

The Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel - Student Financing

Response from HSSD

- 1. In what respects does H&SS, as employers of nurses, consider that the current system of student financing meets or fails to meet the needs of young people and their families in Jersey?**

The current system of student financing is prohibitive to young people who want to pursue a career in health or social care if they have to leave the island to undertake their degree. This does not just apply to nurses or midwives, but other professional groups such as physiotherapists, social workers, pharmacists and medical staff.

For more mature students, who bring valuable life experience to the role, under the current scheme if they already hold a first degree they are currently not able to apply for any funding support. For those with families, going off-island is not an option.

- 2. In the opinion of H&SS, as employers of nurses, whose responsibility is it to finance university education?**

For island students wishing to enter a career in nursing or midwifery in Jersey, HSSD would see the responsibility to determine the level of funding support as sitting with the Education Department, which already has a mechanism to means test applicants.

However, for nurses and midwives already qualified and in employment in HSSD who access academic courses as part of their ongoing CPD, this is funded in part through HSSD as the employer and the nurse/midwife themselves.

- 3. What changes, if any, would H&SS, as employers of nurses, like to see to the current system that would greater assist young people in achieving their ambitions?**

Changes to entitlement for income support to enable existing employees to temporarily transfer from paid employment to complete a three-year pre-registration programme.

A system in place to provide realistic student loans and repayment agreements from local banks.

Offer course fee funding for those with previous degrees and those in full-time employment outside of H&SS who are suitable for pre-registration nurse training.

- 4. What reliance does H&SS, as employers of nurses, have on graduates being available?**

Nursing is now an all graduate profession. Having graduates available is crucial in order to deliver safe patient care.

Natural staff turnover, through promotion, retirements or relocation invariably puts pressure on the system. However, having an annual supply of locally trained graduate nurses entering the workforce relieves some of the recruitment pressures.

5. Is it essential for nurses to have degrees?

Nursing is an all graduate profession and has been since 2012.

As from September 2012, all Registered Nurses in the UK are required by the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC), as a regulatory body that sets the standards for training, to have undertaken a three-year degree programme of preparation for the qualification.

The NMC sets out essential requirements for the number of student academic hours; clinical placement hours; ratio of lecturers per student and Registered Nurse mentors in practice required by H&SS in order to validate Jersey in partnership with a UK university as a centre to provide the training.

6. Does H&SS, as employers of nurses, generally have training available to bring employees up to the same level as degree holders?

Yes, training is available on-island to bring any Registered Nurse without a 1st Degree up to graduate level, and has been available since 2004.

7. What does H&SS, as employers of nurses, consider the long term impact on the Island would be if large numbers of Jersey young people are unable to follow degree courses?

An increase in reliance on recruitment from outside the Island at all grades.

Loss of indigenous population from the caring workforce and a workforce not reflective of the island's ethnic population.

Increasing number of economically active residents looking to train for and develop careers outside Jersey. This would inevitably impact on economically active partners and spouses likely to move with them.

Increasing reliance on external nursing recruitment and applications for visas.

Increased costs associated with recruitment and relocation.

Increasing number of spouses/partners of externally recruited nurses looking for employment in Jersey, historically one of the main causes of H&SS turnover at more senior nursing grades.

Increasing number of children from externally recruited nurses requiring access to education.

Changing profile of Island housing needs from demand for more key worker licensed accommodation and reduced number of those with entitlement.

8. Additional Comments

H&SS considers that the Island would benefit from the same criteria suggested within point 3 with regard to widening of access to health and social care graduate training.

The department believes that this approach should apply to all health and social care professions where a critical skills shortage exists – currently trainee graduate Social

Workers and Operating Department Practitioners in addition to Registered Nurses. Such an approach aims to reduce the reliance on external recruitment and address service demand to support P82 and provisions for the increased population.