

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES
BY THE DEPUTY OF ST. JOHN
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 16th JULY 2019**

Question

What is the waiting time for non-urgent MRI scans –

- (a) for public patients; and
- (b) for private patients;

and, if there is a difference between the two, will the Minister explain why?

Answer

The current average waiting time for a non-urgent public MRI scan is 12-14 weeks
The current average waiting time for a non-urgent private MRI scan is 7-10 days.

The average waiting time for an urgent MRI scan for both public and private patients is less than 24 hours. With urgent MRIs there is no distinction between private and public patients – all cases are prioritised according to urgent clinical need.

The main reason for the big difference in the public vs private non-urgent MRI average waiting times is demand. There is much less demand for private MRIs and this is reflected in a quicker turnaround time, which results in a short waiting time.

Private scans are predominantly performed out of normal working hours – before 9am and after 5pm. This means that public patients do not compete with private patients for scans. When resources permit, additional public MRI sessions are undertaken at weekends, which has reduced the average waiting time from 20 weeks in 2018 to the current 12-14 weeks.

HCS continues to invest in its diagnostic services. At present, one MRI scanner – replaced in 2018 – is operational as the older unit is being upgraded. By October 2019, Jersey will have two top-specification MRI scanners that will produce superior diagnostic images and work more efficiently. When both units are operational it is anticipated their efficacy will mean public waiting times should continue to fall, although at the same time the demand for new examinations and more complex clinical work is a growing pressure.