

#### **4.16 The Deputy of St. Martin of the Minister for Health and Social Services regarding the rate paid to Allied Health Professionals:**

Timing is not bad, but there was a one or 2 minute stoppage, I think, Sir. Further to the Minister's response to an oral question on 15th March 2011, when she was unable to inform Members why Allied Health professionals are paid at a Civil Service rate, which is considerably higher than that of nurses, is she now able to provide the Assembly with a detailed reason for this anomaly?

#### **The Deputy of Trinity (The Minister for Health and Social Services):**

My understanding is that it was done as part of a major review undertaken approximately 20 years ago, which sought to ensure staff grades were comparable across all public service posts in Jersey. It was undertaken by the Establishment Committee of the day. Where possible staff groups are linked together in order to determine pay, hence the allied health professionals reporting to the Civil Service.

#### **4.16.1 The Deputy of St. Martin:**

I thank the Minister for that answer but given that there are discrepancies in the rate of pay, and the higher rate of pay is not creating difficulties in recruiting allied health professionals, or indeed the nurses at the lower grades, it must be apparent that nurses above Grade 4 will have to have an increase in their salary, obviously to recruit the required number. Does the Minister agree and if so, what steps will she be taking to find the funding?

#### **The Deputy of Trinity:**

Allied health professionals and nurses are not interchangeable. They are 2 different issues and the allied professional pay is something that you need to take up with the States Employment Board.

#### **4.16.2 The Deputy of St. Martin:**

The question was that as there is no difficulty in recruiting allied health professionals or nurses at a lower rate, but there is a difficulty in recruiting Grade 4 and above. Does the Minister agree and if so, what steps will be taken to find the funding to meet the need for this additional funding for Grade 4 and above?

#### **The Deputy of Trinity:**

The Deputy is quite right with the Grade 5 nurses. That work is being done and we - the department- are in discussions with the States Employment Board.

#### **4.16.3 Deputy G.P. Southern:**

Given that she is currently involved in negotiations over a 5 per cent offer to the senior nurses, but that these senior nurses are some 15-17 per cent behind their U.K. counterparts in terms of the expense of living in Jersey, will she attempt in her communications with the States Employment Board to lobby for an exemption should the States Employment Board in 2012 and 2013 come up with the idea of yet another pay freeze, because that would mean that her recruitment problems with these senior nurses was made worse if she were to go along with it? Will she lobby S.E.B. (States Employment Board) to make an exemption for nurses?

#### **The Deputy of Trinity:**

As I have stood here many times and said, there is a problem with nurses pay. It is over a certain level we have trouble recruiting, as it has been said, and I think the Chief Minister's office did a written question to more or less those issues. But it is not only just one issue regarding pay. The difficulty in recruiting is also the cost of childcare and housing. There is not just one effect. It is a multitude of things and where we have to look at the possibility of recruiting nurses, especially in those areas I have mentioned, we need to look at somehow addressing those issues and that is what we are doing with the States Employment Board.

**4.16.4 Deputy G.P. Southern:**

As a point of clarity, I think, is the Minister suggesting that she undertake providing housing or providing cheaper childcare, or is she suggesting that she pay her nurses enough that they can afford to live here under the right conditions, and if so will she be opening negotiations with S.E.B. to make an exemption for nurses should we face a pay freeze in the future?

**The Deputy of Trinity:**

We do provide housing, and that is part of the problem because the housing over many, many years has not kept up to standard, and that is one of the big issues that we have too with them, as States Members know regarding our estates. They have not been kept up-to-date. But I continue to say, it is not just one issue, and I am in negotiations, as my department is, with the States Employment Board, and we will continue to have these discussions until we have a resolution looking at these nurses pay grades.

[12:45]

**4.16.5 Deputy A.E. Jeune:**

Could the Minister advise then, what rates of pay are being used to engage contract nurses, such as the Head of Nursing in the A. and E. Department?

**The Deputy of Trinity:**

I have not got that detailed question. I know Deputy Jeune is very concerned about these levels and again I say to her, please, Deputy Jeune, please email me and I will give you the information that you require.

**4.16.6 The Deputy of St. Martin:**

The I.D.S. (Income Data Services) report and recommendations were published in January this year, yet in the answer given in written answer 7 today it says that no final decisions have been made on the I.D.S. recommendations, is the Minister in a position to inform Members how soon these decisions will be made?

**The Deputy of Trinity:**

No, I am not unfortunately and I think that is a question more geared-up to the States Employment Board.