

DRAFT

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES
BY DEPUTY G.P. SOUTHERN OF ST. HELIER
QUESTION SUBMITTED ON MONDAY 10th MAY 2021
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON MONDAY 17th MAY 2021**

Question

With reference to the 'Review of Dental Health Services and Benefits' (R.91/2015) and the list of policy options contained therein for the development of strategy and delivery of dental care, will the Minister inform members –

- (a) what progress, if any, has been made in implementing the 6 short-term and 4 longer-term policy options since the report's publication in 2015;
- (b) how dental services will be provided for in the Jersey Care Model currently under development;
- (c) what improvements, if any, are planned or under consideration for the delivery of affordable dental care in the public sector;
- (d) how take-up of the Dental Fitness Scheme by young people has progressed since 2015; and
- (e) the number of claims for dental treatment that have been made by lower-income pensioners through the Pension Plus Scheme?

Answer

- (a) what progress, if any, has been made in implementing the 6 short-term and 4 longer-term policy options since the report's publication in 2015;**

There has been a range of progress against the short- and long-term policy options. A working group was established and their outputs fed into the Sustainable Primary Care project which laid the foundations for the current Jersey Care Model.

Within the new Health and Community Services (HCS) structure, the Primary, Prevention and Intermediate Care Group has responsibility for developing a governance structure for HCS dentists and for addressing the general dental care needs of children and young people. Investigations into improved information systems have been undertaken and will feed into the broader HCS IT strategy.

The introduction of the Pension Plus scheme in 2017 provided enhanced support to pensioners in respect of dental check-ups and treatments.

Great efforts have been made to recruit into orthodontics, but this is a very challenging area of recruitment nationwide. Adverts are currently out for a consultant of oral and maxillofacial surgery and for a dental nurse. The consultant post is currently being filled by a locum and the nursing post by a bank nurse on an as required basis.

(b) how dental services will be provided for in the Jersey Care Model currently under development;

A project to define an up-to-date Dental Strategy has recently been initiated as part of the JCM programme. This work will look at patient needs and pathways, and service provision across all providers to present a strategy for how the services need to be configured in the future, aligned to JCM principles. It will include exploring the extent to which current hospital-based activity could be transferred to primary care settings.

c) what improvements, if any, are planned or under consideration for the delivery of affordable dental care in the public sector;

The review of the Dental Strategy will consider improvements for the delivery of affordable dental care.

d) how take-up of the Dental Fitness Scheme by young people has progressed since 2015; and

In 2015 1,065 children were members of the Jersey Dental Scheme. In 2019, this stood at 823 members. Figures for 2020 and 2021 are lower and may have been affected by the coronavirus pandemic (2020, 747 and 2021, 623).

e) the number of claims for dental treatment that have been made by lower-income pensioners through the Pension Plus Scheme?

As of 31/12/2020, there were 2,587 people registered on the Pension Plus scheme where low income pensioners can access £40 for a check-up each year and a further £700 every two years for treatment and dentures. Scheme activity was low during 2020 because of covid-19; the data below is from 2019 and shows 2,097 claims for treatment and dentures were made.

	Number of claims	Expenditure
All claims dentures and treatment	2097	£305,649.85
Check ups	868	£27,845.00
Total Expenditure		£333,494.85