

President of the Committee *for* Health & Social Care

Statement from Deputy Heidi Soulsby at Media Briefing - 2.30pm, 17 March 2020

I think it is important that I repeat a couple of things that Gavin has just said – firstly that we have had 157 tests and still only just one positive result. We are not hiding anything and the up to date figures will be provided on the website. Secondly, that we are in control, we have a good grip and we are thinking one step ahead.

This result is, in no small measure, down to the hard work and effort being undertaken by all those working for us. It is the strength, quality and dedication of many, both in and outside the States of Guernsey that is keeping us in a good place. From senior civil servants to the HSC estates team, from SOG communications team to our partners in health and care, the community should have assurance that every effort is being made to ensure that we are prepared for the weeks and months ahead.

However, we can't do it alone and we will only have a chance of being able to cope if we work together. We as a community have to step up to the plate too. It is important that we all heed the advice of Dr Brink.

The reality is that the vast majority of us are taking on Dr Brink's advice right now. We are all ensuring we up our game when it comes to basic hygiene, finding alternative ways of greeting instead of shaking hands and maintaining social distance. Others have been self-isolating and yet more have been offering to support our more vulnerable members of society. Thank you one and all.

However, sadly there has been a very small number of people who have been ignoring public health advice. This selfish behaviour is deemed completely unacceptable, putting the lives of others at risk and we can't allow that to continue.

As such, the Civil Contingencies Authority will imminently be approving regulations providing emergency powers. These will allow the Medical Officer of Health (who currently acts also as the Director of Public Health), her deputy and others authorised by her to enforce the testing, isolation and/or detention of those who travel to the Bailiwick. It will also allow the enforcement of testing, isolation and/or detention for anyone in the Bailiwick suspected of being infected.

The Medical Officer of Health intends to require all those travelling to the Bailiwick, who are not considered to have critical roles, to self-isolate for 14 days.

The powers also allow Bailiwick Law Enforcement officers to initially detain at the hospital (or another suitable location) someone that they suspect may have the coronavirus and

present a risk of spreading it to others, until the Medical Officer of Health can advise further.

Not complying with the restrictions or requirements imposed under these powers will be an offence and we will be looking to introduce statutory sanctions for people who don't comply.

This is not a decision that has been taken lightly. However, the fact that these emergency powers will be enacted demonstrates the seriousness with which we are taking this issue. This is the time when we must all support each other for the good of the whole community. We are all in it together and must support each other through these extraordinary times.

Deputy Heidi Soulsby, President of the Committee for Health & Social Care