

## **5. Questions to Ministers without notice - The Minister for Health and Social Services**

### **The Deputy Bailiff:**

We will know nothing more, Minister, because time has now expired. We come to the second question period for the Minister for Health and Social Services.

#### **5.1 Senator S.C. Ferguson:**

Given the recent report on Stafford Hospital and given the public disquiet over its findings, will the Minister undertake to release the report from the G.M.C. resulting from their uninvited surprise visit to this Assembly and if not, why not?

### **The Deputy of Trinity (The Minister for Health and Social Services):**

I am glad the Senator has asked that question because I am very pleased to be able to put her right. The G.M.C. was a planned visit in line with the Emergency Department with all other emergency departments in the U.K. and in conjunction with the Wessex Deanery to review the supervision arrangements for our foundation doctors which are doctors in training working in emergency departments. The visit was positive with good feedback and welcomed recommendations that the department is working on, for example, increased induction programme. Positive feedback was provided from the foundation doctors to the G.M.C. and the Deanery on their training and experience. A Jersey placement is always well subscribed by the U.K. foundation doctors due to the training and support given to them. The department has increased the number of consultants in the E.D. (Emergency Department) to provide more senior cover on the shop floor, especially out of normal working hours which does include weekends. This will also increase the amount of senior support for the junior doctors and out of hours.

#### **5.2 The Deputy of St. Peter:**

Could the Minister explain why hydrotherapy services have been reduced by 50 per cent?

### **The Deputy of Trinity:**

I am not aware that they have been reduced. There was an issue, I know, 2 or 3 years ago regarding a C.S.R. (Comprehensive Spending Review) proposition but that was not followed through. There has been some reorganisation in the department but I am not aware that they have been cut. I have used it myself and the service is well used and I must say it is a very good service.

#### **5.2.1 The Deputy of St. Peter:**

Could you look into this please, Minister, as I have received communications from a parishioner which confirms this?

### **The Deputy of Trinity:**

If the Deputy would like to give me that information, I will certainly look into it.

#### **5.3 Deputy G.P. Southern:**

Will the Minister engage in talks with the Minister for Social Security as a matter of some urgency to ensure that short-term revisions to H.M.A. (Household Medical Account) or other measures are introduced to ensure that low income households can afford access to G.P.s (General Practitioners) and other primary health care?

### **The Deputy of Trinity:**

The Minister for Social Security's department and my department invariably talk very often together and as the Deputy knows, we are looking at redesigning primary care which includes G.P.s, dentists, opticians and pharmacists. It is a piece of work that we are just beginning to undertake. This was approved by this Assembly back in October. It is a huge piece of work and

it has to be completed at the scoping, at the consultation, and the proposition before September next year so it is a tight timescale. Until then, everything at the moment I would have thought would stay exactly the same.

[12:00]

### **5.3.1 Deputy G.P. Southern:**

If I may, a supplementary. That is long-term looking to come back to this House by September 2014. The fact is that there are many in our society on low incomes that cannot afford G.P.s now. What short-term measures will she discuss with the Minister for Social Security to make sure people can afford G.P.s?

#### **The Deputy of Trinity:**

As the Deputy knows, G.P.s are private businesses and I would like to think that G.P.s should know their patients very well and if there are patients who are finding it difficult, that they would help those families. The Deputy knows how to access Social Security very well. As I said, G.P.s are private businesses.

### **5.4 Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:**

Can the Minister elaborate on the much-welcomed nurse-training scheme where she obviously has personal knowledge? Could she inform the House that this scheme results in the equivalent of a Jersey person or a U.K. person attending a U.K. university and obtaining a fully-fledged nursing degree? Could she assure the House that this is indeed what happens to the students on our scheme?

#### **The Deputy of Trinity:**

Indeed because nurse recruitment and training our own to help staff our own hospital is essential, and there are lots of different initiatives and I think one is going to be starting this September about a yearly training programme for student nurses linked with a university in the U.K. That is a big positive step forward. It will be on an annual basis. But also increasing places for on-Island training in Back to Nursing programmes because that was, I think, 8 nurses went on a Back to Nursing because, as you know, if you have been out for so many years, you need to do a Back to Nursing training and some of those are now working in the hospital. But also it is the other things like nurse prescribing to help retain our own nurses and invest in them in their training because nurse prescribing is ... well we were lacking behind but this helps improve that and various programmes are put in place. So we are being very proactive in how we look at including our own nursing training but, on top of that, healthcare assistants to some positive investment in their training is important too because I would like to think that a certain proportion of healthcare assistants, once they get experience under their belt and working on the wards, would like to go on to do further nursing training and that can only be a benefit.

#### **The Deputy Bailiff:**

Minister, if you could just try and keep your answers a lot shorter, thank you.

### **5.4.1 Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:**

Just to clarify, will the people who have been on nursing training in the last few years be able to upgrade their qualification in order that they can reach fully-fledged staff nurse status?

#### **The Deputy of Trinity:**

Yes, I do not think that is a problem because as you have done your nursing training, you come out as a staff nurse.

### **5.5 Deputy J.A. Hilton:**

I have in my hand a hospital pre-feasibility spatial assessment project which gives a slight validation process and it indicates that public consultation on the preferred site for a new hospital was due to commence in February 2013. Is the Minister able to tell Members exactly where we are with regard to the new hospital?

**The Deputy of Trinity:**

The Minister's oversight group and the various officers have been working extremely hard over this raising different issues and challenging Atkins who came over to do the hospital feasibility study. We are a little bit behind schedule unfortunately but I think that is all to our credit because we need to make sure that when we come out with our consultation and identifying the sites that it is right because it is a big amount of money and it is a big site that we would be looking for. But as yet, I have not got a revised timetable but as soon as I do I will let States Members know.

**5.6 The Connétable of St. Lawrence:**

Will the Minister advise us following treatment in a U.K. hospital, who is responsible for assessing whether home care is needed upon the patient's return to Jersey? Is it the U.K. hospital or is it ours?

**The Deputy of Trinity:**

I do not think there is one answer to that that fits all because everything must be done on a case by case basis. I would like to think that the hospitals in the U.K., when they discharge a patient who needs home care whatever region that is, will be in contact with the relevant, whether it is Family Nursing Services or whatever over here and to put it in place because it needs to be in place for when they come home.

**5.6.1 The Connétable of St. Lawrence:**

Supplementary? I have been advised today about one of my parishioners who spent 5 weeks in a U.K. hospital was sent home 2 days after heart surgery back to his flat in St. Lawrence where he had no one to look after him. Apparently there had been no communication with our hospital over here. He was sent with a prescription, he had no one to collect his prescription and he collapsed and died shortly afterwards. Will the Minister make comment on that and advise me how that will not happen to another Islander?

**The Deputy of Trinity:**

I think what the Constable is saying is it should not happen and I would like to think that if the Constable and I could get together and see why it did not happen, why there was not good communication from the U.K. hospital over here because it should not happen and I am very sad that it did.

**The Connétable of St. Lawrence:**

I would be happy to meet with the Minister.

**5.7 Deputy T.M. Pitman:**

Child Protection. In the rare instance of video evidence being available illustrating deeply worrying and inappropriate sexual activity taking place in the presence of young children, does the Children's Service look at that evidence itself and form its own view or do the professionals simply rely on the view of the police officer?

**The Deputy of Trinity:**

That is a very complex issue. I have not got the exact answer because I do not exactly know, but I would have thought ... I know the agencies are working extremely well together: the police, the social worker, education. But also we have got the Child Protection, the J.C.P.C. (Jersey Child

Protection Committee), of which there is a new independent chair and if necessary she would need to be involved.

#### **5.7.1 Deputy T.M. Pitman:**

Supplementary? With due respect there must be policy in place. If there is video evidence, do we rely just on a police officer, who is not an expert in that field, or do the professionals make their own decision? Surely that is a yes or no answer?

#### **The Deputy of Trinity:**

I cannot give the exact answer to that, but I can easily come back to the Deputy on that. I cannot see that one agency would make the decision on their own because it is a multi-agency approach and that is what we have been stressing over the last month especially, that it must be a multi-agency approach to these very difficult circumstances.

#### **5.8 Deputy M.R. Higgins:**

The Minister gave a written answer to my question number 27 about the testing of residents in the Bellozanne area and employees of Bellozanne. Can I say the answer is totally unsatisfactory, in fact I happen to believe it is probably a work of fiction because I have lived in that area for 30-odd years and no one ever approached me nor did I see an advert and neither does anyone else who has lived in the area that we have approached - we have been in the area for years - about any screening. Will the Minister go back to her department and publish exactly the adverts and everything else and who is contacted because this is totally unsatisfactory.

#### **The Deputy of Trinity:**

That was back in 2006-2007, health promotion at that time ... regarding your answer, health promotion did go back into their records and they have no records. It was found that the forms were sent out from the hospital on request of a previous Minister for Health and Social Services and that is all the information that we can find.

#### **5.9 Deputy J.M. Maçon:**

In 2004 the Mental Health Services had an independent external report for the Wool report. This report is almost 10 years old and given that the Health Department robbed the resources that was recommended in that report, does the Minister think that it is now time to commission a new external report of Mental Health Services and if not, why not?

#### **The Deputy of Trinity:**

All our services, I would like to think, have gone through some sort of review and continue with review. But I will take the Deputy's comments and look into them and will report and read it and come back to him.

#### **5.10 Deputy J.H. Young:**

When the Minister publishes the consultation on the possible sites for the new hospital, will she publish a shortlist of available sites with information about the advantages and disadvantages or is it proposed to propose one site as a *fait accompli* for public views?

#### **The Deputy of Trinity:**

Many sites have been looked at and some of them have been shortlisted. It is a huge piece of work, as I have said before. What will come out into public, we have not decided to be done, on behalf of the Minister's oversight group but I will take the Deputy's comments and feed that into the Minister's oversight group.

#### **The Deputy Bailiff:**

I am conscious that there are further questions that Members would like to ask but the 15 minutes has expired and questions of the Minister for Health and Social Services therefore comes to an end. There is nothing under J, under K the Chairman of the Corporate Services Population and Migration Sub-Panel will make a statement on the Sub-Panel's recent review. Deputy Power.