

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES
BY DEPUTY M. TADIER OF ST. BRELADE
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 12th OCTOBER 2010**

Question

Will the Minister –

- (a) confirm whether there was an inquiry into a complaint about Highlands Care Home by a former member of staff of the home, and, if so, when it was initiated and completed?
- (b) confirm whether the officer who carried out the inquiry and wrote the accompanying report has recently resigned from his post and accepted the position of Manager at the said care home and, if so, can she inform members when he gave notice of his resignation?

Will the Minister advise whether she is satisfied that there was no conflict of interest on the part of the officer who carried out the inquiry and that there was no risk of the report not being objective or impartial?

Given ongoing concerns, will the Minister consider undertaking a full independent inquiry into the home before any more individuals currently in the care of the public sector are moved to this facility?

Answer

- (a) I can confirm that an investigation of the home by the Health Protection Service was initiated following a complaint from a former member of staff on the 1st July 2010. The investigation plan was approved by the head of service on the 2nd July 2010 ahead of the first formal interview which took place that day with the complainant and Deputy Tadier present.

The investigation of the complaint was completed on the 23rd July 2010 when the investigating officer from Health Protection met with the Adult Social Work Team. The first draft report from the investigating officer was presented to the Team Leader of Registration and Inspection on the 4th August 2010.

- (b) The officer who led the investigation and produced the 1st draft report has indeed resigned from his post and will be taking up the vacant post as manager at the home. The service will be sorry to lose his extensive knowledge and expertise and his interpersonal skills which were exemplary, although a successor has been appointed in the last few days. The officer applied for the post at the care home on 26th July, was interviewed on 29th July and received written confirmation offering him the post on 5th August. He tendered his resignation the same day.

I am satisfied that the utmost probity has been undertaken by the officers of the Health Protection Service. In the course of the investigation, an interagency approach was used with evidence being presented directly by social workers and other allied professionals via the home's records. The investigation was not conducted solely by one officer. The head of the service has as part of overseeing the process ensured that the appropriate level of investigation has been undertaken, the process has ensured that the report and its findings have been scrutinised by the investigating officer's line managers as part of due diligence.

I am not aware of any ongoing concerns with regard to the matter and neither are my officers. If Deputy Tadier has evidence of ongoing concerns I would be grateful if he would ensure that all relevant evidence is provided to the head of the Health Protection Service without delay. Since the report and its findings have been released to the care home and the complainant, the care home has provided the Health Protection Service with its detailed plan to ensure compliance with the findings and my officers will be following up on those matters to ensure that they are appropriately completed.

In the light of the findings and the commitment to ensure proper process I do not consider in the circumstances that it is either expedient or appropriate for there to be yet another investigation. The home will continue to be inspected twice a year in accordance with statutory regulations.