

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES
BY THE DEPUTY OF ST. JOHN
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 8th JUNE 2010**

Question

“Further to the response to written question 5382 on the 25th May 2010 regarding taxi expenses, would the Minister advise why 38% of the Health and Social Services Department’s total taxi bill of £93,996 was spent on travel by persons other than patients and will she provide a detailed breakdown of who made these journeys and for what purpose?”

Answer

Health and Social Services has many functions and sub departments where operationally it is necessary to provide transport to a considerable number of staff and contractors so they can undertake their duties.

There are an estimated 2,200 journeys undertaken annually by the following groups either employed or associated with the Department:

- Employed staff e.g. theatre nurses called in for emergency out of hours procedures who don’t have their own transport.
- Agency staff e.g. agency nurses where accommodation is not provided within walking distance or their shifts fall outside acceptable public transport timetables.
- Visiting doctors e.g. UK Medical Consultants who regularly visit for one or two days to under specialist clinical work for patients.
- Training consultants e.g. specialist experts providing staff training.
- Visiting technicians e.g. specialist UK engineers to maintain equipment and undertake specialist repairs.

Taxis are also occasionally used to collect urgent supplies from the airport for delivery to the Hospital.

On a monthly basis all invoices are checked and reviewed by the service administrators and journeys queried if they seem erroneous. A Departmental Manager then authorises the invoices for payment. Due to this monthly checking and authorisation process, the Department has not invested administration resource in maintaining a detailed register of every journey made, the individual or commodity transported and the exact cost of every journey.

If further detailed information is required a comprehensive analysis would have to be undertaken by reviewing all of the invoices received for a specific period and then summarising the detail of every journey undertaken.

An analysis in this detail could be performed, but the cost of the staff time necessary to undertake it would have to be considered against the benefit of possessing the additional detail so the staff cost could be demonstrated as achieving value for money for the States of Jersey.