

3.12 Deputy J.A. Hilton of the Minister for Health and Social Services regarding delays in recruiting Consultants:

What measures, if any, has the Minister taken to ensure that the delays experienced in recruiting a replacement respiratory consultant will not be repeated in the future?

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

Health and Social Services works to undertake all consultant recruitment in a timely fashion. The delays associated with the respiratory consultant were due to exceptional circumstances. As already stated in the recent Scrutiny meeting, Health and Social Services has already made the following improvements: that the job descriptions will be completed in a timely fashion and submitted to the appropriate Royal College and the Medical Staff Committee simultaneously rather than one after the other plus job adverts will carry a caveat stating that minor changes to the job description may be made if deemed necessary. With the exception of the respiratory consultant, all the last 7 consultant recruitment processes have been executed in a timely fashion.

3.12.1 Deputy J.A. Hilton:

Can the Minister tell Members when she was informed of the protracted delay in recruiting another consultant and what her immediate reaction to that news was?

The Deputy of Trinity:

I was informed a little while ago and the news was a shame because I would like to say that all consultants, the interviews and the job descriptions are done in a timely fashion. The reason for the delay was the production of the job description that reflected the particular needs of the service going forward. That job description has to be right and unfortunately that took time as it had to go through the Royal College as all consultant job applications have to go to the appropriate Royal College as well as the Medical Staff Committee and unfortunately they requested some changes to the description and they delayed that return of the job description and that was what took the time unfortunately.

3.12.2 Deputy G.P. Southern:

In addition to this particular individual case, what measures has the Minister put in place to ensure that the structure of management does not repeat it in the future? What has changed now to make this a better practice than what was obviously fairly poor practice?

The Deputy of Trinity:

I would not say it was very poor practice. It was unfortunate and something that was out of our hands but I think, as I have said in my opening answer, that instead of just waiting, as I said, all job descriptions have to be sent to the Royal College for verification and the Medical Staff Committee so that we would do them all at the same time and so consequently put a caveat in the advert to say that it is subject to slight changes but the job description needs to be right at the onset.

3.12.3 Senator S.C. Ferguson:

The Minister says that all job descriptions have now to be sent to the Royal College. When did that commence?

The Deputy of Trinity:

It is not now, it has always been a practice.

3.12.4 Deputy J.A. Hilton:

Can the Minister assure Members that she feels that proper processes have been put in place in the H.R. Department and that unacceptable delays, as experienced in this case, will not be repeated in the future?

The Deputy of Trinity:

I hope so because it was unacceptable in some ways and I think that by putting it all out together to the Medical Staff Committee and the appropriate Royal College at the same time, and making sure that the job description is right going forward will prevent this happening again.

The Deputy Bailiff:

Very well, we come now to question 14 which Deputy Tadier will ask of the Chairman of the Comité des Connétables but before he does so, can I just mention to Members who will be listening to questions and answers in the adjacent rooms that we are at the minimum going inquorate and it would be helpful if some Members returned to the Assembly.