

**Question on Notice  
No. 534  
Asked on 19 April 2006**

DR FLEGG asked the Minister for Health (MR ROBERTSON)-

**QUESTION:**

With reference to the recent nurse pay offer that is claimed to be a 25.3 per cent increase-

- (1) Will he detail the actual increase in nurse payment packages incorporating all incentives?
- (2) Will he estimate the total cost to Government including professional development allowance, superannuation, leave loading etc and the total impact this will have on the budget over the next three years (reported separately)?
- (3) What was the percentage increase in the total cost of employing nurses over the course of the agreement (should it be sealed) taking into account all extra costs and payments?

**ANSWER:**

- (1) An in-principle agreement for nurses has been formalised between Queensland Health and the Queensland Nurses' Union, and is currently the subject of a ballot of all relevant nurses concluding on 2 June 2006.

Nurses will receive a 23% (25.3% compounded) wage increase over the life of the interim agreement and the proposed three year agreement for Queensland Health nurses which will expire on 26 March 2009.

Wage increases apply as follows:

- 4% or \$30 per week from 26 October 2005 (Interim Agreement);
- 3.5% or \$26.25 per week from 27 March 2006 (Nursing Attraction and Advancement Incentive);
- 4% or \$30 per week from 26 October 2006;
- 4% or \$30 per week from 1 July 2007;
- 4% or \$30 per week from 1 July 2008; and
- 3.5% or \$26.25 per week from 1 December 2008 (Nursing Attraction and Advancement Incentive).

This increase will see the salary of Nursing Officers Level 1, which are the majority of nurses in Queensland Health, increase from \$51,466 per annum to \$64,496 per annum.

Additional non-wage incentives include:

- \$2,000 one-off professional development payment to permanent registered and enrolled nurses (pro-rata amount for permanent part-time registered and enrolled nurses);
- three days professional development leave for all permanent registered and enrolled nurses (pro-rata amount for permanent part-time registered and enrolled nurses);

- enhanced roles and career paths for nurses including nurse practitioners;
  - additional support for nursing graduate transition (funding for one additional week's training);
  - remote area incentives extended to enrolled nurses;
  - increases to the night shift rate from 17% to 20% for registered and enrolled nurses;
  - 4% increases on 26 October 2006, 1 July 2007 and 1 July 2008 to the following allowances:
    - On-call;
    - X-ray;
    - Mental Health Environmental Allowance;
    - Relieving in Charge and special duty allowance; and
    - Assistant in Nursing targeted training; and
  - improved arrangements for midwifery models of care including an annualised salary for midwives managing a caseload of clients across a wider continuity of care.
- (2) The total cost to Government of the Nurses enterprise agreement proposal (over the interim and the proposed three year agreement) is outlined below:
- (a) Salary costs including superannuation, penalty payments and loadings - \$704.240m;
  - (b) Non wage items including professional development, graduate transition, remote area incentives and allowance increases - \$146.541m;
  - (c) Total \$850.781m; and
  - (d) Total cost over the 2005-06 to 2008-09 financial years is \$953.198m.
- (3) The total percentage increase in the salary cost of employing nurses (ie salary increases) over the course of the proposed agreement is 56%.