

2.3 Deputy K.C. Lewis of St. Saviour of the Minister for Health and Social Services regarding the banning of so-called legal highs:

Further to my question last year regarding the banning of spice, salvia, ketamine and mephedrone, is the Minister keeping a watchful eye on the new brands of so-called legal highs, and if not, why not?

Deputy A.E. Pryke of Trinity (The Minister for Health and Social Services):

I know that the Deputy is very interested in the subject and, indeed, both I and the officers in my department do keep a very watchful eye on emerging legal highs. I am advised on this subject by the Jersey Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs, which was established under the provisions of Misuse of Drugs Law. The Council has a duty to keep under constant review the situation in respect to drugs which are or appear likely to be misused. This is particularly pertinent when such misuse appears capable of causing harm or social problems.

2.3.1 Deputy K.C. Lewis:

I refer to the drug mephedrone, not to be confused with methadone; sadly there was apparently another victim of this drug yesterday, lost their life in the U.K. As the so-called legal highs are freely available in the U.K. and on the internet is the Minister liaising with Customs and Home Affairs to block these evil drugs coming into the Island?

The Deputy of Trinity:

I read that article too and in fact having been away for the week in Dubai it made the Dubai news as well. So it is very much a worldwide problem. I am pleased to say that mephedrone is classed as a cathinoid which includes butanone, metolazone and mephedrone, which is similar to effects to amphetamines, so these drugs are, in fact, illegal drugs in Jersey.

2.3.2 Deputy M. Tadier:

Will the Minister confirm that she is keeping a watchful eye on the old brands of legal highs, one of which is known as alcohol? I was reading in the national papers the other day that somebody had actually been killed as a result of alcohol even though they had not consumed any themselves. So will the Minister outline her plan for alcohol - another legal high - to minimise the impact that it has on our Island.

The Deputy of Trinity:

These legal highs, very much like the ones that Deputy Lewis has mentioned, come under the Misuse of Drugs Law. I am too concerned, as Deputy Tadier, too and I hope this whole Assembly that we do have a problem with alcohol misuse and intake of it. I know the debate at the end of last year... the Medical Officer of Health did raise some concerns about it and I am sure in her report, which is due to come out fairly soon, she will make mention of it and perhaps afford strategy on that too.