

3.2 Deputy M. Tadier of the Minister for Health and Social Services regarding Le Geyt Centre Day services:

Will the Minister advise whether new referrals to Le Geyt Centre Day Services have been stopped and, if so, can she explain why and state how the department proposes to meet the future needs of people requiring access to day services?

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

The simple answer is no. I can assure the Assembly that new referrals to Le Geyt Centre have not been stopped and no referrals have been refused.

[9:45]

3.2.1 Deputy M. Tadier:

Will the Minister respond to concerns of a constituent who states that: "I have had problems getting support for my daughter over the summer months, and this is due to staffing problems at Le Geyt basically struggling to cope with the amount of people requiring their service." Can she confirm whether or not there are staffing issues, resourcing issues and, over the summer period, whether parents and other carers have been told that the normal allocation has been reduced for that period?

The Deputy of Trinity:

As I understand it, there is no particular change. It would be totally inappropriate for me to go into details of the specific client and family issues. All I can say is that the family are very welcome to come and talk to the staff, as happens very regularly. These are very challenging adults and the service will continue to raise demands because of their needs. These people, like everybody else, are living longer with their complex needs.

3.2.2 Deputy J.H. Young of St. Brelade:

Would the Minister inform the Assembly what priority this particular service carries within her budget and whether she has plans for the future to expand it to meet the needs?

The Deputy of Trinity:

Every service that we provide within Health and Social Services is a priority, because you are talking about health needs; whether it is an acute hospital or a community setting, it is all top priority. The budget within the Le Geyt Centre is just over £1 million, and there are 62 adults and their families that we look after. We regularly talk to the service users, because there is a special needs advisory panel, of which service users act as a voice for that body, and obviously officers are on that panel, as well as a service user forum, which comes under the auspices of the Assistant Chief Minister.

3.2.3 Deputy J.H. Young:

Would the Minister accept that resources for support services is, in fact, an action for which giving priority is very cost effective because, if there is any failure in this area, it would ultimately result in long-term costs falling upon the public? Would she accept that the support services, particularly day care for all adult groups, is very important in the long run?

The Deputy of Trinity:

Indeed. As I said, all services within Health and Social Services are our top priority; that is the whole emphasis of the White Paper: more care in the community. When you think back, 5, 10 years ago, most of these clients were perhaps in institutional care. Was that right? No,

that was not right; it is important that they are part of the community and continue to be part of the community.

3.2.4 Deputy J.G. Reed of St. Ouen:

Would the Minister confirm that the Le Geyt Centre Day Service is able to provide the necessary support to all those in need?

The Deputy of Trinity:

As I said, we have not refused any new referrals, and that demand will increase because we are an ageing population and, as with everyone else, their needs are there for the rest of their lives.

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

The Minister has twice now said that all services supplied by her department are top priority. Surely at budget time there is some prioritisation and there are some bids for funding which do not succeed. You cannot have all services at top priority, surely. Would she reconsider that statement?

The Deputy of Trinity:

Because we provide the health and social care for all Islanders, be it an old lady waiting for eye cataract treatment, be it in the community, like the Le Geyt Centre, and the good work that they do there, as well as services for young children, regarding the business plan, all requests for further involvement are sorted out as a business plan, and there is a business plan to do that.

Deputy G.P. Southern:

Can the Minister then account for the lack of prioritisation given to community dental services by her department?

The Bailiff:

No, that is drifting rather too far off the Le Geyt Day Centre, I think.

3.2.6 Deputy J.A. Hilton of St. Helier:

The Minister has just said in answer to a question that no referrals have been refused, but can she confirm that referrals to day services are turning into care for service users?

The Deputy of Trinity:

It is difficult to say that no new referrals have been refused. Each package of care is a bespoke package of care for that individual. We are talking about high-level young adults and older adults with complex needs, so therefore each package is a bespoke package of care and it does come at a price, too.

3.2.7 Deputy J.A. Hilton:

Can the Minister confirm in writing to Members the service-users who have been refused care in day services because of lack of resources, please?

The Deputy of Trinity:

I have just said that we have not refused anyone, so I cannot understand why a letter ... because it is a bespoke package of care and every client has got their own specific needs.

3.2.8 Senator S.C. Ferguson:

If there is a question of shortage of funds for the Le Geyt Day Centre, why is the Minister wasting resources on projects which cannot be policed, such as smoking in cars or energy reviews in private houses?

The Deputy of Trinity:

The budget for Le Geyt is just over £1 million plus, if there is anyone with a particular bespoke package of care, that will have to be put in place. As I said, each bespoke package of care, including Le Geyt, can cost well over £100,000 per client. As I said before, if they were in institutional care, obviously that cost is lower because being in institutional care comes at a cheaper price. That is not the way to go forward because they are part of the community and need to be treated as such.

3.2.9 Deputy M. Tadier:

It seems that the message coming from clients I have spoken to is that there are issues going on with respite, to do with reduction in services, difficulty in getting referrals. This issue about respite care, particularly as children move into adulthood, is an issue that comes up time and time again, and has done during this Minister's tenure. Will she take decisive steps so that these constituents, who are not by nature prone to complaining and who deal, as the Minister has said, with very challenging circumstances, can have security going forward to know that respite will be invested in? If new funds are needed to provide these services, will she approach the Minister for Treasury and Resources and the Chief Minister and make sure that a long-term package for respite is put forward which can be workable?

The Deputy of Trinity:

There was some investment within respite within the White Paper for Respite Care, and that is being worked through and about to be delivered. As I said it is important that there is a users' forum and it is talking about those specific issues that the Deputy raises, within that forum, because the voices of the people that need the care is important, so together we can plan the future needs.