

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES
BY DEPUTY G.P. SOUTHERN OF ST. HELIER
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 1st NOVEMBER 2011**

Question

In the light of the refusal of both her department and the States Employment Board's to implement the recommendations of the Income Data Services review of recruitment and retention of nurses, will the Minister give members detailed information on the concrete proposals she has to address the issues raised?

Does the Minister accept the findings of the report which suggest that significant pay rises (of the order of 17%) are required if nursing vacancy rates are to be addressed in the long term?

Answer

The IDS report did find that Grade 5 nurses are 17% worse off than their UK counterparts once housing costs had been factored in. The report did not, however, recommend a 17% pay rise.

HSSD accepts that we are part of a global labour market and, if we are to recruit and retain high calibre nurses and midwives, we must be able to compete. Pay is obviously a critical factor in making Jersey attractive but there are many other important issues relating to broader terms and conditions of employment, the working environment, accommodation, access to training, career opportunities and overall quality of life. Managing our nurse vacancy rate in the long term is about more than salary increases, even if such increases could be afforded.

Since the publication of the IDS report discussions have taken place between:

- the States Employment Board
- HSSD Management
- employee representatives from the three unions that comprise the nurses and midwives pay group (Royal College of Nursing; Royal College of Midwives; the Jersey Nursing Association/Unite)

As a result, I confirm the following proposals have been agreed:

1. More flexibility will be applied to the current relocation arrangements. In future nurses and midwives recruited from outside Jersey will be able to immediately access £3,000 of the available £8,000 to assist with their relocation.
2. Additional nurses will be recruited in order to ease the operational pressures in elderly mental health services.

3. Amendments will be made to the current pay structure including:

- changing the starting increment for newly qualified nurses and midwives, so that all registered nurses start on Grade 4, as opposed to some starting on Grade 3. Newly qualified staff will start at a lower increment on Grade 4 and experienced staff will start on a higher increment. This change will result in the Grade 3 band becoming available to support the development of new roles, for example the progression of healthcare assistants.
- Revise the Grade 8 structure to allow the expansion of roles whilst retaining the nurses and midwives pay structure.