

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES  
BY THE DEPUTY OF ST. MARTIN  
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 29th MARCH 2011**

**Question**

- (a) Given that it is now anticipated that an offer will be made to Middle Grade doctors by the summer of 2011, can the Minister explain the reasons for the delay in negotiating an acceptable local equivalent to the April 2009 UK SAS New Contract?
- (b) Can the Minister describe the points on which negotiations have been hitherto unsuccessful?
- (c) Does the Minister accept that her Department will have difficulty in attracting suitably qualified doctors to the 10 vacant Middle Grade posts before these negotiations are complete, as any candidate accepting a post will be committing to an uncertain future contract, and if not, why not?

**Answer**

- (a) Despite taking several years to negotiate, many UK health authorities are still encountering problems with the implementation of the new contract for specified middle grade doctors.

In common with the approach successfully adopted for its Medical Consultants, HSSD aims to introduce a significantly different local version of the new contract for middle grade doctors, in order to enhance its ability to attract and retain good quality staff. Local differences will include the incorporation of internal cover arrangements.

Whilst the development of a local version has incurred delays, good progress has been made on the structure of a proposed agreement in partnership with staff and their representatives. The remaining issue to be resolved prior to the commencement of formal negotiations is the checking of the financial model that will determine the costs of any resultant offer or final agreement.

- (b) It is to be expected that changes to contractual arrangements may elicit a variety of views all of which need to be considered. To date a good measure of agreement has already been reached on the main non financial elements. Negotiations (in particular those related to remuneration) are due to start under the auspices of the Local Negotiation Committee. It would be premature to provide details or pre judge the outcome.
- (c) In common with many hospitals in the UK, Jersey has been affected by the restrictions in the employment of middle grade doctors outside of the European Economic Community and changes in their training and working hours. This has significantly reduced the availability of these doctors, in particular those in the specialities such as emergency medicine. In an effort to improve this situation, the Department implemented a £5,000/annum pay supplement for these doctors in August 2010 which effectively matches the basic rates of pay in the UK, pending the introduction of the proposed new contract.

This interim supplement has helped support the successful recruitment of a number of middle grade doctors to vacant posts.