



Standing Committee on Health and Community Wellbeing

Inquiry into Annual and Financial Reports 2022-2023 **ANSWER TO QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE**

Asked by Mrs Elizabeth Kikkert MLA on 15 November 2023: Ms Rule took on notice the following question(s):

Reference: Hansard proof transcript 15 November 2023 [PAGES 70-71]

In relation to: Child and Family Centre staffing vacancies

MRS KIKKERT: What jobs are you struggling to recruit to?

Ms Perkins: Why are we struggling?

MRS KIKKERT: What jobs? What are the roles?

Ms Perkins: The child and family centre worker—social workers.

MRS KIKKERT: Social workers in particular? Any other roles?

Ms Perkins: We are a multidisciplinary team, so we have teachers, psychologists—

MRS KIKKERT: How many vacancies currently need to be filled, and what are their roles?

Ms Rule: We can take that breakdown on notice. I think it would be reasonable to say that the Child and Family Centres are not immune from the workforce shortages that every other part of the service system is facing. Allied health workers and therapeutic workers, like social workers and others, are in high demand across all service systems, and the Child and Family Centres are experiencing difficulties like other parts of the system. We have looked at doing some things like making sure that the jobs are paid at the right level. We have done some work around permanency, so, instead of offering short-term positions, we offer permanent positions because that is more attractive. We have also talked to our colleagues in the Health Directorate, who are another big consumer, if you like, of these sorts of job families. We are also doing some workforce planning in the directorate about where our areas of highest need are and what some creative solutions are that we might be able to work through to source more workforce for some of the areas where the skill shortages are real.

Ms Rachel Stephen-Smith MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

Across the three Child and Family Centres, the total budgeted Full Time Equivalents (FTE), including an administration officer in each centre, is 30 FTE. As of October 2023, the centres are operating at 28.63 FTE.

Vacancies are for Child and Family Centre workers. These positions are qualified health professional positions with backgrounds in social work, early childhood, psychology or behavioural sciences. As with any workforce where there are ongoing recruitment challenges, CSD expects fluctuations in these figures.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Health and Community Wellbeing

Signature:



Date:

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By the Minister for Families and Community Services, Ms Rachel Stephen-Smith MLA