

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES
BY THE DEPUTY OF ST. MARTIN
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 10th MARCH 2009**

Question

With reference to the table of suspensions produced in answer to a written question asked by the Connétable of St Lawrence on 3rd February 2009, would the Minister inform members of the total paid to date to the 15 members of staff from the Health and Social Services Department during their period of suspension, the combined total of which amounts to approximately 5 years and 8 months, and will he inform Members of the total sum paid to date to staff for overtime or 'Acting Up' to cover the work not being undertaken by the 15 suspended staff?

Answer

I can confirm that the total amount paid to the 15 members of Health and Social Services staff included in the table produced on 3rd February is £448,000. The combined total sum paid to staff to cover these suspensions has been estimated at £243,000.

Decisions taken to suspend or exclude employees from work are never taken lightly. They are invoked when there are concerns about the performance or conduct of staff in an environment where the maintenance of patient safety is paramount. All suspensions or exclusions within the Health and Social Services Department are undertaken in compliance with policies and procedures agreed by the States Employment Board.

I take no pleasure in identifying these costs, particularly in an environment where such resources should be invested directly in front line services in support of direct patient care. The time often taken, in relation to exceedingly lengthy police investigations and subsequent court procedures, inhibits our capacity to act and this remains a cause of considerable concern and frustration.