

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES
BY THE DEPUTY OF ST. JOHN
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 18TH JULY 2017**

Question

Could the Minister advise what practices are currently in place for mandatory reporting (by professionals) of abuse of both children and adults? If none, what consideration is the Minister giving to mandatory reporting and what extra resources does he estimate would be required?

Answer

The issue of mandatory reporting has been referred by the Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy Group (CAVA) to the Safeguarding Children Partnership Board (SCPB) on two occasions, most recently in February 2016. The SCPB is an independent body, chaired by Glenys Johnston OBE.

The advice of the SCPB was that a duty to report concerns is already enshrined in professional standards. Experience has shown that where reporting has been made mandatory, it has led to a large volume of referrals being made which were not all appropriate and which led to pressure on resources, distracting staff from their main safeguarding priorities.

The SCPB's decision was informed by the attitude of the NSPCC, which did not support the introduction of mandatory reporting laws. Recently, the NSPCC has modified its stance and has recommended a restricted form of mandatory reporting. The UK government is considering the issue. The Children's Commissioner in England does not support mandatory reporting.

The SCPB has agreed that it would be sensible to see if/how the NSPCC recommendations are taken forward by the UK to ascertain if the suggested changes make a significant difference. The SCPB continues to keep the issue under review and is able to provide CAVA with advice on the matter.