

20.11.17

8 The Deputy of St. Martin of the Minister for Health and Social Services regarding the number of flights to Southampton available to Islanders with medical conditions (OQ.318/2020):

Will the Minister advise how he intends to assist any Islanders with medical conditions who are facing challenges caused by the reduction in flights to Southampton to just one per day?

The Deputy of St. Ouen (The Minister for Health and Social Services):

Each Island is advised by the H.C.S. travel office, according to their individual circumstances. Paid hotel or other accommodation will be arranged for Islanders attending outpatient appointments who need to stay overnight. Wherever possible and where it is clinically appropriate, teleconference alternatives can be arranged. In cases where any of these arrangements are not practical for Islanders or where the patient does not wish to travel, the consultant doctor responsible for their care will agree an alternative treatment plan that minimises clinical risks associated with not being able to travel to attend the U.K. hospital in person. As Senator Farnham has mentioned in the previous question, there is a Government of Jersey travel cell and membership includes representatives from Health and Community Services. The travel cell advises the travel office as circumstances change so that Islanders and the staff who care for them have the latest information to inform their decisions. Also, Senator Farnham has just said the lifeline contract with Blue Islands will be reactivated in the near future to ensure we remain connected to the U.K., and this could well have an effect on patients travelling to Southampton or other U.K. hospitals.

4.8.1 The Deputy of St. Martin:

The Minister will be aware that Southampton Airport is now closed at weekends. He will be aware that medical passengers who have to travel away for appointments cannot have the appointment and return on the same day as previously. He will be aware that those people who have to stay overnight then have to isolate. He will be aware of doctors that are not able to visit the Island, resulting in a number of additional Islanders having to go away for medical appointments. Can the Minister not see the advantage of the States putting on a second plane every day so that appointments can be taken away from the Island and people return on the same day?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

Yes, at first sight I could see the advantage of that and that is something that could well be discussed and may well be being discussed within the travel cell. Because the requirements of patients are not the only possible requirements within the Island. I will make enquiries as to whether that is under consideration.