

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES
BY DEPUTY M. TADIER OF ST. BRELADE
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 28th SEPTEMBER 2010**

Question

“Will the Minister advise how the lack of suitable care and respite units for vulnerable and/or chronically disabled children (e.g. Oakwell) is being addressed?

Will she advise how many beds there are at Oakwell; confirm that these are meant for short term 'respite' care and advise how many of these beds are currently being used for non-respite purposes (i.e., Monday-Friday or longer periods)?”

Answer

Under normal circumstances there is no lack of suitable care and respite units for vulnerable and/or chronically disabled children. In comparison with many UK authorities Jersey, as a small jurisdiction, provides a good level of residential beds offering such residential respite care. We currently have Oakwell and Eden House, run by H&SS Special Needs Service, and Maison Allo, run by Les Amis on behalf of Jersey Mencap.

All of our services used for children’s residential respite have historically been used on a flexible basis and this remains so. Oakwell currently has four beds at its disposal and this unit has a primary role of providing short term respite care. It is regularly used for planned breaks, holiday breaks, shared care arrangements, and has on several occasions been used as a long term home for individual children.

It remains essential that H&SS is able to respond to statutory responsibilities to safeguard the welfare of children. This means we have to be flexible to respond to any prioritised need, on behalf of children and their families.