

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

7th Assembly

30/03/1995

40. Professional Development - Remote Area Nursing Staff

Mr. BELL to MINISTER for HEALTH SERVICES

QUESTION

1. What in-service arrangements are offered to nurses employed by the Department of Health and Community Services who work in remote rural communities.
2. What are the details of the number of in-service courses each nurse in those communities is able to access each year.
3. Have any nurses been advised that they are unable to attend in-service courses because of financial restraints within the Department.
4. Have any nurses been advised that they have had the number of in-service courses they are able to attend reduced because of financial restraints within the Department.

ANSWER

Answered on 15/08/95

1. Staff Development Services for each district in the Northern Territory provide a diverse and extensive range of inservice topics for nurses. Remote area nurses can access many general sessions and are assisted to attend those identified and conducted as an individual development need or a new requirement for the specific role they perform.

The identification of training and development needs is done annually by Staff Development Services in consultation with the Rural Nursing Service.

Factors which limit access are relief availability and competing work demands. Cost factors and competing demands on the Staff Development Services as a central resource are also considerations.

2. The following summary indicate variations in local arrangements between districts

DISTRICT	MINIMUM INSERVICE ATTENDANCE PER YEAR
Darwin	1 x (3-5 days)
Katherine	3 x (3 days)
Alice Springs	No minimum set. 10 days per year study/in-service under discussion.
East Arnhem	1-2 x (4 days)
Barkly	1-2 x (2-3 days)

Each inservice attendance in most instances covers a number of topics or specific skill development. In addition new staff are provided with additional information in an orientation program.

3. Yes. There is not an unlimited budget for staff development. From time to time all staff are encouraged to adopt a carefully balanced and planned approach in providing and accessing Departmental inservice programs and meeting professional development requirements.

4. There is no deliberate strategy across the Northern Territory which specifically targets inservice for remote area nurses as a cost saving exercise. Barkly District staff have been advised that due to budget restraints only essential and priority services would be funded.