

2.1 Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier of St. Saviour of the Minister for Health and Social Services regarding the Aitkenhead report concerning the death of a patient:

What steps will the Minister be taking in the light of the Aitkenhead Report concerning the death of a patient and related matters?

Deputy A.E. Pryke of Trinity (The Minister for Health and Social Services):

Patient safety is our paramount concern. Our commitment to patient safety and improved clinical governance, which is the responsibility of all our staff, is demonstrated by the appointment of Medical Directors who lead and monitor patient safety programmes. These include, but are not limited to, new medical handover documentation, establishment of a Hospital Board, care quality groups, a new incident reporting system. Many of these improvements have already been set in train prior to the Aitkenhead Report and we will continue to seek new ways to improve. Our clinical staff and managers fully participated in the production of the report which was commissioned by the Health and Safety Inspectorate. They have worked to address the issues raised, delivering positive improvements. As acknowledged by Professor Aitkenhead, clinical governance is high on the hospital agenda. The Health and Safety Inspectorate also acknowledge Health and Social Services' positive response and they intend for Professor Aitkenhead to review progress again later this year.

2.1.1 Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:

Given the public concern that exists and given, perhaps, some of the unfortunate slurs that may be passed against staff, would the Minister not acknowledge it would have been much better if this report was placed in the public domain and that the public could make a judgment based on the full report being available? This continuous stream of reassurances is not solving the problem; it is simply exacerbating it.

The Deputy of Trinity:

I totally agree with the Deputy. I would like this report to be in the public domain but it is not my report. It is done on behalf of the Health and Safety Inspectorate and I know they are working with the Law Officers and with the Chief Minister's Department to hopefully release it next week.

2.1.2 Deputy M.R. Higgins:

Just to again follow up on this thing about the publication of the report, the Minister has told us steps are being taken to rectify deficiencies but until we know what those deficiencies are and it is totally transparent, we have no way of knowing whether they are addressing those issues. Will the Minister use every effort on her part to get this thing published as soon as possible?

The Deputy of Trinity:

Yes I have tried but I understand it is under the law within Health and Safety Inspectorate that they cannot release it. It is not my report and I am very willing for the report to be put out in the public domain.

2.1.3 Senator S.C. Ferguson:

The reporting in the *J.E.P. (Jersey Evening Post)* of the whole case was inaccurate. Will the Minister be correcting these and will not publication of the report, as other Members have said, give peace of mind to the general public who have paid for the report no doubt? Even though it is not her report, does the Minister not feel that her representations for publication would carry weight?

The Deputy of Trinity:

There are a few questions in what the Senator has asked. I reiterate, I would like the report released and I am working hard with the Chief Minister and with the Health and Safety Inspectorate to release it into the public domain and hopefully it will be released once it is redacted next week. It

is an important document and as I said, there are some very positive comments made by the Professor, especially in his follow-up report, which came out at the beginning of this year, and it is important that these are put out into the public domain to reassure the public.

2.1.4 Senator S.C. Ferguson:

Will the Minister be correcting the inaccurate reporting in the *J.E.P.* of the whole case which gave rise to the report?

The Deputy of Trinity:

At times, I do go back to the *J.E.P.* and tell them that they have not perhaps reported something accurately and when the report does come out into the public domain next week, I shall make sure that the proper comments are put out and that they are done in a proper and efficient way and everyone is aware of the findings.

2.1.5 Deputy G.C.L. Baudains of St. Clement:

It does appear to me that the department moves from one crisis to another and we are continually told that it is learning from its mistakes. Can the Minister advise when this sort of thing will cease and we can have confidence in the department again?

The Deputy of Trinity:

I have every confidence in all my staff, including the medical staff. A hospital is a risky place but as I said, we continue looking at ways to improve. We have care quality groups, appraisals; the appointment of 2 Medical Directors has gone a long way. It is a continual process and will continue to be so.

2.1.6 Connétable J.M. Refault of St. Peter:

Could the Minister please confirm or otherwise that the items reported on by Professor Aitkenhead occurred back in 2006, 2008 and since that time, much work has been done to already address those items, many of which have already been concluded? Can the Minister confirm that, please?

The Bailiff:

Connétable of St. Peter, it slipped past me [Laughter] which I failed to spot and I am going to disallow that question. [Laughter]

2.1.7 Deputy T.M. Pitman of St. Helier:

I would advise the Minister for Health and Social Services not to ask the *J.E.P.* to correct any inaccuracies or lies because it is very expensive, but there we go. What I would like to know is, given that this report was all read out verbatim in court, does it not make a mockery if the report cannot be released to the public? Of course, what was read in court was not redacted so could the Minister advise on that?

The Deputy of Trinity:

It is very difficult to comment on that because the Health and Safety Inspectorate, as I understand, was a witness at an inquest.

2.1.8 Deputy G.P. Southern of St. Helier:

I can hardly believe my ears but I have just heard the Minister for Health and Social Services state and accept that the hospital is a risky place. Does she wish to stand by that statement?

The Deputy of Trinity:

Just to clarify, there are many different procedures that go on within the hospital in mitigating that risk. A lot of patients come through the hospital, a lot of seriously ill patients, and the most

important thing is to put procedures and policies in place and make sure that everything is as safe as we can possibly make it.

2.1.9 Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:

A very senior official at the hospital stated it would take years to catch up in crucial ways with U.K. (United Kingdom) practice. Could the Minister tell us, in this case, what lessons have been learned and what reassurance can she give to people like Deputy Baudains of St. Clement that these matters, bar very exceptional circumstances, are not going to be repeated as they seem to be too often?

The Deputy of Trinity:

To comment about the years to catch up, I need very much to put that into context. It is our data systems that are the problem in collecting evidence. There is no doubt there is some improvement, there always will be, but the rate of improvement is impressive and it will take time so it is the data collection that is years out of date but we are looking at forwarding that. Patient safety I continue to say is paramount and we will work and continue to work to that ...

The Bailiff:

I think you have made that point, Deputy.