

2014.09.09

3.10 Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier of St. Saviour of the Minister for Health and Social Services regarding the percentage of operating theatre time devoted to allow Consultants to perform private procedures during their working week:

What percentage of operating theatre time is devoted to allow consultants to perform private procedures during their working week?

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

All consultants undertake a full-time job working a minimum of 40 hours right across the working week. That working week covers 24/7 and the 40 hours which is public work includes clinics, ward rounds, theatre time, out of hours and administration. Over and above these 40 hours consultants are entitled to undertake private practice. Surgeons are allowed to undertake private practice in the Jersey General Hospital theatres and this can occur across the 6 days of a week. To plan the most efficient use of theatre capacity, surgeons are requested to keep their private practice to no more than 30 per cent of the scheduled theatre lists. Most recent audits however show that the percentage of theatre activity spent on private practice is 21 per cent. This remains over and above the contracted 40 hours of public work they undertake across their full working week.

3.10.1 Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

Could the Minister confirm - and I thank her for the clarity of her answer - whether any of this 21 per cent is focused on operations where people are desperate to get them and are kept on long waiting lists but almost by a sleight of hand were they to move to private operations they can get the operation almost immediately? Would she confirm that a lot of the 21 per cent is used in that fashion?

The Deputy of Trinity:

I cannot confirm that the 21 per cent is used in that fashion because that is private practice and it is up to the consultant at the time, but issues of waiting lists are because there is an increase in demand for surgery. We know that because of the ageing population. That will not change whether we did private practice or not private practice. The waiting lists, even though they have been successful over the last months, have reduced dramatically. If there was not private practice work those patients would not be able to go obviously on the private list and the public list would even be longer.

3.10.2 Deputy J.A. Hilton of St. Helier:

Members have just been told that theatres are currently used 6 days a week. We are all very well aware of lengthy waiting lists for some specialities. Has any consideration been given to using theatres 7 days a week?

The Deputy of Trinity:

Yes, issues like that are always constantly under review but if we did do 7 days a week you need to make sure you have the theatre staff, the anaesthetist, *et cetera*, to be able to achieve that but that is the whole issue of working at weekends within the hospital which is constantly kept under review.

3.10.3 The Deputy of St. Ouen:

Would the Minister tell us, after the overall 40 hours that the consultants undertake on public work, what is the actual average time per week spent in theatres by those consultants?

The Deputy of Trinity:

I do not have the exact details. It varies from surgeon to surgeon, I would have thought. An E.N.T. (Ear Nose and Throat) consultant does one night in 3 on call, so this is including the on-call. But the exact figures of what each doctor ... we do have that information but I do not have it to hand.

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

Could I just ask the Minister if she would circulate that information to the States Members?

The Deputy of Trinity:

Yes.

The Deputy Bailiff:

A final supplementary?

Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:

No, Sir.

Deputy J.A. Hilton:

Could I ask a final supplementary?

The Deputy Bailiff:

That is not the tradition, Deputy. **[Laughter]** We have a lot of questions to get through.