

2020.03.24

**6 The Greffier of the States on behalf of Deputy M.R. Higgins of the Minister for Health and Social Services regarding the number of admissions to the Hospital of people with Covid-19: (OQ.90/2020)**

Will the Minister advise Members how many people have been admitted to hospital to date with COVID-19 and what the estimates are for future such admissions on the basis of the models being used by the Government?

**The Deputy of St. Ouen (The Minister for Health and Social Services):**

As of yesterday, 2 people have been admitted to hospital with a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19. Members will be aware from the daily release of figures that we do await a number of test results. As to estimates for the future of such admissions, I refer Members to the advice and briefings we have received from Dr. Muscat that, without mitigation, we can expect that a maximum of 50 per cent of our population could show symptoms of the virus. That is the realistic worst case scenario. Of those in that scenario, around 4 per cent could require hospital care over a 10 week infection period. If we simply say we have a population of 100,000 - I know that it is more - that would be around 2,000 people. Of those, a quarter, that is 25 per cent of the 2,000, may need intensive care. In that scenario we know the available hospital capacity would be overwhelmed but, as I have said, that is the worst-case scenario on a realistic basis and without effective mitigation. That just highlights the importance of the measures that we want to implement and that we are asking and pleading with the population to implement: social distancing, be careful where you gather, wash your hands thoroughly, all of those. Only in that way will we stand a good chance of bringing demand and hospital capacity together so that we can save people's lives.

**3.6.1 Deputy J.H. Perchard:**

Are there any people who have been admitted to hospital on suspicion of having the virus who are awaiting test results? In the Minister's answer he stressed about the confirmed cases.

**The Deputy of St. Ouen:**

Yes, there could be and that will always be the case, because we know there is a lag now because of the need to send tests away to the U.K. So I do not know whether some patients in hospital, who may have been tested have COVID or not, so that is why I was careful to say that, but we must not speculate.

**3.6.2 Deputy J.H. Perchard:**

I do not wish to cause any unnecessary speculation. It is more just about the process. If a person is awaiting a test result and they happen to also be in hospital, what processes and procedures surround that person to ensure that any risk of infection is minimised while test results are being waited on?

**The Deputy of St. Ouen:**

Yes, that is a good question. All those coming into hospital are immediately assessed and those who may be assessed as suspected COVID are placed in a certain ward. There is a ward that is ready to take suspected cases. There is another ward in which confirmed cases are placed and those wards are entirely separate from the non-COVID stream of work within the hospital.

**3.6.3 Deputy G.P. Southern:**

Could the Minister inform Members whether we have identified any local transmissions via contact with foreigners, for want of a better word?

**The Deputy of St. Ouen:**

Yes, Deputy, there appear to have been. Of the tests that have come back as positive, it appears that there have been 2 cases of local transmission.