

2015.05.12

### **3.8 Deputy A.D. Lewis of the Minister for Health and Social Services regarding patient treatment abroad:**

Would the Minister summarise the history and status of any negotiations conducted during the last 5 years with non-U.K. authorities regarding the possibility of sending Jersey patients elsewhere for treatment? Thank you, Sir.

#### **Senator A.K.F. Green (The Minister for Health and Social Services):**

There have been no formal negotiations over the last 5 years with non-U.K. authorities regarding the treatment of Jersey residents. In 2014, Rennes Hospital in France invited members of the senior H.S.S.D. (Health and Social Services Department) team to visit their hospital and discuss any possible opportunities for them to provide treatment in France for Jersey residents. We shared activity levels and examples of procedures to enable them to access costing, we discussed with them ways of assuring the quality of their clinical outcomes and some logistical challenges such as travel and language. We discussed the method by which we would contract in the future and that would be via a tender process detailing cost and benefit. To that date - and I have got a little bit more to say on this - we have heard nothing more from Rennes regarding their costing exercise. However, recently awarded contracts for cardiology, renal and neurology with U.K. hospitals were undertaken via the formal official journal of the European Union tender. This process is Pan-European and open to all European members so open therefore to non-U.K. authorities to submit a tender. However, tenders were only received from the U.K. providers and clearly the Deputy will be aware we occasionally refer patients to Guernsey for diagnostic tests.

#### **The Deputy Bailiff:**

Supplementary, Deputy.

#### **3.8.1 Deputy A.D. Lewis:**

Some anecdotal evidence suggests that there is a significant differential between the cost of private healthcare procedures in Jersey compared with some of our near neighbours, i.e. in France, a hip replacement costs about £7,000 and in Jersey, about £12,000. Mindful of this, could the Minister advise as to changes within the Health Service he would need to make in order to create the foundations for a possible centre for health tourism in the future?

#### **Senator A.K.F. Green:**

The Deputy is just slightly, by a few days, premature with that question because I have got a report winging its way to me literally as we speak from Ernst & Young who have investigated the possibility of expanding and the benefits and merits therefore of expanding private medicine. I have seen a preliminary draft and it is not as clear-cut as the Deputy might suggest.

#### **3.8.2 Deputy G.P. Southern:**

Does the Minister agree with me that the possibility of expanding procedures in Jersey to create a centre of excellence is a lot more difficult than people would imagine?

#### **Senator A.K.F. Green:**

I do agree with the Deputy that it is very difficult. I think it is worth, however, looking at to see whether there could be some benefit to ordinary patients by reducing costs generally and increasing the level of expertise but it is not as straightforward as people think. It is not helped by the fact that we have this extra piece of water between us and the mainland and I have been advised by one potential provider that clients would not make that second flight. They may come from abroad to London but they would not make that second flight then to Jersey. If we are not careful, what we might do is end up attracting consultants over here who will take the work away from Jersey rather than keeping it in Jersey.

### **3.8.3 Deputy G.P. Southern:**

Will the Minister do his utmost to ensure that, in the light of increased private services on the Island, charging does not extend to ordinary people and that healthcare for most will be free at the point of delivery?

#### **Senator A.K.F. Green:**

I am not going to fall into that one. As the Deputy knows, we are reviewing health charges at the moment and that is what we are doing.

#### **The Deputy Bailiff:**

Final supplementary, Deputy Lewis.

### **3.8.4 Deputy A.D. Lewis:**

Is the Minister concerned about the high cost of some procedures in Jersey? I accept that, to attract the best consultants, fees have to be at the upper limit but is he concerned about the price that private healthcare has to pay to access consultants in Jersey?

#### **Senator A.K.F. Green:**

I am concerned about every cost, I am concerned about value for money and I am concerned about outcome and they cannot be taken separately. When I have this report, then I will look at it and, if the Deputy would like, I am happy to discuss it with him.

#### **The Deputy Bailiff:**

Then we come now to question 10 which Deputy Southern will ask of the Minister for Treasury and Resources. Deputy Southern.