

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES
BY DEPUTY C.S. ALVES OF ST. HELIER
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 12th MAY 2020**

Question

“Will the Minister explain what contact-tracing undertaken by the Government entails and, in doing so, will he advise in particular –

- (a) what data are being collected, how they are collected and whether people who have potentially been in contact with someone with a positive diagnosis of Covid-19 are specifically being contacted;
- (b) whether contact-tracing information will be released to the public and, if so, when and how; and if not, why not; and
- (c) whether the current household health survey is intended to inform the contact-tracing work and, if so, whether anyone who has completed the survey has also been contacted directly as part of the contact-tracing process?”

Answer

Contact tracing is a coordinated response to outbreaks of notifiable diseases, which is led by Environmental Health. The key objective is to contain onward transmission of disease by breaking the chain of infection. Providing appropriate support, advice and guidance, as well as linking those who have tested positive and their contacts to internal and external services, is a critical aspect of contact tracing.

- (a) Following confirmation of a positive COVID-19 test result from the laboratory, an interview is conducted with the patient to explain the result, the welfare or wellbeing steps they need to undertake and to identify any individuals they have been in close proximity with whilst infectious. This interview facilitates understanding of the types of contact which took place, how long they were for and whom they were with. The patient’s identified direct contacts are then contacted to explain that they may have been exposed to COVID-19 and that they should now self-isolate as a precaution; this has been standard practice since the first positive case of COVID-19 was identified. A direct contact is an individual who has been:
 - in proximity to a positive confirmed case less than 2 metres in distance and for longer than 15 minutes in duration, or
 - in physical contact with the positive confirmed case.

The data collected by Environmental Health are collated using an Integrated Public Health Record system. This system is continually updated as new information about the disease (e.g. symptoms) is verified. Categories of data held include: contact details; employment; symptoms; underlying medical conditions; care needs; test results; and interactions with direct contacts, indirect contacts and locations visited prior to self-isolation. The interview also has a strong focus on the location of interactions. They are individually named and also categorised as household, employment, school, day care / nursery, healthcare, event, restaurant, vehicle, plane, boat, bus, and other. The Integrated Public Health Record case management system is being continually enhanced and now has sophisticated mapping tools to visualise the links between cases through people and their interactions. Prior to its use, the Integrated Public Health Record received all necessary Data Protection approvals, with data sharing proactively managed following the completion and agreement of Data Protection Impact Assessments and Data Sharing Agreements.

- (b) Information gathered through the contact tracing process forms part of the public health briefings and statistics released by the Government of Jersey.
- (c) Responses to the household health survey have not and will not be used to inform contact-tracing activity. The survey's data protection statement stipulated that the information submitted by Islanders would be used for statistical purposes.