

2020.07.13

17 The Connétable of St. Martin of the Minister for Health and Social Services regarding Public Health Services in the Island: (OQ.192/2020)

Will the Minister outline what involvement it is planned the States Assembly will have in deciding upon any restructuring or reprioritisation of public health services in the Island, including any proposed move from public to private sector provision, in response to any cost-saving reductions to services arising from the Government's Recovery Plan?

[16:30]

The Deputy of St. Ouen (The Minister for Health and Social Services):

This is a very general question and I can say that H.C.S. has no recovery plans to outsource public health services to the private sector in order to make cost savings.

3.17.1 The Connétable of St. Martin:

There has been a lot of restructuring going on and a lot of reprioritisation in public health. For example, I am sorry to mention this again, the fully equipped, fit-for-purpose infertility unit on Rozel Ward, which is now closed and which is moving to Samarès Ward in one week, and Samarès Ward is the successful Stroke Rehabilitation Unit that is fit for purpose and we understand that is now being moved to the hospital temporarily, which will be moving another unit out. I also understand that the Executive has deemed that we do not need a dedicated gynaecology ward and that men are alongside women on Rayner Ward. My question is: would the Minister agree that it is in the benefit for all of us that the States Assembly are at least informed of any restructuring or reprioritisation of public health services on the Island?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

The Connétable has referred to a number of things. She mentioned Samarès. I have answered to Deputy Pointon and I hope I have made clear that the provision around Samarès was a temporary measure as a result of COVID, like so many other measures within the hospital. I have committed that the Assisted Reproduction Unit, which the Connétable has asked about, is a service that is continuing and to offer everything that it always has. Provision around gynaecology, I cannot imagine that a general hospital can do without gynaecology, although I have no specific instructions. Of course, if the Connétable wishes to come and talk to me about any concerns she has heard or put a specific question, we will answer that. Finally, Rayner Ward, again I am not aware of any changes. In recent months there have been some very difficult changes to make. We have had to ask staff to work in very many different ways to address an emergency situation that the Island was facing. If the Deputy's concerns arise out of that I can confirm that we will be returning to business as usual, let us say, but if she has specific concerns ... I am sorry I have kept on referring to the Connétable as a Deputy. I do not mean to. But specific questions I am always very willing to answer and I can go and ask when I do not know the answer to specific provisions.

The Connétable of St. Martin:

Could I just clarify something? I did not say that the gynaecology services was closing down. I just said that it has always had a dedicated ward and that men were now being treated on this ward alongside women and I believe this is not just a temporary measure. So it was just to clarify.