

2025.07.08

4.6 Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson of the Minister for Health and Social Services regarding the diagnosis, treatment and management of endometriosis (OQ.165/2025):

Will the Minister state what actions are underway to improve the diagnosis, treatment and management of endometriosis and whether he will be implementing any learnings or changes arising from his attendance at the “Below the Belt” film screening and discussion, organised by Endometriosis Jersey on 17th June 2025?

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

I wonder if the Deputy would be prepared to allow the Assistant Minister for Health, Deputy Howell, to answer that question as she heads that up.

Deputy A. Howell of St. John, St. Lawrence and Trinity (Assistant Minister for Health and Social Services - rapporteur):

I thank the Deputy for her question. We would also like to thank the Endometriosis Jersey Group for arranging the screening of “Below the Belt” at the Arts Centre. I understand how debilitating endometriosis is for some women and girls and I sympathise with the challenges that some go through. If anyone does have severe period pain I encourage them please to visit their G.P.s (general practitioners) as they can often help. Currently women can be referred to a gynaecological clinic by their G.P. to receive further advice and treatment, including pain relief. There is now a plan to set up a dedicated endometriosis clinic in Jersey, offering a multidisciplinary approach to help women and girls most severely affected by endometriosis. The clinic will be linked to a specialist endometriosis centre in the U.K. We are also setting up an endometriosis group, working with individuals and G.P.s to improve education and help early diagnosis, and to work out a more streamlined pathway. This is part of our action plan to improve access to gynaecological services for women, coupled with education and knowledge about gynaecological conditions and where and how to seek help. I want to reassure women and girls that we are listening and we do not want anyone to suffer in silence.

4.6.1 Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:

I want to thank the Assistant Minister for her very considered response there as well, which does recognise the experience of many of those people with that condition. Could she give us an example of how a patient’s journey and experience will be different under the new clinic system, and is it going to require any additional funding to operate?

Deputy A. Howell:

I believe it will just be a more streamlined service so that the referral from your G.P. will be direct into the clinic where we will have experts in that area working. What was the other thing you would like to know?

Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:

Will it require extra funding?

Deputy A. Howell:

I do not believe it will require any extra funding.

4.6.2 Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

If no new services are being offered as part of this clinic and no additional funding, can the Minister explain how Islanders will feel the benefit of this? What will actually be different to a woman who is suffering with endometriosis?

Deputy A. Howell:

I believe that we are raising the awareness of endometriosis. The patient will be able to go to their G.P. and there will be a direct link to the endometriosis clinic. I think it is just, with all gynaecological things, very good to talk about them and for women and girls to understand that there is help available.

4.6.3 Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Is there capacity in the service? If the Minister is raising awareness, which I agree it is good to do, is there capacity to deal with potentially increased numbers of women knowing that they can access these services?

Deputy A. Howell:

We have just recruited 3 new gynaecological consultants.

4.6.4 Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:

Will the department also commit to collecting more data on the prevalence of the condition within Jersey and the experience of those suffering with it in order to better inform policy decisions in future, including on the economic impact of the disease?

Deputy A. Howell:

We will do our very best. It will depend on whether we get the additional funding for digital, because we need improved digital services to be able to collect all this data and to work with clinicians.