

Question on Notice
No. 1708
Asked on 10 November 2009

MR SORENSEN asked the Deputy Premier and Minister for Health (MR LUCAS)-

QUESTION:

With reference to Hervey Bay Hospital—

- (1) What urgent workable solutions is he providing to the hospital to fill the positions of skilled nursing staff who are resigning?
- (2) What will the Government do in the immediate future to fill the gaps in staff rosters as a result of continued staff shortages in all wards of the hospital?

ANSWER:

I thank the Honourable Member for Hervey Bay for his question.

The premise of the Member's question is unfounded in fact.

Hervey Bay Hospital has had an attrition rate for nurses below 1%, and there is not a large number of unfilled long term vacancies of nursing staff.

Strategies employed to attract and retain nursing staff within the Fraser Coast Health Service including Hervey Bay Hospital are:

- Close working relationship with University of Southern Queensland Nursing leaders to optimise the student placements and linkages between the University and the Hospital;
- A robust and flexible Graduate Nurse Program;
- A Preceptorship Program to assist new nursing staff;
- Education programs that assist with skill development for the specific clinical area;
- Flexible rostering to encourage work / life balance;
- Professional development opportunities with a paid allowance and paid leave;
- Monitoring of nursing workloads;
- A recent increase of 15 FTE for the Fraser Coast Health Service Nursing Pool to support clinical staff; and
- Leadership from the Hospital's Nursing Executive in a nursing structure that supports the Nurse Unit Managers who in turn support their staff.

Since 2005, Queensland Health has employed more than 12,600 extra doctors, nurses and allied health professionals. An increase of 93 FTEs have been employed at the Hervey Bay Hospital which represents an increase of 72% in nursing staff over that period.