

**News release and Scrutiny response embargoed until 00.01 Monday 29 April**

## Health Minister sets out improvements to mental health services

The Health Minister has formally responded to a Scrutiny report into the island's mental health services, acknowledging the serious improvements that need to be made, outlining the progress already made and setting out how the services will develop in the future.

Deputy Richard Renouf has today (MONDAY 29 APRIL) lodged a ministerial response with the States following the review which was published by the Health and Social Security Panel last month. The minister welcomed the Scrutiny report, which identified serious issues within Jersey's mental health service, and has now formally set out how improvements to services are being driven forward.

The minister accepts that progress has been slower than expected in some areas of the mental health strategy since it was launched in 2016 but adds there have also been a number of successes such as the launch of Jersey Talking Therapies and the establishment of the Jersey Recovery College. In his response Deputy Renouf says the recently formed Mental Health Improvement Board will push forward any outstanding initiatives against agreed timescales and added that strategic objectives in which to measure progress will be in place from 2021.

Health and Community Services is also addressing estate related issues and work has already been undertaken to improve conditions at Orchard House. Providing safe and effective care remains a constant priority. However, work has begun to relocate Orchard House to a newly refurbished facility during next year. Plans are also in place to create a place of safety at the General Hospital for islanders in mental health crisis, to improve access to GP care and to establish a "Listening Lounge" offering support throughout the day and night.

The recruitment and retention of mental health staff is another key priority with work being undertaken to provide accommodation for keyworkers. Meanwhile, the "Welcome Jersey" initiative has been designed to support people to make a smooth transition to the island once they have secured employment.

Deputy Renouf said: "The report by Scrutiny highlighted a number of concerns with the island's mental health service. However, now is the time to give re-assurance to islanders that we can address these concerns and begin to change for the better. Improving islanders' mental health and wellbeing is a key priority for the Council of Ministers.

"Health and Community Services is committed to turning the island's mental health services around and improvements are already in place. With our dedicated workforce, valued voluntary sector partners and detailed action plan I'm confident that we can take mental health services in a positive direction."

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## Notes to Editors

1. For further information, please contact the press office on 01534 440430 or [pressoffice@gov.je](mailto:pressoffice@gov.je)