

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES
BY DEPUTY G.P. SOUTHERN OF ST. HELIER CENTRAL
QUESTION SUBMITTED ON MONDAY 16th OCTOBER 2023
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON MONDAY 23rd OCTOBER 2023**

Question

“Further to her responses to [Oral Question 121/2022](#), [Written Question 204/2022](#) and [Written Question 267/2022](#), regarding the waiting lists for ophthalmic interventions, including cataracts, will the Minister advise what progress, if any, has been made in reducing the length of these waiting lists in the past year?”

Answer

Firstly, and as I have stated previously, I agree that the waiting list and the waiting times for treatment are completely unacceptable. While I am glad that the below demonstrates progress has been made and that the service is on track to see some improvement, I would have preferred to see the waiting lists and times in a better position at this time, but I recognise that a variety of factors have impacted efforts.

The routine wait in Ophthalmology is currently at 21 months for initial assessment, > 90% of which are routine cataract patients.

The protracted waits in Ophthalmology are being targeted via:

- the waiting list recovery project which is funded to deliver an outsourcing solution; and
- recruitment to medical and specialist nursing posts.

As a result, it is anticipated that a considerable reduction of the waiting list will be seen by Q2 2024.

Waiting List Recovery Project Ophthalmology Update

The Government of Jersey, on behalf of Health and Community Services, are currently engaging with external quality assured providers who could meet the specific requirements of patients. The service will provide additional capacity for a time limited period aiming to reduce the time patients are waiting for Ophthalmology. A procurement strategy is currently in development, of which the clinical activity is anticipated to commence in Q1 2024.

Internal clinical recruitment update

Successful recruitment into the last medical vacancy took place over the summer and the successful applicant is scheduled to commence work in November 2023. This will provide the department with a ring-fenced cataract clinic each week.

The department is currently advertising for a specialist nurse which is out to advert for a second time after receiving no applications previously.