

Thursday 09 February 2017

Improvements made in management of Private Patient Income but more drive required to ensure fundamental change is delivered

Comptroller and Auditor General issues latest report

Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG) Karen McConnell has today (09 February 2017) published her Follow-up of Private Patient Income.

The original report *Private Patient Income: Health and Social Services Department* was published in April 2015. It highlights areas where improvement was required, in particular to ensure that:

- private patient policies and procedures are clear and unambiguous and that compliance is monitored and reported;
- all private patient activity carried out at the hospital is correctly identified and charged for;
- systems operate efficiently and effectively; and
- planning for private patient work is integrated with other longer term planning within the Health and Social Services Department (HSSD).

In her follow-up work, the C&AG found significant improvement in key areas.

She concludes that HSSD had established much firmer foundations on which to manage its private patient business: it has adopted a structured approach to implementing the recommendations, focusing on key weaknesses and aligned with departmental objectives. She particularly welcomes the steps taken to improve the administration of the Private Patients Management Committee and arrangements for charging private patients. But she also recognises that there are areas where progress has been slower:

- the development of policies and procedures;
- the arrangements for identifying private patient activity and billing for it;
- development of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to allow effective and timely monitoring of performance by management; and
- monitoring of compliance with policies.

Karen McConnell said:

“Structured follow up of my reports is important to ensure that agreed recommendations are implemented and the underlying causes of recommendation are addressed. My work does not stop when recommendations are delivered and agreed by managers: change needs to follow.”

“I welcome the steps taken by HSSD to implement my recommendations. Although progress in some key areas has been slower than the Department expected and than I would have liked to see, the focus has rightly been on high priority areas.”

“It is important that management continues to focus on embedding effective governance and compliance arrangements so that they become ‘business as usual’ in all areas of HSSD’s work.”

The report will be available on the Jersey Audit Office’s website from 0930 on 09 February at (www.jerseyauditoffice.je).

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Notes to Editors:

- The Office of Comptroller and Auditor General (‘C&AG’) was established in 2005 and operates under the Comptroller and Auditor General (Jersey) Law 2014
- The remit of the C&AG includes the audit of financial statements and wider consideration of public funds, often expressed as ‘value for money’
- Karen McConnell was appointed in 2013 and the term of office was extended in 2014 to December 2019.
- Formerly of the UK Audit Commission (‘the Commission’), Karen held a variety of senior positions, including leading the Audit Practice
- The Office of Comptroller & Auditor General is known as the ‘Jersey Audit Office’
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