

2019.06.18

14 Deputy I. Gardiner of the Chief Minister regarding the establishment of an Independent Health Commissioner for Jersey: (OQ.157/2019)

Will the Chief Minister consider establishing an independent health commissioner for Jersey to investigate and help resolve complaints relating to the health system in Jersey and to oversee and audit healthcare processes and procedures?

Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré (The Chief Minister):

On 1st January of this year, the Independent Jersey Care Commission came into force and that provides for a regime of independent regulation and inspection of health and social care services. At this point in time, the Care Commission only regulates care homes, home care and adults day care services, but over the next 5 years its reach is to be extended to social work services, community health services and hospital services. In the coming weeks, which might also address the other part of the Deputy's question, a public consultation is to commence on a proposed Public Services Ombudsman. Pending decisions to be taken by this Assembly, it is envisaged that the Ombudsman will be provided the powers to investigate complaints about services delivered by the Minister for Health and Social Services, but it has yet to be determined at what point those powers will be enacted.

3.14.1 Deputy I. Gardiner:

Thank you for an extended answer. Yes, it has partially answered my supplementary question. I would like to extend. In the U.K., the Care Commissioner has the power to inspect and introduce special measures on the hospitals and G.P. (general practitioner) practices, if they do not meet specific standards. Would our Care Commission have the same powers and would it be a robust mechanism to protect and safeguard the people of Jersey?

Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:

At a high level, I think my understanding would be yes. I might have to just go back and check the detail that the Deputy has raised, but the point is that the Care Commission is being introduced on a phased basis and on the discussions I have had with them in the past month they are very acutely aware that they are very slowly rolling things out. My understanding, at a high level, is that the Deputy is correct, but I will go back and check the detail.

3.14.2 Deputy I. Gardiner:

In an executive response to the Comptroller and Auditor General's report on Government's arrangements for health and social care from 2018, it has been stated that the independent regulator will publish a timetable for the extension of independent regulation and inspections to all elements of health and social care, including services directly provided by the States, by early 2019.

[11:15]

Would the Chief Minister circulate, or tell to the Members, what timescales, timetable ... if this timetable exists and, if yes, can we have information about it for the planned inspection for this year?

Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:

The short answer is I will go back and check. I am sure if the Care Commissioner said they would be publishing a timetable it is out there, but I will go back and check and see if it exists and when it was circulated to Members. If it has not been circulated to Members, I will ensure it does so.