

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES
BY DEPUTY I. GARDINER OF ST. HELIER
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON MONDAY 2nd NOVEMBER 2020**

Question

Will the Minister provide a full breakdown of present staffing levels in each department at the General Hospital, including all current vacancies, and advise what provisions are in place to manage the impact of Covid-19 or illness in any areas which are assessed as under-resourced?

Answer

The safety of patients is a top priority for the department and so a daily “Operational Hub” is in place to ensure that no areas are under-resourced. This is managed via the flexible use of the workforce in response to demand.

Given the nature of the use of flexibility across the department, it is important for us to capture staff vacancies across the hospital. With that in mind, at the end of September the vacancy rates for staff groups in the Hospital were:

15 Medical vacancies; 7% vacancy rate
57 nurses; 13%
17 HCAs; 11%
5 Physios; 10%
5 Psychologists; 16%

It is worth noting that these are vacancies in terms of posts not being filled substantively, but this does not mean they are not occupied, and we have 200 staff on our bank to fill shifts in line with our flexible requirements.

The department has in place an HCS Winter and Covid Preparedness Plan that has been refreshed for 2020/2021 and agreed by the HCS executive team.

This plan has been produced based on:

- Learning from previous winter planning
- Impact and learning from COVID-19
- Refreshed winter bed modelling for 2020/21
- Revised Emergency Department capacity and demand modelling 2020/21
- Strategic requirements for system-wide transformation.

The plan will be subject to further refinement throughout the winter period reflecting HCS developments and wider community actions over the coming months.

Health and Community Services has been working with partners across Jersey to develop Business Continuity Plans to ensure adequate preparedness for potential Winter pressures including COVID-19 preparedness. This includes:

- Planning successful internal and external communications
- Plans to increase immunisation rates across the public and the workforce

- Effective command, control and co-ordination during escalation – setting a high bar across all system partners and determining what ‘excellent’ looks like, referring to principles of Emergency Preparedness, Resilience and Response. To include system-wide access to operational data/insight into day-to-day demand and capacity and flow in/flow through/flow out, for use by all system partners in limiting risk of escalation and targeting actions in support of de-escalating.
- Reviewing in-patient discharge arrangements.

The period of winter for planning purposes is from 1 November 2020 to 1 March 2021.

In addition, recruitment continues to all substantive and bank vacancies across the Department, and during October we have successfully recruited to 30 nursing vacancies