

**Question on Notice**  
**No. 1061**  
**Asked on 17 June 2011**

MR JOHNSON asked the Minister for Health (MR WILSON)-

QUESTION:

With reference to medical and nursing positions in the Central Health District—

Will the Minister advise the (a) number of permanent medical and nursing positions currently staffed by locums, (b) number currently staffed by permanent appointees and (c) number of medical and nursing positions currently vacant?

ANSWER:

I thank the Honourable Member for Gregory for his question.

The Queensland Government is committed to building the medical workforce around the state especially in regional and rural areas of Queensland.

Since 2005 state-wide we have employed more than 3,151 medical staff, 10,288 nursing staff; and 3,774 health practitioner staff. This gives a total 50, 609 clinical staff currently employed by Queensland Health.

Outside South East Queensland, that includes an extra 600 doctors more than we employed in 2005.

I am advised that in Central Queensland Health Service District, Queensland Health employees 294 FTE medical and 1235 FTE nursing staff.

I am further advised that each of these is a permanent position which is available to full-time permanent staff. However, as the Member knows, recruitment of health professionals in regional Queensland can be difficult. While recruitment processes are undertaken for each and every one of these positions, Queensland Health will not leave a position vacant just because qualified professionals do not express interest in moving to regional centres on a permanent full-time basis. Further, Queensland Health employs locums to fill in when permanent staff take a well-deserved break.

Therefore, Queensland Health employs locums to fill vacancies to ensure services are provided in regional hospitals. With recruitment efforts ongoing the number of locums varies from hospital to hospital, from day by day.