

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL SECURITY
BY DEPUTY M.R. HIGGINS OF ST. HELIER
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 16th JUNE 2009**

Question

Would the Minister please advise:

- (a) how many general practitioners are licensed in the Island under the Health Insurance Fund;
- (b) the number of patient visits in 2008 for which money was paid to supplement the cost of medical advice and assistance to patients;
- (c) the amount of money paid to general practitioners in 2008 by the Social Security Department in respect to these visits; and,
- (d) whether his Department collates information from general practitioners on the amount that each patient had to pay for doctors' consultations in 2008 (broken down for consultations, cost of injections etc) and, if so, will he provide a breakdown for members?

Answer

Under the Health Insurance (Jersey) Law 1967 (rather than the Health Insurance Fund), a medical benefit may be claimed by an insured person for any "proper and necessary" medical service provided by a GP. Such services include visits by a GP and letters of referral. The medical benefit arising is the property of the individual and the current level of benefit is £15 per consultation, irrespective of place/length of consultation or services provided.

- (a) There are currently 96 approved doctors in active practice who provide medical services under the Health Insurance Law. The Minister for Social Security may licence (or approve) a doctor to deliver medical services provided they satisfy the vocational GP qualifications set by the legislation (Health Insurance (Conditions For Approval OF Medical Practitioners) (Jersey) Regulations 1993).
- (b) The number of patient visits in 2008 for which money was paid to supplement the cost of medical advice and assistance to patients was approximately 350,000.
- (c) The amount of medical benefit claimed for GP visits and services in 2008 was approximately £5.3 million.
- (d) General medical practice in Jersey is a private enterprise and there is no contract between GPs and the States. GP consultation and service fees are set by individual practices and governed by market forces. Patients are not required to register with a practice and many GPs discount within their fee structure depending on the patient's circumstances. Whilst the Department collects information on gross fees paid for a consultation, it does not collate information on the breakdown of specific charges for GP services.