

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES
BY DEPUTY K.G. PAMPLIN OF ST. SAVIOUR
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 20th OCTOBER 2020**

Question

Will the Minister advise why the recent shipment of flu vaccinations from a U.K. supplier to Jersey pharmacies was delayed in transit and subsequently had to be thrown away due to not having been properly refrigerated whilst awaiting dispatch, and state the total financial loss incurred and the number of people requiring vaccinations who were affected?

Answer

It is the responsibility of the supplier to deliver any medicines to their destination and to ensure that storage arrangements are complied with during transit. The flu vaccines only become the responsibility of the pharmacy or GP practice once it has accepted delivery.

If a shipment is delayed in transit (e.g. due to bad weather) there is a risk that products requiring cold chain distribution may go outside of the recommended temperature range. In these cases, the supplier will direct that the product should not be used, which is in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations. This is part of Good Distribution Practice (GDP) requirements that all pharmaceutical suppliers must adhere to. Generally, refrigerated medicines are transported in specially designed cool boxes which maintain the necessary temperature for the anticipated duration of transport plus a safety margin. This is confirmed by including temperature monitors inside the containers. If the boat is delayed significantly (as I believe was the case) it is possible that the necessary temperature might not be maintained during transport. I believe the boat did not sail for 2 days which meant that deliveries due on a Friday were not received until Monday.

If this happens, the supplier will make arrangements to send another consignment to replace the one that cannot be used. The cost of this is borne by the supplier and not the pharmacy or GP practice so there is no financial loss incurred.

Pharmacies and GP practices order their own supplies of flu vaccine so we do not have information on the numbers of vaccines that were affected. HCS has no involvement in the pharmacy and GP ordering process.