B to J in the new pay bands), and state where the target rate offered for each grade is estimated to be higher or lower in real terms by the end of the period;
- (e) what the package on offer to nurses (including basic hourly rates, unsocial hours and overtime rates) will mean for average annual earnings of the nursing workforce by 2020; and
- (f) what strategy, given the pay offer for 2017-2020, he has for dealing with any high nursing vacancy rates in the short to medium term?

**Answer**

- (a) The current vacancy factor for registered nurses and registered midwives in the public sector (HSSD) is 6%. The figure reported previously in answer to written question (256) of 2nd May 2017 related only to qualified nurses in the Hospital.
- (b) The breakdown of the distribution of registered nurse and midwife positions is as follows along with the vacancy rate, as a percentage, for each grade. (Grades 1-3 are excluded as they are Healthcare Assistant and Support Worker grades.)

	<b>Number in grade</b>	<b>Vacancies</b>	<b>As a %</b>
NM04	399	29	7%
NM05	164	5	3%
NM06	106	9	8%
NM07	5	0	0
NM08	13	1	8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>687</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>6%</b>

- c) Nurses benefit from a more flexible and generous application of the States relocation policy.
- d) and e) These matters are still subject to negotiation between the States Employment Board and the trade unions and professional bodies so it would not be appropriate to comment at the current time.
- f) This will be defined once the outcome of Workforce Modernisation is known.

The Department has always been proactive in its recruitment activities, notwithstanding the fact that certain types of staff, such as theatre nurses, are always difficult to recruit, reflecting a national shortage of qualified applicants for these posts.

Recent initiatives to deal with nurse vacancies include the launch of 'Care Rediscovered', a six-month campaign using social media and the Internet, which has created a brand identity intended to help attract nurses to come and work in Jersey. All nursing, midwifery and operating department practitioner vacancies are promoted through the site, which has had almost 18,000 unique visitors since it became operational in mid-May.

Through 'Care Rediscovered', 13 candidates are attending interviews during June. A recent open day in the UK yielded nine potential recruits, and we have a further six candidates from a recent initiative in Lisbon.

We continue to proactively offer Islanders the opportunity to enter a career in nursing or midwifery through the partnership HSSD has with the University of Chester. There are currently 36 Jersey-based students undergoing this training who are in different stages of their pre-registration nursing degree programme. We have also recently agreed with the University to increase the number of places available for the next year group, and in May held open events where potential applicants could learn more about the programme and meet the lecturers.

The students currently in training will qualify as Registered Adult Nurses, Registered Mental Health Nurses, Registered Children's Nurses or Registered Midwives.

We also have two former nurses currently completing the Return to Practice Programme who will be able to work as Registered Nurses later in 2017.