

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE PRESIDENT OF  
THE EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL SECURITY COMMITTEE  
BY DEPUTY G.P. SOUTHERN OF ST. HELIER**

**ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 15th MARCH 2005**

**Question**

Would the President inform members –

- (a) of the percentage of new recipients who, in the 4th quarter of 2004, received 100% benefit under the long-term incapacity allowance (LTIA)?
- (b) of comparative figures on LTIA claimants in the 4th quarters of 2004 and 2003, showing the difference in numbers of claimants, the percentages of their awards, and the total sums paid out in these periods?
- (c) what estimated saving, if any, will be achieved through LTIA accumulated in the first year of its operation as more claimants transfer from short-term to long-term incapacity allowance during this period? and,
- (d) whether the recent findings of the report from Professor Walker of Nottingham University on poverty in the Island included evidence of these most recent data on changes to LTIA, and, if not, what steps is the Committee going to take to update our understanding of the real levels of poverty in Jersey following these recent changes?

**Answer**

- (a) In the 4th Quarter of 2004, 125 claims to LTIA were made of which 25, or 20%, were assessed at 100%, 63 (52%) were assessed at between 50 and 99%, and 35 (28%) were assessed at below 50%.
- (b) This is impossible to answer as LTIA was introduced on 1st October 2004, and did not exist in the 4th quarter of 2003.
- (c) No savings have been estimated as none have been identified by the Committee. As the new benefits are completely gender neutral, and with the removal of the married woman's option not to pay contributions, more claims will result from married women than in the past. Unlike the old sickness and invalidity benefits, LTIA is not disallowed if a person is capable of any work and so will be available to claimants who may have been previously disallowed payments of the old benefits.
- (d) Professor Walker presented the comparative study to States' Members on 3rd March 2005, and those present would have heard that the comparison was based necessarily on 2001 figures and, therefore, recent changes could not be included. Unfortunately, Deputy Southern was not present at the meeting so could not have asked questions about levels of poverty to an expert on poverty who advises Governments on both sides of the Atlantic. Nevertheless, the comparative study did show that the comparative spend on sickness and health was higher than the European average without taking into account employers' sick pay in Jersey for which figures were not available. The Committee is always ready to help members understanding of complex issues and would be happy to help Deputy Southern or any other member if there are matters that need to be further clarified. I am sure that Professor Walker would be happy to help in this regard if there are specific questions to be answered on the Nottingham University report. The Committee is also committed to keeping members informed about the eradication of financial and social exclusion and will do so through the development of the income support system and reviews of the Social Security system. At this stage, the Committee has noted that the incidence of poverty in Jersey is about the same as Europe but the level of poverty is not as deep as Europe even though the comparative spend is relatively low.