Report from

Advisory Committee on Ministerial Placements

Report

The Placement Committee has sought to do the following since the 34th Synod:
- Support the "call" process within the life of the church;
- Streamline and make this process more transparent and efficient;
- Update our data base and documentation supporting the placements process.

About our Committee

The Placements Committee (Advisory Committee on Ministerial Placements) is responsible for the oversight of the processes that enable the placement of ministers, ministers from other denominations and lay people in particular specified ministries.

Membership includes the moderator (chairperson), associate general secretary (secretary), each presbytery minister, delegate of the CEO of UnitingCare Queensland, the executive officer of the Queensland Synod Chaplaincy Commission, and the Director of Christian Formation or delegate. This diverse membership brings together a collective story about what is happening across the life of the church and what resources are best able to meet the needs of particular ministry contexts.

Please see below the current statistics for Placements within the Qld Synod:

Statistics @ 01/03/2020 for the period 01/01/2019 - 01/03/2020

Total number of approved placements including vacancies	**292**
Synod/Chaplaincy	77
Bremer Brisbane	30
Carpentaria	31
Central Queensland	15
Mary Burnett	26
Moreton Rivers	57
South Moreton	39
The Downs	17
Number of approved placements less than 1.0 FTE	**132**
Number of ministry agents in approved placements	**270**
Ordained	194
Lay	76
Male	175
Female	95

Focus since the last Synod

Placements Administration Review Project

The purpose of this project was to align the administrative functions relating to the placement of ministry agents, with the administrative functions of the People and Culture Team. A key deliverable for this project was to reduce the average time to fill a placement vacancy and to provide consistent and accessible templates to support the placement processes.

An analysis of placement processes identified in 2018 that:

- 50 new vacancies were received and 35 were fulfilled
- Existing vacancies increased from 16 in 2017, to 32 in 2018
- 11 calls and appointments were issued out of 25 Placement Committee recommendations
- On average, it takes 2.8 months to issue a call/appointment
- There are multiple sources of data on ministry agents
- Inconsistency in recording
- Some documentation is missing or not captured in the current process

Two improvement strategies have been implemented to improve the administration functions of placement processes:

- The customer relationship database of the Queensland Synod (SugarCRM) is now the single source of truth for ministry agents, with links to the records management solution Sharepoint. The placement process is captured in SugarCRM and the Placement Committee has real time access to data and reports that contain all required information for the Committee considerations. This has been complimented by an associated SugarCRM project to maintain accurate Blue Card records for Ministry Agents.

- Letters and templates have been extensively reviewed. New forms have been developed where a gap was identified and the data contained in the templates is designed to maintain ministry agent records in SugarCRM. Form completion has been simplified wherever possible using PDF pick lists, embedded calendars and formulas.

- Placement processes are now being updated to include references and links to the letters and templates. It is expected that the letters and templates will be available on the Queensland Synod website for ease of access.

It is our expectation that the project will deliver at least a 20% improvement in placement processes.

Project Plenty

The Placements Committee has engaged with the Project Plenty indirectly through being aware of the Mission priority outcomes that are coming from that work and looking to shape how the Placement Process is *fit for purpose* in being able to best serve the needs of the church.

Challenges/risks as we progress

- The impact of Covid-19 on the gathered life of our congregations and what this continues to mean for the skillset required of ministers in placement.
- Our ability to resource the church's witness in locations of missional importance geographically, organisationally, and demographically with suitably skilled ministry agents.
- The continued rise in the number of part-time placements demands the need to rethink the nature of ministry in the placement. When placements reduce from full time, history shows that without significant, purposeful intervention, the fraction of the placement continues to decrease.

Proposals to the 35th Synod

It is proposed that the 35th Synod receive this report.

Contact for report questions

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