

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES
BY DEPUTY J.M. MAÇON OF ST. SAVIOUR
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 14TH NOVEMBER 2017**

Question

Will the Minister request his Department to publish –

- (a) the number of people on the waiting list for gastric bypass surgery;
- (b) how many such people are in the urgent category;
- (c) how long each of them has been waiting for this surgery;
- (d) over the past five years, how many people have been moved up the waiting list;
- (e) how many of these people were moved up the waiting list due to their health deteriorating or other conditions developing as a result of not receiving this surgery in a timely fashion; and
- (f) what the increased cost to the Department has been, if any, from not being able to provide this surgery in a timely fashion?

Answer

- (a) the number of people on the waiting list for gastric bypass surgery;

There are several stages that a patient goes through before they are accepted for gastric surgery (bypass/banding/sleeve).

There are currently 14 patients waiting to be allocated a date for surgery by our UK partner hospital (Portsmouth).

There are 7 patients prioritised to see the surgeon at the next clinic appointment (consultant visits the island).

There are 143 patients waiting assessment and onward referral.

- (b) how many such people are in the urgent category;

21; these are the 14 awaiting a surgical date and the 7 waiting to be seen in the next clinic.

- (c) how long each of them has been waiting for this surgery;

Individuals may be identifiable from a response, but can say that of the 14 awaiting a surgical date, 93% have waited 18 months or less.

Of those waiting for the next clinic, all have been referred or re-referred in 2017.

For those on the 'routine' list, waits vary considerably and may be due to a variety of reasons including pre-surgical weight loss programmes, requests to wait until personal circumstances suit, watch and wait etc.

45% have been referred since 2015; 55% were referred between 2007 and 2014.

(d) over the past five years, how many people have been moved up the waiting list;

This is almost impossible to answer as the list is dynamic and regularly reviewed by the consultant and dietician, with input for other professionals such as GPs.

There have been 68 patients receiving surgical intervention in the last 5 years, 22 of those in 2017.

There have been 43 removals from the waiting lists for a variety of reasons including not being fit for surgery and where the patient has changed their mind about surgery.

(e) how many of these people were moved up the waiting list due to their health deteriorating or other conditions developing as a result of not receiving this surgery in a timely fashion; and

Again this is almost impossible to answer.

Patients are re-prioritised on a regular basis (as they are within any specialty) if their condition changes and a greater priority is warranted. How many of these are due to their weight issue is not possible to say without looking at the notes of every patient. Similarly, without assessing every patient's medical history it is not possible to ascertain how many patients have other health needs relating to their weight.

If the patient's GP or other health care professional caring for the patient believes that the patient needs re-prioritising, they contact the service and the patient's waiting status is re-assessed.

(f) what the increased cost to the Department has been, if any, from not being able to provide this surgery in a timely fashion?

Again this is impossible to answer as per answer to (e).