

2019.12.10

15 Deputy G.P. Southern of the Minister for Health and Social Services regarding the access to primary care by vulnerable groups: (OQ.311/2019)

This has largely been superseded, but if I could just ask the Minister whether he could confirm the timescale he has for any measures he has under consideration to improve access to primary care for vulnerable groups.

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

Well, I could really answer this question by saying I refer the Deputy to the many other questions I have answered on the subject. I am grateful to him and I would always want him to hold our feet to the fire, but I will repeat that, as I have stated in the Government Plan debate, the Government is committed, in the Government Plan, to develop a model next year to address access for vulnerable groups and that delivery is targeted at 2021. We have engaged health planning professionals to help us develop and cost the model for services, which will improve access to primary care, but that is the whole of primary care and not just G.P. services. It will include pharmacists, practice nurses and, I hope, dentists, also. This is a priority for Government and it has not changed in the week since we concluded the debate on the Government Plan. The analysis that is going to be undertaken, as I have said before, will be available early next year.

3.15.1 Deputy G.P. Southern:

Briefly, can the Minister, at this stage, state how many patients in his proposals this may cover? I proposed some schemes on my Amendment to the Government Plan, which talked about a maximum of one-third of our population, who might be eligible for enhanced access to primary care. At this stage, are his plans considering a similar sized cohort?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

I do hope the Deputy will understand that I cannot give a number, because that would be prejudging, entirely, the work that is to be done by the health planner and health economists. I do not hold any such skills. We are waiting for the work to be undertaken by those people.