

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR HOME AFFAIRS
BY DEPUTY M.R. HIGGINS OF ST. HELIER
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 17th NOVEMBER 2020**

Question

Will the Minister explain to Members how his Department safeguards the wellbeing of any staff within the Ambulance, Fire and Rescue, and Customs and Immigration Services, as well as the States of Jersey Police, who experience mental illnesses, including those associated with a severe addiction to drugs, alcohol or gambling; and, furthermore, will he outline what duty of care his Department has towards employees in this respect?

Answer

The Government of Jersey offers free counselling support to all staff through the Employee Assistance Programme, Be Supported, on a 24/7 basis. Additionally, further face to face sessions are arranged locally for individuals depending on their circumstances. Where the individual has more complex mental health issues, such as an addiction, we encourage them to seek advice from their GP or Health Services (Drug and Alcohol Unit) and also sign post them to local organisations such as, Gamblers Anonymous, Alcohol Anonymous, Silkwood, etc where they can also seek further specialised help, advice and support.

The States of Jersey Police recognise they have a duty of care to all staff (Police Officers and Police Staff). As such the SoJP has a bespoke newly adopted Well-Being Strategy that seeks to support, encourage and enable officers and staff to maintain a healthy balance between their work and other interests and responsibilities in their life.

A Well-Being Working Group promotes well-being and supports the achievement of an appropriate work life balance.

The SoJP acknowledge that officer and staff health, safety and well-being is a priority and will be delivered in an environment where staff are well managed, valued for their contribution and are developed within available resources.

Sickness data is monitored closely and those officers who have extended periods of sickness that needs management intervention, or are on restricted duties, are managed by a Restricted Duties Review Group (RDR). The RDR Group which has been in place since January 2019 is chaired by a Chief Inspector and includes representation from Human Resources (HR) and the Welfare Officer. This group allows the organisation to fully understand an individual's specific needs which in turn allows for a tailored support plan to assist the individual.

The SoJP is committed to developing Supervisors and Managers so that the safety, health and well-being of staff can be understood. This allows the organisation to support staff with interventions for physical and psychological conditions. To date the SoJP has and continues to support a number of officers and staff through situations specific to them.

Supervisors and Managers are / will be trained in 'Defusing' Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) training which seeks to reduce trauma related ill health.

As a modern workforce who strives to support its staff the SoJP has in place an in-house Welfare Service and a 24/7, 365 day a year Employee Assistance Programme phone line. These services are open to all staff.

The Senior Leadership Team recognise Well-being as a regular agenda item and processes are being enhanced to ensure regular updates and monitoring.

The Police Association have a specific interest in well-being and will continue to consider the most appropriate time to conduct internal staff surveys which provide feedback to Senior Managers.

There is a recognition that early intervention is critical, as such there is in place a mechanism for staff to access to comprehensive Occupational Health Services including force wide introduction and embedding of CISM. Psychological Risk Management Guidance and access to an Employee Assistance Programme phone line (Be Supported / Health Line) is also in place.