

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES
BY DEPUTY R.S. KOVACS OF ST. SAVIOUR
QUESTION SUBMITTED ON TUESDAY 30th MAY 2023
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 6th JUNE 2023**

Question

“Will the Minister advise, in relation to the [Nutritious Food Strategy 2017-2022](#) –

- (a) the number of recipients of funding from the Health Start Programme per year for each of the last five years;
- (b) the annual cost of the programme for each of the last five years;
- (c) the requirements for families to benefit from the programme; and

will she further advise when the replacement nutritious food strategy, for which work was commenced on 4th May 2023, will be in place; and whether this replacement strategy will include support for those not on Income Support?”

Answer

- (a) The below table shows the number of Islanders who benefitted from receiving Healthy Start Jersey fruit and vegetable vouchers in each year since the launch of the programme in 2019.

Year	No. of Recipients
2019 (March-Dec)	313
2020	357
2021	243
2022	631
2023 (Jan-May)	512
TOTAL SO FAR	2056

Table 1. Number of Islanders who received Healthy Start vouchers each year since 2019.

After a successful pilot and programme evaluation among 0-1 year olds the programme was expanded to reach those with 0-3 year old children from April 2022 onwards. This mirrors provision within the equivalent UK- programme and is in line with the evidence-base for greatest benefit on child health outcomes. This explains the increase in recipient numbers in Table 1 from 2022 onwards.

- (b) The below table shows the costs for the Healthy Start Jersey programme, by year, since the launch of the programme in 2019.

Year	Programme costs per annum
2019 (March-Dec)	£17,441.50
2020	£26,439

2021	£29,318.8
2022	£90,253.99
2023 (Jan–May)	£48,431.92
TOTAL SO FAR	£211.885.21

Table 2. Healthy Start Jersey programme costs by year since programme launch.

- (c) The requirement for families to benefit from the Healthy Start Jersey voucher programme is that they:
- must have children between the ages of 0-4 years old *and either*
 - be in receipt of income support, *or*
 - have been identified by a Health Visitor as living in poverty (allowing for those without five years residency to benefit where need is identified)

As outlined above, there is already a provision for people who are not on income support to **receive** Health Start Jersey vouchers. There are no intentions to restrict the availability of Health Start Jersey vouchers to ensure that people who are living in poverty are able to continue to access the vouchers.

The revised Food and Nutrition Strategy is due to published in 2024. Work has started to ensure that the strategy captures and addresses the broad set of challenges associated with ensuring a health promoting and sustainable Jersey food supply and food environment. This affects the whole population, and initial qualitative research has highlighted how affording to eat a healthy and sustainable diet has become increasingly challenging across a wide range of population groups. The new strategy will identify the most effective means to address identified barriers to good nutrition, including affordability, and will seek to co-ordinate action across Government and the wider community.