

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL SECURITY
BY DEPUTY G.P. SOUTHERN OF ST. HELIER CENTRAL
QUESTION SUBMITTED ON MONDAY 5th JUNE 2023
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON MONDAY 12th JUNE 2023**

Question

“Further to the recent announcement regarding the rise in medical benefit, will the Minister advise what measures, if any, are under consideration to index-link the subsidy paid to GPs to prevent spiralling costs in this sector; and what further discussions, if any, are being undertaken with GP representatives to plan for longer-term solutions to the cost of GP visits?”

Answer

As of 1 June 2023, the Government is paying an additional activity fee of £25 per surgery consultation to GP practices, where that consultation also qualifies for a medical benefit of £20.28. The additional £25 activity fee is paid through a contract which requires that £20 of the fee is directly allocated to a reduction in the patient fee.

This scheme is in addition to the Health Access Scheme that has been in place since December 2020 and provides a range of subsidised services to members of the scheme which includes all households receiving income support and all pensioners enrolled on the pension plus scheme. Under the Health Access Scheme the cost of a surgery visit is limited to a maximum of £12 for an adult with no charge for a child.

A separate scheme to provide free GP surgery consultations for all children aged under 18 is being finalised and will shortly be implemented.

The Government also supports access to general practice through a range of other contracts, currently providing wage subsidies, payments based on agreed outcomes and activity payments.

General practice in Jersey is maintained by private businesses with different practices setting different levels of fees.

Government continues to maintain an active dialogue with GP representatives to discuss both short and long term issues. This includes the regular renegotiation of existing contracts including a consideration of inflationary pressures. As a general principle, no, we do not index link contracts but they are renegotiated regularly.