

3.12 Deputy M. Tadier of the Minister for Health and Social Services regarding the importation of cannabis for medicinal use:

Will the Minister confirm whether her department has been approached by any individual with a view to importing cannabis for medicinal use and, if so, what steps would be necessary to enable G.P.s (general practitioners) to import and prescribe cannabis for medicinal use to their patients?

Deputy A.E. Pryke of Trinity (The Minister for Health and Social Services):

I can confirm that the department has been approached by an individual inquiring whether or not it be possible under the provisions of the Misuse of Drugs (Jersey) Law for cannabis to be imported for medicinal use. It is not immediately clear whether the importation and possession of cannabis for medicinal use would be possible under the provisions of the Misuse of Drugs (Jersey) Law and an opinion has been requested from the Law Officers to clarify this. Until this legal opinion is available, it is not possible to speculate regarding what steps might be necessary regarding the prescribing of cannabis for medicinal use.

3.12.1 Deputy M. Tadier:

A subsequent question will be, of course, when was the Law Officers' Department asked for that judgment and when will she find out, but that is a question for another day. The question that I would like to ask is, if I understand, there is legislation called the Misuse of Drugs (General Provisions) (Jersey) Order 2009. Under Article 3 of that legislation it states that: "A person may be authorised by a licence issued by the Minister under this Article to produce, supply, offer to supply or have in his/her possession a controlled drug" of which cannabis would be one. Can the Minister confirm on that basis that the law seems to give her to the right to provide such licences and why it has taken so long for an answer to be given?

The Deputy of Trinity:

Until I get that advice from the Misuse of Drugs Advisory Council, it is not appropriate to make any comment on that.

3.12.2 The Connétable of St. Lawrence:

Will the Minister advise the Assembly how much it would cost if cannabis was to be introduced as a controlled drug?

The Deputy of Trinity:

I have no idea on what the cost... I know there is a synthetic medicinal product, which is Savitex, and I understand that is in the region of between £300 and £500.

3.12.3 Deputy J.M. Maçon:

In seeking this advice, can the Minister clarify whether they are not only asking for the raw product but also that products that may have a part of cannabis within it, as I believe the technology is moving on, was also requested to be reviewed?

The Deputy of Trinity:

I have not seen the actual request that went to the Law Officers, but I would like to think that is included. If it is not, I think it is a very good question and that should be included.

3.12.4 Deputy M. Tadier:

Is the Minister comfortable with criminals having the monopoly on the supply and quality control of cannabis?

The Deputy of Trinity:

Cannabis is a class B drug, and I do not want to rehearse all of the side effects of that, but I have a Misuse of Drugs Advisory Council, which is a statutory body, which will advise me accordingly. As I said, it is a statutory body and they will look at the evidence accordingly and advise and, when they take the legal opinion back, that is what will come to me.

3.12.5 Deputy M. Tadier:

Can the Minister confirm that the decision or not about whether cannabis has side effects and whether or not it should be legalised more generally, is not germane to the question which she is being asked under the law, whether or not she is able to issue a licence for this particular type of medication to be issued. Can she also confirm that she will not let her personal views on the particular use of cannabis as a recreational drug jaundice any decision made under the law about the issuing of licences for medicinal use?

The Deputy of Trinity:

At the end of the day, I take advice from the Misuse of Drugs Advisory Council and it is a very broad-based membership from the Minister for Health, the Chief Pharmacist, the States Vet, *et cetera*.

The Bailiff:

I do not think you need to go through all of them, Minister.

[11:15]

The Deputy of Trinity:

I can do, Sir. At the end of the day, it is the advice that I take. They look at all the evidence that is available and come up with and decide on the way forward.