

23.12.11.

10. Deputy L.J. Farnham of the Minister for Health and Social Services regarding prostate cancer screening (OQ.247/2023)

Following the response to Oral Question 166/2023, will the Minister detail what actions, if any, she is taking to include Jersey in the £42 million prostate cancer screening trial, funded by the National Institute for Health and Care Research and Prostate Cancer U.K., that is due to begin in the U.K. in early 2024?

Deputy K. Wilson of St. Clement (The Minister for Health and Social Services):

Thank you to the Deputy for his question. What I can say is that screening teams in both Jersey and Guernsey are awaiting confirmation from the National Institute for Health and Care Research as to whether we are eligible for inclusion in this trial. The research centre tends to focus more on established N.H.S. (National Health Service) trusts but this is something that we are very keen to participate in. However, should we not be considered eligible, we will certainly follow developments in this area closely and our lead consultant for our screening board will be updating fellow clinicians as regularly as possible. In the event that we are able to pursue the screening process, provisions will be made in H.C.S. (Health and Community Services) to secure the sufficient resources and staffing, which will be likely through the Radiology Department. This, of course, would rely on additional funding for the service and as such will be something that the Minister for Treasury and Resources and I will need to discuss further.

The Bailiff

Supplemental question, Deputy?

Deputy L.J. Farnham:

No, thank you, Sir. I thank the Minister for her answer and wish her well with her endeavours and hope we can get this up and running as soon as possible.

2.9.1 Deputy R.J. Ward:

Can I ask the Minister, it was disappointing in the recent cancer strategy, which is welcomed, that screening for prostate cancer was not there, seeing as one in 8 men and many more in Afro-Caribbean men, for example. Can the Minister reassure that the tests that we do have are encouraged for men to go and get, because early diagnosis is so important?

Deputy K. Wilson:

Yes, I can agree with the statement that the Deputy has just made. Every effort is being made to support people to access screening services and, as you have just heard, we do have a screening board who keeps regular oversight of this.

2.9.2 Deputy R.J. Ward:

Is the Minister aware that there are some providers - I will use that word - who may say that the P.S.A. (prostate-specific antigen) test is not relevant? Would the Minister publicly state whether she feels that it is actually a useful test for men to have as an indicator in early on in diagnosis?

Deputy K. Wilson:

Certainly I would be supportive of any evidence that suggests that it is for the benefit of patients. I do know that the National Screening Committee have also commissioned a review of the evidence. So,

obviously, when that review has been concluded we will have some more further detail on the efficacy and the efficiency of some of these tests.