

2016.05.24

3.9 Deputy G.P. Southern of St. Helier of the Minister for Health and Social Services regarding the outsourcing of services currently delivered by Health Department staff:

What plans, if any, does the Minister have for the outsourcing of services currently delivered by the Health Department staff and what consideration has been given to abiding by the 2000 policy agreed between the States and the unions in P.59/1999 outsourcing policy?

Senator A.K.F. Green (The Minister for Health and Social Services):

As set out in my answer to the Deputy's written question for this sitting, the Health and Social Services Department is always seeking to deliver services to Islanders in the most efficient and effective way possible, also prioritising the safety of patients. One would expect services to be always under review to ensure value for money. Health and Social Services is a dynamic service. However, at this stage there are no plans to outsource services currently provided by my department. Should that provision change in the future then my department and the States Employment Board would be guided and advised by States of Jersey H.R. and Employee Relations Department Policy and Process.

3.9.1 Deputy G.P. Southern:

Are any preparations currently under consideration for moving towards outsourcing services currently administered by the department and particularly beyond the period, the span, of M.T.F.P.2 into 2019 and beyond?

Senator A.K.F. Green:

No, nothing at the moment but I will not ever say that we would not be looking at things, particularly when you are looking at services provided within the hospital moving from secondary care into primary care. It is a change of emphasis, a change in the way we do things, but there are no specific plans at the moment.

The Deputy Bailiff:

Deputy, you are entitled, I think, to a final supplementary at this point because there are no other questions. **[Interruption]** Well, there are no other questions so I will give you a final supplementary if you would like.

3.9.2 Deputy G.P. Southern:

The Minister said there are no preparations for specific plans to outsource. Are there preparations taking place over the coming period to prepare the way for outsourcing in a general way without focusing specifically on particular services?

Senator A.K.F. Green:

Not directly, but we are moving in a situation where we are providing, as I said ... for example, we intend to provide more in the primary care in the community setting than in the secondary setting. That will mean change. While it was not directly outsourcing, it was a result of an unsuitable building, I think the Deputy would agree that when we looked at The Limes and the need to look after our staff there as well as the residents that moved, we did that well. Because of changes with the P.82 and the need for more nurses, for example, we were able to offer everybody a job but things change. But there are no plans at the moment to directly outsource.

Deputy M. Tadier:

Before we proceed, I apologise for the interruption but I did not have the presence of mind to cite the Standing Order which I wished to have a ruling on earlier. It is Standing Order 63 part 7, which says: "That the Member of the States answering the question shall answer it and any supplementary question concisely." I appreciate fully that the word "answer it" is subjective. I do not believe that the Minister has met with the spirit of that Standing Order 63(7) because he did not answer it and I think any reasonable listener would think that. So that is the Standing Order which I wanted to invoke.

The Deputy Bailiff:

Well, Deputy, I am entirely content that you draw that to my intention. Clearly, the purpose of question time is the soliciting and provision of information; that is the essence of it. Sometimes one gets to that in a rather circuitous difficult route and sometimes people do not provide the information in the way that the questioner would like to have it. But I do not think I am called upon to make a ruling at this stage because we are now past the point where a ruling would have any effect. Very well, we now come on to question 10 that Deputy Higgins will ask of the Minister for Home Affairs.