

THE HONOURABLE LESA SEMMLER  
MINISTER OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

**Private Agency Nurses**

Mr. Speaker, I have a Return to Written Question asked by the Member for Range Lake on February 28, 2024, regarding Private Agency Nurses.

The Member asked for a breakdown of the total costs for agency nurses by fiscal year since 2019-2020. The health and social services system did not start using agency nurses until 2021-2022. For 2021-2022, the total cost was \$531,568. For 2022-2023 the total cost was \$5,330,579. For 2023-2024 the estimated cost was \$4,441,235. This is an estimate as actuals are not yet finalized.

The Member asked for a breakdown of the total costs for agency nurses based on expenditure categories, those being salaries, overtime, per diems, travel, accommodations, performance bonuses, and any other form of remuneration. This information is quite detailed and later today I will table this information.

The Member asked for the total number of nursing staff positions in the public service that could be funded from an equivalent expenditure as on agency nurses. For 2023-2024, the total expenditures by HSS system on agency nurses was \$4,441,235. The average cost of a registered nurse position in 2023-24 was \$143,000. Based on the 2023-2024 expenditure on agency nurses, this was equivalent to 31 registered nurse positions. It is important to note that the need that required the use of agency nurses is a direct result of not being able to fill critical functions. Recruitment efforts to fill all nursing positions is of the utmost importance and continues in a labour market that is both limited and highly competitive across the country.

The Member asked for the total number of registered nurses recruited to the public service since 2019-2020. Later today I will table this information.

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-2-

And finally, the Member asked for the total number of registered nurses who have been terminated, retired or otherwise left their employment since 2019-2020. This information will be included in the information I will table later today.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.