

# STATES OF JERSEY



## COVID-19 ELIMINATION STRATEGY (P.61/2020): THIRD AMENDMENT

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Lodged au Greffe on 18th May 2020  
by Deputy K.G. Pamplin of St. Saviour

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STATES GREFFE

**PAGE 2, PARAGRAPH (b) –**

After paragraph (b), insert the following new paragraph –

“(c) that the strategy must include explicit provision for how, at each stage of the strategy’s implementation, mental health services will be provided and enhanced by the Government of Jersey in order to support Islanders during the Covid-19 pandemic; and”,

and re-designate the remaining paragraphs accordingly.

DEPUTY K.G. PAMPLIN OF ST. SAVIOUR

**Note:** After this amendment, the proposition would read as follows –

**THE STATES are asked to decide whether they are of opinion –**

- (a) to request the Chief Minister to develop and implement a new ‘Covid-19 elimination strategy’, arising from which the Government of Jersey should revise its ‘delay, contain, shield’ policy and the ‘safe exit framework’ to reflect this new strategy;
- (b) that the ‘elimination strategy’ must detail a plan of action that will be implemented with the explicit aim of eliminating the virus in Jersey through well-recognised measures used to eliminate infectious diseases –
  - rapid case detection identified by widespread testing, and rapid case isolation and contact tracing;
  - continued intensive hygiene promotion;
  - border controls with high-quality quarantine of those arriving in Jersey;
  - intensive physical distancing that may include various severities of lockdown; and
  - a co-ordinated communication strategy for elimination;
- (c) that the strategy must include explicit provision for how, at each stage of the strategy’s implementation, mental health services will be provided and enhanced by the Government of Jersey in order to support Islanders during the Covid-19 pandemic; and

- (d) to request the Chief Minister to publish this ‘elimination strategy’ in a report to the States within 2 weeks of the date this proposition is adopted, and to publish updated versions of the strategy whenever guidance is altered, in order to ensure that everyone remains fully informed about the current strategy.

## REPORT

This Amendment seeks to provide explicit provision for the assessment of and impact on Islanders' mental health should the States Assembly adopt [P.61/2020](#).

The intention behind the Amendment is to ensure that the impact on Islanders' mental health is addressed at each stage of any new strategy, and to allow the Mental Health services to adopt a more proactive approach to the support offered. The Island's Mental Health services have reacted to the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic with great speed, while keeping the needs and concerns of their patients in the heart of all they do, and they should be congratulated in achieving this. However, the earlier they are made aware of the strategic stages, the sooner they can determine the level and type of support that will be required.

If the Proposition is adopted, I believe the general public would welcome consideration of Islanders' mental health at each and every stage. For example, when a Minister, speaking in the States Assembly or at a press conference, raises mental health concerns as one of the reasons for certain decisions, reference can be made to the involvement of the Mental Health services at each strategic stage.

An article in UN News dated 14th May 2020 (<https://news.un.org/en/story/2020/05/1063882>) refers to –

*“Decades of neglect and underinvestment in addressing people’s mental health needs have been exposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the UN said on Thursday, in a call for ambitious commitments from countries in the way they treat psychological illness, amid a potential global spike in suicides and drug abuse”.*

The article also identifies the growing use of addictive coping strategies, including alcohol, drugs, tobacco and online gaming as examples.

It also states that –

*“During the COVID-19 emergency, people are afraid of infection, dying, and losing family members, the UN recommendations also explain. At the same time, vast numbers of people have lost or are at risk of losing their livelihoods, have been socially isolated and separated from loved ones, and, in some countries, have experienced stay-at-home orders implemented in drastic ways”.*

I believe that no States Member would dispute that the Covid-19 pandemic is impacting on Islanders' mental health.

- We know of many elderly Islanders not wanting to be a burden.
- Local domestic abuse charities have stated concern over the drop-in contact with them.
- Data confirms that medical professionals and other key workers have experienced significant mental health problems linked to the Covid-19 emergency.

- The Island’s Children’s Commissioner has indicated that children will need support on their return to education.

A press release by the World Health Organisation dated 14th May 2020 (<https://www.who.int/news-room/detail/14-05-2020-substantial-investment-needed-to-avert-mental-health-crisis>) states –

*The COVID-19 pandemic is highlighting the need to urgently increase investment in services for mental health or risk a massive increase in mental health conditions in the coming months, according to a policy brief on COVID-19 and mental health issued by the United Nations today.*

*The impact of the pandemic on people’s mental health is already extremely concerning,” said Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General of the World Health Organization. “Social isolation, fear of contagion, and loss of family members is compounded by the distress caused by loss of income and often employment.*

### **Financial and manpower implications**

It is difficult to predict exactly the financial and manpower implications arising from the adoption of this amendment. Ensuring and enhancing the delivery of Mental Health services may require additional funds to be made available; in a similar way to those monies listed by the Minister for Treasury and Resources at the meeting of the Assembly on 12th May 2020 when discussing the initiatives already supported by the Government during the pandemic.