

STATES OF JERSEY



FLU PANDEMIC FUNDING (P.67/2008): COMMENTS

**Presented to the States on 1st July 2008
by the Health, Social Security and Housing Scrutiny Panel**

STATES GREFFE

COMMENTS

- The Health, Social Security and Housing Scrutiny Panel (“the Panel”) has carried out research into Pandemic Flu risks and assessed background information on preparations for Pandemic Flu in other jurisdictions. Members have also attended presentations by the Health and Social Services Department (“H&SSD”) on this matter and a Public Hearing was held with Departmental representatives and the Emergency Planning Officer on 9th June 2008.
- While necessarily much of the information relating to this subject is of a highly scientific and technical nature, in the opinion of the Panel the H&SSD and its consultants have taken a commendably pro-active stance on the Pandemic Flu issue.
- Purchase of the Tamiflu anti-viral and arrangements in hand to obtain supplies of pre-pandemic and (when available) pandemic-specific vaccine would currently appear to offer the best available level of protection against any eventual global flu pandemic; thanks to the H&SSD’s efforts the Island is clearly well ahead of most other jurisdictions in obtaining stocks of the best available treatment for the entire population.
- Whilst there is uncertainty as to what strain of virus may eventually cause a pandemic, the Panel is confident that the Department is taking the best possible advice and keeping up-to-date with the latest developments. The Panel is assured for example that it will monitor the spread of Tamiflu-resistant strains of flu virus and take any appropriate steps to adapt the Island’s state of preparedness to respond to the threat of Pandemic Flu as it continues to evolve.
- The Panel has also been impressed by the apparent thoroughness of preparation for a co-ordinated and effective response from emergency and voluntary services in the event of a pandemic outbreak.
- In short, while no-one could say they are fully prepared for Pandemic Flu and others will argue that it may never happen, the Panel is confident that should the global flu pandemic widely predicted by experts come about, all necessary and appropriate steps are being taken by the H&SSD and other Departments to ensure that Jersey will be as well prepared as possible to cope and offer the highest possible level of protection to the local population.