

2020.03.09

**4 Deputy M.R. Higgins of St. Helier of the Minister for Children and Housing regarding the administration of personal records held within his portfolio: (OQ.73/2020)**

Will the Minister explain how he ensures that the personal records held within his portfolio are accurate; and advise whether clients within that portfolio (including children and parents) are given a periodic opportunity to review the records that relate to them, subject to any appropriate redactions required under the Data Protection (Jersey) Law 2018?

**Senator S.Y. Mézec (The Minister for Children and Housing):**

Records held within Children's Services adhere to data security requirements in line with the Government data protection framework and the principles of the Safeguarding Partnership Jersey procedures. They are held on a secure central platform, called Mosaic, with restricted access to specified users within the Department, in line with their role responsibilities. All Government workers are required to complete online Government mandatory training, including data protection and security awareness and a record of completion of that is maintained centrally. All Children's Services' staff complete record-keeping training as part of their induction process, in order for them to be granted access to the Mosaic database recording system. Every effort is made to ensure records are regularly updated and are factually correct. The opportunity for parents to review data held occurs when completed records are routinely shared with them and reviewed by them for factual accuracy. Any factual inaccuracies can be identified and rectified immediately at that point and children and parents can request to view their individual case records via Children's Services, or they can go down the route of a subject access request, if they prefer.

**3.4.1 Deputy M.R. Higgins:**

I would like to thank the Minister for his long and largely unnecessary answer. The second part was the relevant bit, about how accurate they are. As the Minister knows, I have been on at him for some time about the inaccuracy of the records, which has also been highlighted by Ofsted and others who have come in. The records are appalling and members of the public do not have the knowledge that they can have access to them and, to the best of my knowledge, no one yet has. I have been campaigning for it for a while. Will the Minister publicise to all members who use the Children's Services that they have the right of access to their records and to see if they are accurate, or not?

**Senator S.Y. Mézec:**

In response to the first part of Deputy Higgins' question, I will make sure my answers are more brief in future...

**Deputy M.R. Higgins:**

Accurate.

**Senator S.Y. Mézec:**

But, of course, I am absolutely content with advertising the fact that users of the service have the right to seek the information that is held on record by them. In the first instance, I suggest going to Children's Services and asking, but if they prefer they have the right to a subject access request. I have no problem saying that in this Assembly and I can ask Children's Services to make that clear to their clients, so we can proactively ensure that people know they have that right.

### **3.4.2 Deputy M.R. Higgins:**

Will the Minister be prepared to go to the media and advertise the fact that they can do this? As he knows, there are many people who have got records which are saying that they have been involved in sexual child abuse, they have had children they have never had and various other inaccuracies and we are not going to have any confidence in the Children's Service until everyone has the right to see their records and have them amended.

### **Senator S.Y. Mézec:**

I am happy to have a conversation with Deputy Higgins about the most effective and appropriate ways of making sure that progress can be made on this issue. If that involves the media, fine. If that involves other ways, fine. But I am more than happy to have that discussion.