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"Friends Urge Assembly to Delay Interim Health Board"

For Immediate Release - Release Begins

The Friends of Our New Hospital are urging the Assembly to delay establishing an Interim Health Board. Plans to establish the Board were lodged by the Minister for Health and Social Services on 11 April as Proposition P.19-2023 "Health and Community Services Interim Board." The Proposition is due to be considered by the Assembly on 23 May. The Friends have raised questions regarding the aims, objectives and functions of the Board.

Mary Venturini, Chair of the Friends commented:

"There are plenty of questions to ask about P.19-2023. Its cost is estimated at £343,000 in the first year and £206,000 in the subsequent two years of its three-year life. This comes on top of the £800,000 now being spent on the Turnaround Team, which is looking at the same problems in secondary healthcare as the proposed Board. Shouldn't we save this £755,000 at least until the Turnaround Team publishes its report?"

The Friends have asked why Jersey needs the Board. In their view it is another layer of management to manage more healthcare managers. Presently there are more managers in secondary healthcare than overnight beds in the General Hospital. The Friends are also questioning why the proposed Board follows models in other jurisdictions, such as the UK, where the healthcare service is completely different from that in Jersey. The Friends also note that the proposed Board would be solely accountable to the Health and Social Services Minister rather than the Council of Ministers and the Assembly.

Mary Venturini went on to say:

It is our view that the rationale for the proposed Board has not been fully justified by the Minister or adequately reviewed by the health community and the public. As proposed, the Board will divert time and resources when more resources are needed to bolster clinical and nursing services. We urge the Assembly to vote to defer Proposition P.19-2023 and to seek further clarification for its establishment. Do we need it?"

Release Ends: (322 words)

Notes for Editors: The Friends of Our New Hospital was started by the late Sir Nigel Broomfield in 2017. The Group acts as an independent source of information, commentary and advice on Island Health Care and in particular the development of the new General Hospital.

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