

3.7 Connétable D.W. Mezbourian of St. Lawrence of the Minister for Health and Social Services regarding travel subsidies or supplements available from Health and Social services for people with medical conditions who can no longer drive:

What travel subsidies or supplements, if any, are available from Health and Social Services to people who have medical conditions that prevent them from driving a car?

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

The department does not provide any travel assistance beyond that for (1) overseas transport in an emergency, which is free of charge; (2) planned overseas transport for treatment, which is means tested; and (3) ambulance and patient transport to and from treatments for both emergency and planned care. The Social Security Department provides a range of financial assistance to individuals who have long-term medical conditions through the means test income support scheme and contributory incapacity benefits.

3.7.1 The Connétable of St. Lawrence:

A supplementary. We have just heard from the Minister that those people who have medical conditions that are not controlled by medication and, therefore, prevent them from driving have no assistance from her department - no financial assistance - for on-Island travel. This question has been raised with me by a young mother in my Parish who has 2 young children under 5 and who finds it very difficult managing day-to-day activities such as taking her children to school, collecting them from school. She works with her husband to manage tasks such as shopping and medical visits, but it is not easy for her. My question to the Minister is: how does the Minister for Health and Social Services expect this lady and others with those medical conditions that are not controlled by medication to travel around the Island undertaking day-to-day tasks with ease and in a timely manner?

The Deputy of Trinity:

I fully appreciate the difficulty that this young lady has and I have been in correspondence with her. We can provide transport for health needs. There are many conditions where people are unable to drive: if you are blind, if you have a stroke, dementia, amputees, *et cetera*. It is unsustainable for Health and Social Services to be providing financial help to someone who wishes to get around the Island, understanding that it is an important issue. But there is transport there if the person and the carer or whatever needs to come to any hospital outpatient appointments or elective surgery or even in an emergency. The transport is there for them. Regarding the financial needs, that sits with the Social Security Department.

3.7.2 Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade:

I do not want to stray too far from the question, but if we include foreign treatment in this where people have to go to the U.K. is it fair when ...

The Bailiff:

I am sorry, I think Deputy that is ...

Deputy M. Tadier:

I will limit it to local transport, but I think the principles remain the same. Is it fair that transport is means tested to get to the point of health care when health care itself is not means tested? Is that logical and consistent?

The Deputy of Trinity:

That is another issue. Some of it is means tested. If I remember rightly, the threshold is very high. Do not quote me on this but I think it is in the region of £60,000 or £70,000 income.

This is for patients travelling overseas. If somebody in Jersey needs to come to an outpatient appointment or surgery or a planned admission and they cannot drive for one reason or another or a member of the family cannot bring them in, transport is available free of charge.