

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES
BY DEPUTY R.J. WARD OF ST. HELIER
QUESTION SUBMITTED ON MONDAY 29TH NOVEMBER 2021
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON MONDAY 6TH DECEMBER 2021**

Question

Will the Minister explain what advice and support regarding protection from Covid infection is given to women in the third trimester of their pregnancy who work in front line services such as health and education?

Answer

As an employer, the Government requires managers and pregnant women to undertake a risk assessment at various stages of the pregnancy. The risk assessments should be recorded and reviewed at appropriate times throughout the term of pregnancy including the third trimester.

The responsibility to protect the health and safety of pregnant women who are working, has always been part of our duty of care and nothing that has happened in this Covid-19 crisis negates this. However, guidance specific to Covid-19 is provided to managers around the safety measure in all service areas including front-line services such as health and education. Our most vulnerable colleagues, including pregnant women, are a priority to ensure that they are safely able to continue working, appropriate adjustments can be put in place or that other suitable alternative work is found.

As part of our business continuity approach, revised policy arrangements are in place to ensure that managers understand specifically the need to undertake risk assessments and make suitable adjustments. The risk assessment involves seeking advice from General Practitioners and/or our Occupational Health provider. Risk assessments and suitable adjustments will vary from service areas and from individual to individual. In some situations, managers/colleagues may need to discuss options around changes to working arrangements if there are any concerns that have been identified through the risk assessment and / or the advice that is provided by the GP or Occupational Health. In exceptional situations where adjustments or other suitable alternative work cannot be found, alternative leave arrangements would be agreed. We will follow the advice provided by Midwives and other clinicians if this varies from our policy.

Those who are pregnant when reaching 28 weeks or over and wishing to remain in a patient-facing role in HCS can do so providing they:

- are fully vaccinated
- are taking part in workforce swab testing (health surveillance)
- do not work in COVID Hot wards or conduct AGPs (aerosol generating procedures)
- must be face fit tested and wearing full protective clothing at all times whilst working
- have an up to date New and Expectant Mothers Risk Assessment in place.

Alternative non-patient facing work such as admin, audit or education will be considered if any of the above is not in place.