

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES
BY THE DEPUTY OF ST. JOHN
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 16th JULY 2019**

Question

Will the Minister –

- (a) advise whether he or his Department maintain any record of social workers who live in the Island, but work in the U.K. and who therefore commute regularly and, if so, state how many social workers he or his Department are aware of;
- (b) provide details of the number of applications received from experienced social workers who have an address in Jersey, but who are currently working as social workers in the U.K., which were rejected by the Jersey social worker recruitment process and, in broad terms, the reasons for any such rejection; and
- (c) indicate how he proposes to resolve the current shortfall in permanent social workers in order to reduce the amount spent on agency staff and to ensure continuity of care for the Island's vulnerable children?

Answer

- (a) The Minister maintains no record of social workers living on the island unless employed by the government. Records of social workers and their home addresses will be held by the regulatory body they are registered with such as the local care Commission or the Healthcare and Professionals Council (HCPC).
- (b) There is no collated record to allow reporting of where applicants for the post of social worker reside. The service has received applications from qualified social workers and some of these have been successful in the application. A high calibre of staff is required to work as a social worker in Jersey. The recruitment process for social workers irrespective of domicile is robust and some individuals are considered to be 'unappointable' to the role. Factors taken into account include application form and personal statement, previous experience, competence, evidence gathered during the recruitment process and previous references. Having a role elsewhere is not a guarantee of success in securing a post in Jersey.
- (c) In March 2019 the service launched an innovative and professionally challenging recruitment campaign called 'Let's Be Honest', this has been supported by attendance at English recruitment fayres which has generated significant interest and an increase in the number of applications being made to the service, 57 interviews been carried out and 21 offers have been made to candidates. The area of recruitment and retention remains a high priority for the service. In addition all the places (15) for the new on island social work degree at Highlands College in partnership with Sussex University have been filled with a start date of September 2019. The first cohort of students will graduate in 2022.

Recognising the importance of staff training and development in retaining staff we have entered a partnership with the Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) to develop a practice model for social work in Jersey along with practice and action learning. A number of staff have also successfully completed an accredited qualification in systemic practice delivered by the Centre for Systemic Social Work in London. The training and development builds on the importance of relationship based practice and continuity of care for children and young people.