

3.5 Deputy T.A. Coles of St. Helier South of the Minister for Health and Social Services regarding the impact of Blue Island flight disruptions on patients travelling to the UK for medical treatment (OQ.133/2025):

Further to the reduction in services by Blue Islands airline resulting in flight disruptions and cancellations, will the Minister state when he first became aware of the situation, advise what impact this will have on Islanders travelling to the U.K. for medical treatment and explain what actions, if any, are being taken to mitigate any impact?

Deputy T.J.A. Binet: (The Minister for Health and Social Services):

The Health and Care travel team is in daily contact with the staff of Blue Islands to co-ordinate arrangements for patient flights. On average, the service facilitates approximately 15 return flights for patients each day, the majority going to Southampton. On the evidence presented, I am comfortable that Blue Islands fully understand the essential nature of these medical appointments, and it is clear from their recent actions that they are prioritising Jersey patients to make sure their transfer is planned. In the event that flights are cancelled or disrupted, Blue Islands contact both affected patients and the H.C.J. (Health and Care Jersey) travel team as soon as they can to make alternative arrangements. Where possible, they provide notice of any changes to the flight schedule, and that is often several days in advance. This allows the H.C.J. travel team to rebook patients on to alternative flights or flights on different days, minimising disruption to the greatest extent possible.

3.5.1 Deputy T.A. Coles:

What discussions, if any, have taken place between the Minister and the Minister for Sustainable Economic Development and the Minister for Treasury and Resources: to co-ordinate Government's engagement with Blue Islands about this, and if none, why not?

Deputy T.J.A. Binet:

None have taken place, I have to be perfectly honest about that, because to the extent that the information has been relayed to me, the best arrangements that can be made are being made. I would have thought short of hiring planes individually, there is little else we can do given that we are on an Island in the middle of the Channel.