

Deputy J.M. Maçon of St. Saviour of the Minister for Health and Social Services regarding the capacity of the Jersey Women's Refuge: [OQ.7/2018]

In light of comments at a recent Women in Politics event that the Jersey Women's Refuge - on a side note, who do phenomenal work on behalf of the women on the Island - is over-capacity, what analysis, if any, occurs in assessing the capacity of the Refuge and the need to provide extra capacity?

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

I thank the Deputy for his question and also would like to align with the comment about the phenomenal work that they do. They do a fantastic job. As at Friday, 12th January, 5 out of the 7 bedrooms were available. My department has a contract with the Women's Refuge to provide a walk-in temporary safe place and 7 bedrooms, some of which accommodate children as well, along with communal areas such as kitchen, laundry, sitting rooms, outside and inside children's play areas. Officers regularly meet with the Women's Refuge and receive quarterly reports, which details the demands on the service. There were a small number of instances in 2017 where the Refuge was relatively busy. However, the Refuge management have confirmed that during these periods no lady who met their criteria was turned away. They have also confirmed that additional rooms, if needed, could be made available at these busy times, such as emergency beds in sitting rooms.

4.4.1 Deputy J.M. Maçon:

That is good. If there is a situation whereby there is over-capacity, how will this demand be met exactly?

Senator A.K.F. Green:

Initially, and it was not done last year, but initially over-demand would be met by converting the 2 sitting rooms into spare bedrooms.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

I thank the Minister for his response.