

2019.06.18

**2 Deputy I. Gardiner of St. Helier of the Minister for Health and Social Services regarding people who were known to have been infected in the Island via elements of donor blood used to treat Haemophilia: (OQ.156/2019)**

Following his answer to my Written Question 241/2019, will the Minister inform Members whether all people, who are known to have been infected in the Island via elements of donor blood used to treat haemophilia, have been informed?

**The Deputy of St. Ouen (The Minister for Health and Social Services):**

As far as I understand from advice received from within Health and Community Services, there are no known examples of a named individual being tested for blood borne virus infection and a positive result never being fed back by the relevant medical staff. It would be illogical to test, find a positive and not to share that information, given that there are increasingly effective treatments available for blood borne virus infection, plus the potential risk of transmission to a third party. If the Deputy has specific examples, where she has concerns then, of course, I and my department would obviously wish to investigate.

**3.2.1 Deputy I. Gardiner:**

After the subject has been highlighted in the *J.E.P. (Jersey Evening Post)* following your Minister's answer, approximately 10 days ago, one of the examples that was shared personally with me was a person watching *Panorama* programme in 2009 and thought: "It could be me", contacted the department and after 25 years found out that he has got Hepatitis C, because he received a blood products. We know that Hepatitis C and H.I.V. (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) are life changing and, like the Minister mentioned, can be transferred to a partner. Would the Minister see that not notifying and not contacting patients, when the link between blood products and infection has been established, might fall well below the duty of care to the individual and to the wider community?

**The Deputy of St. Ouen:**

The information the Deputy appears to have from a specific individual is contrary to the information that I have received. So, I would be very anxious to speak to the Deputy and, if she wishes, the constituent, who has spoken to her and we can try and work out what has happened and answer the concerns of her constituent.

**3.2.2 Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade:**

Can I just push the Minister and ask, I may have missed it initially, did he categorically say that all those, who are likely to have been infected, were contacted? Does he have that information?

**The Deputy of St. Ouen:**

These tests have been going on for many years, so the understanding is, within the department, that there are no known examples of a named individual not having been told.

**3.2.3 Deputy M. Tadier:**

Could he reiterate no examples of named individuals not being informed; could he just give a more categorical answer whether everybody, who had received infected blood, or potentially received it, has been contacted?

**The Deputy of St. Ouen:**

That is my understanding from the information held by the department.

#### **3.2.4 Deputy I. Gardiner:**

As we do not know how many people were exposed and we do have probably in the hospital records who potentially could receive these blood products, would the Minister consider to find and to contact people who potentially could receive blood products and to check and to offer them to test their blood to really understand if they have been contaminated, or their blood been contaminated, or not?

#### **The Deputy of St. Ouen:**

There are a very low number of people involved in this blood testing and my understanding is that there is not a cohort of people who we have not been in contact with over time while they have been receiving these services. But, yes, I will go back to the consultants concerned and double check whether there are any means by which we could have treated patients and not have gone back to them in the event of a positive result. But the information, I do stress, so far - and I do not want to cause any alarm to the population - is that all positive results have been informed to those patients affected. But they are very few in Jersey.