

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES
BY DEPUTY M.R. HIGGINS OF ST. HELIER
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 18TH JULY 2017**

Question

Will the Minister explain to Members what steps his Department is taking to deal with the drug Fentanyl, given that it is 50 times more toxic than heroin and is a danger not only to users but also to first responders and police?

Answer

The Alcohol and Drug Service is not currently involved with any interventions around Fentanyl, as it has not had any referrals in 2017 with Fentanyl use as a primary drug of referral or a secondary drug of referral.

Fentanyl is a drug that is regularly prescribed by GPs and pain experts for pain relief. Mindful of the risks, the number of prescriptions for Fentanyl in patch form has fallen consistently. GP prescribing of this and other controlled drugs is fed back to individual doctors by the Primary Care Governance team and prescribing adviser via Jersey Activity Monitoring Cards on an annual basis. Doctors who are 'outliers' then have one to one meetings with the team and are encouraged to reflect on this data as part of their appraisal.

In addition to GPs, the forensic medical examiners – a team of doctors working with the police – have a high level of awareness for substance misuse issues. They are also not aware of any current concerns in Jersey about this specific drug.

However, in April 2017, following a cluster of deaths in the UK with heroin spiked with Fentanyl and Carfentanyl, the Alcohol and Drug Service sent out an alert to all its IV drug users via all the needle exchange programmes on the Island to alert them to the risks. This was a proactive strategy to inform clients of the risks with the intention of preventing anything similar occurring in Jersey. The Service is not aware that this combination of drugs has been detected on the Island to date.