

2.5 Deputy C.F. Labey of Grouville of the Minister for Health and Social Services regarding the implementation of the recommendations contained within the Verita report:

Are Verita's services or another such body going to be used to help implement the recommendations contained in their report?

[10:15]

Deputy A.E. Pryke of Trinity (The Minister for Health and Social Services):

Since 2006 the department has made significant changes, which has led to tangible improvements in patient safety. The implementation of the recommendations made by Verita will be undertaken by the management of Health and Social Services, which will include the new Chief Executive Officer and their teams. Professor Aidan Halligan continues to provide advice to the department on patient safety. A group which includes the Clinical Director and the Chair of the Medical Staff Committee have been set up to oversee this task. This group has held discussions with Verita, which include details of the process that will be used to monitor performance prior to their return visit in 6 months' time. Members will know that I have asked Verita to report back to me, the Greffier of the States, the Deputy Viscount and the chairman of our Scrutiny Panel on that progress that my department have made during that period. I have also promised that I will publish the outcome of the progress report.

2.5.1 The Deputy of Grouville:

Could I ask the Minister why there are no patient safety officers or an officer appointed at the Jersey General Hospital?

The Deputy of Trinity:

At the moment, that comes under the Medical Director, and he retires next month. That is one of the things that Professor Aidan Halligan has talked to the department around, that there could perhaps be a patient safety officer, and that will be part, or one of the issues within the recommendations perhaps.

2.5.2 Deputy A.E. Jeune of St. Brelade:

The Minister referred in her answer to the new Chief Officer for Health; has this person in fact been appointed and, if they have, when are they going to take up post?

The Deputy of Trinity:

I cannot answer that question now but I understand there is a question about the Chief Executive later on.

The Deputy Bailiff:

You can answer the question now.

The Deputy of Trinity:

One has been appointed and I will announce more details later on in the week.

2.5.3 Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier of St. Saviour:

In the Verita report it was a mix of many procedural recommendations and some very scathing remarks about management and cultures of almost fear and so forth. Could the Minister inform us, given their very broad-ranging comments on the management

culture, what steps does she have in mind to rectify this situation, for example, strengthening whistle-blowing which, according to them, is still not working?

The Deputy of Trinity:

The Deputy brings up a very important point there and all these issues will be looked at. As I said, there is a group looking at all the recommendations and that includes right across the department and includes some other States departments, and I would not like to say here about the recommendations because I will publish that in the fullness of time.

2.5.4 Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:

Would the Minister not accept that these comments, rightly or wrongly, reflect enormously on the previous management on the culture that was allowed to develop and can she say how is a fresh start going to be made if an existing group simply reviews themselves?

The Deputy of Trinity:

The recommendations, as I said, is not just the management. It goes right across all departments and there is a clinical director as well the chairman of the Medical Staff Committee. So it goes right across all the areas. But I stress that the Ministerial team is created to a culture of openness and that is very, very important. It must be fair and proportionate and holding them to account to produce a process of putting those recommendations into place.

2.5.5 The Deputy of St. Martin:

It appears that the lessons that were supposed to be learned have not been learned because it appears that those people who were responsible for causing the problems are still going to be there to try to put the problems right. On that point, could the Minister inform the House whether in actual fact she has spoken to the Chief Minister to ask the Chief Minister how soon the report into the suspension of the hospital gynaecologist is going to come to a conclusion? I understand the report has still not been completed and has not been sent to the Minister.

The Deputy of Trinity:

I speak to the Chief Minister quite regularly and I must say that has not been one of my points on the agenda. As I said, that is for the States Employment Board agenda, and I will leave it like that.

2.5.6 The Deputy of St. Martin:

I am rather disappointed that the Minister has not been speaking to the Chief Minister about this possible gynaecologist, bearing in mind only 2 weeks ago a question was asked and answered by one of her Assistant Ministers who said ... or did not answer the question actually, whether in actual fact the Minister had apologised to the gynaecologist for the lengthy suspension. Could I ask the Minister if she has now apologised to the gynaecologist for the lengthy and unnecessary suspension?

The Deputy of Trinity:

I know that this was mentioned in the last couple of weeks; I have nothing to apologise for. It was not under my watch, and also I welcome him back as I would do any staff member. Every staff member is important and especially if they have not been able to work for a period of time, or whatever, and come back to work.

2.5.7 The Deputy of Grouville:

As the Clinical Director and Chairman of the Staff Committee are still in place, who were, in essence, responsible for the sloppy and defective management, they are now going to oversee the changes that are meant to come about from the Verita report; how does the Minister feel that this will instil any confidence in the public in the hospital's management?

The Deputy of Trinity:

The hospital is a good safe place and I must reassure members of the public and this Assembly too. That was brought out in one of the questions that the Verita team mentioned when they were over here, that the hospital is a safe place. A terrible, terrible accident happened over 3 years ago. Lessons have been learned and some procedures have been changed. But there is always room for improvements, and this is where the 29 recommendations do come in, from Verita, otherwise there would be no point in having an investigation. We have got to learn by this. The management team across the whole hospital where there is corporate management, Medical Staff Committee, *et cetera*, are all there for patient safety and with putting the recommendations into place as soon as possible.