

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES
BY DEPUTY G.P. SOUTHERN OF ST. HELIER
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON MONDAY 20th JUNE 2011**

Question

Does the Minister have any plans to introduce or increase charges for services and if so will she given provide details?

In particular, will she identify any plans to charge for the following in the next round of Comprehensive Spending Review proposals –

- (a) Accident and Emergency attendances;
- (b) Patient Transport Services;
- (c) Travel costs for elective (non emergency) surgery;
- (d) psychological assessments?

Will she give details of how charging might be applied in relation to the suggestions contained within questions 11 and 14 of her Green Paper examining longer term options for Health and Social Services?

Answer

As part of its 2012/13 round of Comprehensive Spending Review proposals HSSD is looking at options for increasing existing charges or/and introducing new charges across a range of services. As part of this process HSSD has work underway to introduce a new piece of legislation, the HSSD Charges Law. Charging options to be explored do include:

- (a) Accident and Emergency attendances: HSSD is to scope a review of options relating to the introduction of charges for A&E attendance. This could include, for example, payments from patients who attend A&E for a condition which would normally be GP managed and therefore incurring a charge. No A&E charges will be recommended for introduction without a comprehensive service review and impact assessment being undertaken.
- (b) Patient Transport Services: Patient Transport Services will be reviewed to establish current patterns of usage and the potential associated efficiencies. However, there is no intention to create a situation where patients who require transport for clinical reasons to be denied access. No patient transport charges will be recommended for introduction without a comprehensive service review and impact assessment being undertaken.
- (c) Travel costs for elective (non emergency) surgery: HSSD currently subsidises travel to the UK for some patients referred for non-emergency surgery, and uses a set of household income criteria to determine eligibility and level of subsidy. A reduction in subsidised travel for elective (non emergency) surgery will not be recommended without a comprehensive service review and impact assessment being undertaken.

- (d) Psychological assessments: HSSD is considering its options for introducing charges for Primary Care Psychological Assessment and Counselling. A decision as to whether to progress with this review is pending.

The purpose of the Green Paper is to set out set out future challenges and establish how the public think such issues should be addressed. Detailed work exploring charging options including the possibility of some individuals paying for certain elements of their care, as referred to in Questions 11 and 14, would not commence until after the results of the consultation process are known.