

**Question on Notice
No. 90
Asked on 4 March 2014**

MS PALASZCZUK asked the Minister for Health (MR SPRINGBORG)-

QUESTION:

With reference to the projected growth in population in Queensland in coming years and the need for increased staffing to maintain services—

Will the Minister provide projected staffing levels for the Department of Health and Hospital and Health Services across the forward estimates, that is, for 2014-15, 2015-16 and 2016-17 (in a similar format to that provided on page 13 of the 2013-14 Service Delivery Statement, with each HHS listed separately for each year)?

ANSWER:

I thank the Honourable Member for Inala for her question.

The following table includes the 2013-14 Forward Estimate budgeted staffing levels, by Hospital and Health Service (HHS):

	Service Delivery Statement Published Values (FTE)		Current Staffing Levels (Fortnight Ending 16-Feb-2014)
	2012-13 Est. Actual	2013-14 Budget	
Cairns and Hinterland	3,641	3,761	3,875
Cape York	372	408	379
Central Queensland	2,533	2,696	2,537
Central West	289	278	308
Children's	1,913	1,858	1,941
Darling Downs	3,736	3,855	3,772
Gold Coast	5,021	5,456	5,680
Mackay	1,714	1,834	1,748
Metro North	12,707	12,691	12,478
Metro South	10,624	10,824	10,900
North West	593	626	603
South West	638	650	681
Sunshine Coast	3,556	3,566	3,663
Torres Strait	380	398	379
Townsville	4,478	4,657	4,508
West Moreton	2,477	2,745	2,544
Wide Bay	2,660	2,634	2,578
Department of Health	6,892	6,892	6,553
Total (Excluding QAS)	64,224	65,829	65,129

Note: Queensland Ambulance Service (QAS) has not been included in the above totals.

Queensland Health employs a sufficient number of staff each year to ensure that the approved staffing levels are maintained, inclusive of additional staffing enhancements and increased service level requirements. It should be noted that enhancements to approved staffing levels are announced as part of the budget cycle each financial year. As such, Queensland Health is only able to advise of staffing levels for the current 2013-14 financial year. Staffing levels for the 2014-15 financial year will be announced in the 2014-15 budget cycle.

In line with the key principles of the *Blueprint for better health care in Queensland*, orientating health services to better meet local health needs is a priority for all Hospital and Health Services (HHSs). Hospital and Health Services are no longer constrained by historical patterns of service delivery. Within the context of statewide planning objectives and local factors such as geographic location, workforce supply and access to infrastructure and equipment, they have flexibility to consult the community and determine the best mix of health service.

It is expected that full time equivalent levels will increase at a lower rate than the increase in Queensland Health funding across the forward estimates as the Department of Health and HHSs may elect to deliver additional public health services under arrangements with the private sector and/or non-government organisations.

In addition, the implementation of reforms underway, including contestability, may offset increases in public sector full time equivalent levels.