



The Government of Sark
MEDICAL AND EMERGENCY SERVICES COMMITTEE

Committee of the Chief Pleas of Sark
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Withdrawal of Medical Concession

The Medical & Emergency Services Committee fully recognises that the withdrawal of the concession will have an impact on residents who are required to travel to Guernsey for medical treatment and appointments. We appreciate that this is of particular concern for those with ongoing health conditions, those requiring specialist care that is not available on Sark, and those who may already face financial pressures associated with accessing healthcare. The Committee takes these concerns very seriously.

By way of clarification, the decision to withdraw the concession was made by the Isle of Sark Shipping Company (IOSS). As set out in the joint statement, the concession was funded entirely by IOSS as part of its discretionary concessions framework and has historically been administered by the company. The decision to review and withdraw that concession therefore fell within the remit of the IOSS Board. The Committee was informed of the decision and considered the position thereafter. The Committee did not make the decision to remove the existing subsidy.

Following notification of IOSS's decision, the Committee has considered whether a replacement medical travel subsidy should be introduced and funded directly by Sark taxpayers. This is not a matter that the Committee can determine unilaterally. Any proposal to introduce a new subsidy would represent a new policy commitment and expenditure that is not currently provided for within the Committee's approved budget for the current financial year. As such, any proposal would require the approval of Chief Pleas before it could be implemented.

The Committee is therefore actively considering the issue and is undertaking work to understand the potential costs, practical implications and policy considerations involved. This includes considering how any future scheme could be designed to ensure that support is targeted appropriately and remains affordable for Chief Pleas.

Once this work has been completed, the Committee will determine whether it is appropriate to bring a proposition before the next meeting of Chief Pleas seeking approval for a new medical travel subsidy scheme. In reaching any recommendation, the Committee will need to balance the needs of residents requiring off-island medical care with the overall affordability and sustainability of such support.

The Committee is committed to keeping the public informed as its considerations progress and will provide further updates when there is a substantive proposal to share. The Committee would encourage Sark residents to keep any proof of appointments between now and Michaelmas Chief Pleas, in case Chief Pleas decides to back date any future subsidy.

21st July 2026