

Policy and Scrutiny Committee for Health and Social Care – 14 October 2019

Written Question from Cllr Karl Love

“The Island’s exemplary nurse led sexual health service has been held up as a flagship model of care, even more so in the current NHS climate, where we are seeing a significant increase in nurses (such as Advanced Nurse Practitioners) providing our healthcare (most of us will see one in our GP practices) , nurses being not only efficient but cost effective.

What is the rationale and where is the consultation, behind our islands Public Health taking retrograde steps and insisting on a medical Consultant leadership within our Islands Sexual Health Services when we know it is difficult to recruit to doctors and is only a RECOMMENDATION by medical lead associations such as British association of sexual health and HIV?”

Response from Simon Bryant, interim Director of Public Health

“Improving the sexual health of the population remains an important public health outcome for the IOW. Effective and high-quality care are therefore key to improving health outcomes and are a statutory duty of The Council. In December 2018 IOW council went out to tender for a specialist sexual health service in line with national standards, including the British Association for Sexual Health and HIV (BASHH) Standards for the Management of Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs).

These national Standards have been developed and designed to support local authority commissioners and service providers to achieve high quality sexual health services for the populations they serve, and the standards also specify what the public can expect of the sexual health services they access.

While we acknowledge the very important role that nurses contribute to the delivery of specialist sexual health services on the Island, the national standards do specify that only a service led by a medical consultant on the specialist register of the General Medical Council (GMC) for Genitourinary Medicine (GUM), can be defined as being a specialist Level 3 GUM service for the management of STIs.

In line with other local authority areas, we therefore believe that it is important that Isle of Wight residents should also have access to a high quality specialist sexual health service that is led by a specialist medical consultant and we believe this is achievable within the available budget for this service. This level of medical expertise is currently being bought in by the current Nurse-led service on an interim, locum medical consultant basis.