

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

WRITTEN QUESTION

Mr Yan to the Minister for Health:

Doctor and Nurse Positions

1. **How many doctors in the Northern Territory are currently on temporary contracts at Royal Darwin Hospital, Palmerston Regional Hospital, Alice Springs Hospital, Gove District Hospital, Tennant Creek Hospital and Katherine Hospital? How many are on permanent contracts?**

A 'medical officer' is an employee who is a medical practitioner granted registration by the Australian Health Professionals Regulation Authority (AHPRA).

As of 16 November 2021, the majority of the 888 medical officers in the NT were on temporary contracts. The nature of employment for most medical officers is time-limited contracts between 1 and 5 years. This is consistent with other jurisdictions.

2. **How many nurses in the Northern Territory are currently on temporary contracts at Royal Darwin Hospital, Palmerston Regional Hospital, Alice Springs Hospital, Gove District Hospital, Tennant Creek Hospital and Katherine Hospital? How many are on permanent contracts?**

As at 16 November 2021, the number of Temporary and Permanent Nurses per hospital are:

	Temporary Nurses*	Permanent Nurses*
Royal Darwin & Palmerston Hospital	225	1491
Alice Springs Hospital	204	449
Gove District Hospital	28	58
Katherine Hospital	40	76
Tennant Creek Hospital	13	33
TOTAL	510	2107

*Employed headcount

3. **How many doctor positions are currently vacant at Royal Darwin Hospital, Palmerston Regional Hospital, Alice Springs Hospital, Gove District Hospital, Tennant Creek Hospital and Katherine Hospital? How long have they been vacant?**

To respond to this question is too administratively onerous and would result in undue diversion of resources from service delivery. Reports of vacancies need to be individually verified at the work unit level.

4. **How many nurse positions are currently vacant at Royal Darwin Hospital, Palmerston Regional Hospital, Alice Springs Hospital, Gove District Hospital, Tennant Creek Hospital and Katherine Hospital? How long have they been vacant?**

To respond to this question is too administratively onerous and would result in undue diversion of resources from service delivery. Reports of vacancies need to be individually verified at the work unit level.

5. **In the past year, how many locum doctor placements have occurred in Northern Territory hospitals? What was the total cost of these, including salary, transport, accommodation and any other costs?**

The current data sets are unable to provide this level of detail. However, the following high level costs are provided below.

Hospital	Locum costs
Alice Springs Hospital	\$3,131,097.89
Gove Hospital	\$1,290,158.61
Katherine Hospital	\$4,307,009.27
Palmerston Regional Hospital	\$289,142.39
Royal Darwin Hospital	\$5,946,592.68
Tennant Creek Hospital	\$174,320.93
Grand Total	\$15,138,321.77

*** Figures calculated 16 November 2021 excludes Visiting Medical Officers (e.g. visiting senior specialists)*