

2.4 Deputy M. Tadier of the Minister for Health and Social Services regarding organ donation:

Will the Assistant Minister outline whether information and application forms regarding organ donation are readily available at the General Hospital and if not, where can this information be obtained and will she consider a move to make the organ donation scheme in Jersey opt-out rather than opt-in?

Deputy J.A. Martin of St. Helier (Assistant Minister for Health and Social Services - rapporteur):

Sorry, there are 4 so we have got 2 each and I thank the Deputy for his question. Yes, unfortunately at the moment, Jersey does not have an equivalent database to the U.K. and the N.H.S. (National Health System) and the hospital. The clinicians work on a one-to-one with families to ask whether they give permission and also do they know the patient's wishes. This is very similar to the scheme in the U.K. whereby even if people carry a donation card - that they are willing to be a donor - often they may not have them with them at the time. It is only whether they have spoken to their family and their wishes are known and, if they are not, sometimes the family override even and it may be found out later that the person did have a donor card. On the second part, my personal is yes, I think an opt-out scheme really needs a good debate. It is not in Health's plans for 2012 but with all the different things coming in like the population card and registration card and things like that, where there is a card where there needs to be questions asked we could include that, but it needs to be a debate because apparently you know it is very emotive for some people.

2.4.1 Deputy M. Tadier:

Just a supplementary on the first part. The reason I have raised this question is because a constituent of mine said he has considerable difficulty in finding information and forms at the General Hospital. This may well be an isolated incident but I would like the Assistant Minister perhaps to take a personal look at that, a cursory look, just to make sure information is readily available. I think that is all I have got to ask for the moment. I just thank the Assistant Minister for her answer.

Deputy J.A. Martin:

I am not sure what the Deputy ... I think the Deputy may be alluding to the ...

The Deputy Bailiff:

The question is asking is if you would take a personal interest in having a look.

Deputy J.A. Martin:

Yes, I take a personal interest. Is he asking ... I have already said we do not have an actual registration form so if he is asking me where does the person register, he would probably just need to let the family know and I think with us in ... I think it may be just an English thing, we do not talk about death and we do not talk about what is going to happen after and that is another thing that we should be encouraging.

Deputy M. Tadier:

Could I reiterate the question?

The Deputy Bailiff:

The Deputy can think about his final supplementary in due course. Deputy Le Hérissier?

2.4.2 Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:

Could the Assistant Minister inform the House, given the parlous state of the system as outlined by her, is the department prepared to undertake a review into this situation and put some proper alternatives in front of the public?

Deputy J.A. Martin:

I think I have already said we will need a debate - an in principle debate - some time on whether we do go for opt-out. I have said it is emotive and I have been told it is on a religious basis but it works well in Spain and to me it is a very highly Roman Catholic country, so you know; but if we go down this route, firstly we have the in principle debate and then we decide which and how we get people on the register, and I do not think that would be too hard with all the different forms and different cards we already carry - driving licence and the population card. So it can be done.

2.4.3 The Very Reverend R.F. Key, B.A., The Dean of Jersey:

Would the Assistant Minister take it from me that there are many of us as religious leaders who would love to see an opt-out system on the very sensible ground of love thy neighbour and when I do not need my kidneys any more, I am not going to need them in Heaven either, somebody else is very welcome to them. Would she accept that from me?

Deputy J.A. Martin:

I accept anything from the Dean. He knows that **[Laughter]** and I thank him for his donation.

2.4.4 Deputy M. Tadier:

I think from the clarification that the Assistant Minister has given, it is slightly concerning to know that we are very far from an opt-out because we have not even got a functioning opt-in system yet. So will the Assistant Minister give urgent attention to making sure that both information about organ donation and perhaps application forms should be readily available, if not promoted, at the General Hospital and other health outlets throughout the Island?

Deputy J.A. Martin:

Yes, I will look into this and see where we are.