

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL SECURITY
BY DEPUTY S.Y. MÉZEC OF ST. HELIER
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 14TH MARCH 2017**

Question

Will the Minister provide the details of how much has been spent on the public subsidy of G.P. visits in each year for the last three years; and will the Minister further provide estimates of how much it would cost to fully subsidise G.P. visits?

Answer

The table below shows the total value of medical benefit subsidies made towards the cost of GP consultations.

| Year | Cost |
|------|------------|
| 2013 | £7,211,000 |
| 2014 | £7,108,000 |
| 2015 | £7,298,000 |

On average 350,000 GP consultations take place each year and attract the medical benefit subsidy. In addition since 2015, GPs have received contractual payments under the Jersey Quality Improvement Framework with an annual value of £1,584,000.

An initial estimate can be made to calculate the cost to the States if these consultations were funded in full by considering the current GP list prices for each type of patient and for each type of service.

For example, using the fees published on GP web sites, the cost of a surgery consultation averages £38.50. Some surgeries charge less for students and children (ranging from £0 to £25) and most charge more for home visits (ranging from £70 to £100 and averaging £89). Around 6% to 7% of GP consultations are home visits and attract a higher fee.

If these averages are used (£38.50 for surgery visits and £89.00 for home visits) the cost to fully fund GP consultations based on the current volume of consultations would be an additional £15 million a year.

This estimate should be treated with caution. It does not take into account:

- The significant volume of discounting included within the current payment system.
- The additional fees practices charge for other services such as taking blood samples.
- Any increase in the number of consultations which could be generated within a fully funded system.
- The level at which a full subsidy would be agreed.