

IN THE KEYS
14th February 2006

FOR ORAL ANSWER

Question permitted by Mr Speaker under Standing Order 43(4) as being of an urgent character and relating to a matter of public importance

The Hon Member for Douglas North (Mr Henderson) to ask the Minister for Health and Social Security –

- 1 Can you confirm that a paper submitted under the name of your Chief Executive was discussed recently at the Council of Ministers which outlined ways in which your Department had identified measures to make savings which would impact on the Health Service and included the following:
 - Fuel savings - Newlands Complex
 - HR training budget freeze
 - Children's Resource Centre - delayed opening
 - Children on Island placement rationalization - represents a medium but acceptable level of risk
 - Voluntary carers support budget to be cut
 - 80% cut to Bank and Agency Nurses and overtime payments causing:
 - merger of wards
 - reduction of theatre sessions
 - closure of some ITU beds
 - impact on waiting lists
 - all waiting list initiatives to cease
 - other bed closures
 - Social Services and Mental Health training budgets cut
 - Mental Health supplies cut
 - At point 6 – reassess child benefit
 - reassess prescription charging
 - At point 7 – Council of Ministers were asked to approve these measures
- 2 Can you confirm if this is still your Department's intended way forward in all the areas outlined and, if not, what changes to this strategy have been made;
- 3 If ostensibly this is still your Department's intended way forward, will you, as Minister, act as a matter of urgency to review this situation to remove any impact to frontline public services, and ensure no ward mergers, ITU bed closures or reduction to theatre sessions occur; and
- 4 Do you acknowledge the incredible concern this has raised with Health Service staff and the public?

R W Henderson MHK
10th February 2006