

STATES OF JERSEY



PROPOSED GOVERNMENT PLAN 2024 - 2027 (P.72/2023) – EIGHTEENTH AMENDMENT (P.72/2023 AMD.(18)) – COMMENTS

**Presented to the States on 7th December 2023
by the Council of Ministers**

STATES GREFFE

COMMENTS

The Council of Ministers opposes this amendment.

Significant steps have been taken during 2023 to reduce the cost of general practice GP surgery visits for all local residents. Child appointments are now free to all under 18s and the cost for all adults has been reduced by £20 following an initiative from the Minister for Social Security.

In addition, the Health Access Scheme has provided a range of subsidised general practice services since 2020. The adult patient fee has not increased since 2020 and provides for a surgery appointment with a GP for £12, inclusive of blood tests, referral letters and similar services. The Health Access Scheme is automatically available to every member of an Income Support household and to any pensioner who is enrolled on the Pension Plus scheme.

Ministers are committed to improving healthcare services for all islanders and will be working with local healthcare providers during 2024 to develop an island wide health and care strategy as well as continuing the detailed work on current and future healthcare costs.

Ministers are also pleased to support the Government Plan amendment put forward by Deputy Kovacs to fully fund a wound dressings service. A new service to support individuals who have a clinical need for specialist dressings will be established in early 2024. This funding will be well targeted to individuals with a specific medical need who are currently required to buy their own supplies.

This amendment seeks to provide fully funded surgery visits to all adult full-time students. The report suggests that this group visits a GP just over once a year and pays a co-payment of less than £40 a year.

This proposal is not targeted at individuals with a clinical or financial need.

- Comprehensive support is already available for low-income adults through the Health Access Scheme.
- Most young adults with a significant disability are also covered by the Health Access Scheme as they receive Income Support, regardless of the family household income. They will pay £12 for a surgery visit with a GP or £9 for a nurse consultation.
- Care leavers receive full support for their primary care costs.

This support is available regardless of whether the adult is in full time education or not.

Ministers will continue to expand support for healthcare services to groups that have a clear clinical or financial need for that support. Adult full-time students do not fall into this group and this amendment cannot be supported.