4. Oral Questions

4.1 Deputy G.C.L. Baudains of St. Clement of the Minister for Health and Social Services regarding the reliance on the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency for information on drugs:

Further to the answer she gave to my written question on 21st February 2014 regarding her reliance on the Medicine and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency for information on drugs will the Minister advise whether she is certain the information she is giving Jersey residents is as accurate as possible?

The Deputy of Trinity (The Minister for Health and Social Services):

As I have consistently and repeatedly said in my responses to the Deputy's recent questions on the issue the answer is yes. Numerous questions from the Deputy on the validity and safety of vaccines and medicines in recent times - at least 4 of them - have specifically referred to the issue of medical research and the M.H.R.A. (Medicine and Healthcare Products Regulatory Authority). There was an oral question on 5th November; a written question on 19th November; a written question on 2nd December; and a written question on 21st January. So, in summary, yes, I am certain that the information my department is giving Jersey residents is as accurate as possible.

4.1.1 Deputy G.C.L. Baudains:

As the Minister will be aware the U.K. (United Kingdom) Public Accounts Committee has recently concluded that drug companies are not truthful about drug trials and that the regulatory authorities are just taking the drug company's word for it. They have been accused of that. Can the Minister explain how, if she was relying on information from regulatory authorities that do not have and have not made accurate judgments about drugs, she can possibly inform residents of Jersey as to the efficiency of safety of drugs?

The Deputy of Trinity:

Health and Social Services is not a primary research body and, as such, when making decisions about vaccines, *et ceteraI*, it looks closely at professional primary research bodies including the U.K. Joint Committee Vaccination and Immunisation, the U.K. Department of Health, the European Medicines Agency and to the highly reputable independent U.K. regulator, the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency. As any agency do they look at all the information coming in, whether that is from a select committee or other trials, *et ceteraI*.

4.1.2 Deputy G.C.L. Baudains:

The M.H.R.A., the regulatory body regarding the Tamiflu, only looked at a handful of trials, all of which were funded by the manufacturer. We now know, as a result, that the drug is virtually useless and if I recall correctly we spent, I think, over £1 million stockpiling it. Will the Minister now, in the light of those failures by regulatory authorities, such as the M.H.R.A., agree first of all that the public has a right to know whether medicines are effective and safe and to take further steps to ensure that the information given by the medical authorities is as accurate as possible and not merely repeating the propaganda of the drug companies?

The Deputy of Trinity:

I refute some of what Deputy Baudains has just said. It is an independent medical research authority and further to his inquiry about it, back in November, the M.H.R.A. themselves wrote to the *J.E.P.* (*Jersey Evening Post)* to put some facts across that were obviously wrong,

which the Deputy had. I have full faith in the M.H.R.A. They are there to provide research from all the clinical trials and assessments by professional expert people.