



SARK MEDICAL COMMITTEE

Public Statement 29th January 2012

Contrary to what you may have read about Doctor Peter Counsell, the Medical Committee is fully confident that he has always acted in the best interest of his patients, whether they are residents of or visitors to Sark.

The Committee has every trust in the Doctor's judgment on all medical matters and his work as Medical Officer; advising us on professional issues outside the scope of our own knowledge is invaluable. His appointment to the Committee by Chief Pleas means that he joins the Committee at its meetings to assist and provide medical expertise but has no voting rights or involvement in the decision making process.

The Medical Officer of Health has advised the Medical Committee on such issues as Pandemic Flu, Medical Insurance and Preventative Medicine and has acted in liaison with external Medical Providers.

Currently Dr Counsell and the Medical Committee believe that a single doctor practice can deal with a seven day a week, 24 hour surgery and emergency support service. However, the new Regulation of Health Professions (Enabling Provisions) (Sark) Law, 2012 does not preclude the Committee from increasing the number of doctors in the practice should the need arise.

We are appalled that someone of good standing within the community is having his professional judgement questioned purely on political grounds; the danger that this kind of publicity could cause to the Island's ability to secure medical professionals to attend this Island in the future, is of deep concern to us.

We re-iterate again that every single member of the Medical Committee fully supports the Doctors medical decisions, whether he evacuates patients by air or sea, and has not attempted in any way to try and influence his decision making process in this matter.

Statement Ends

Ex Officio members represent Sark's professional bodies who Chief Pleas has appointed to advise specific committees.

- Education Committee: The Head Teacher of Sark School
- Road Traffic Committee: The Constables
- Emergency Services Committee: The Chief Fire Officer, Chief Ambulance Officer, Doctor, Constables and O.I.C. Special Constables
- Harbours & Pilotage Committee: The Constables and Harbourmasters
- Finance & Commerce Committee: The Island Treasurer
- Firearms Committee: The Constables
- Sea Fisheries Committee: The Asst. Constable (Sea Fisheries)
- Tourism Committee: The Visitors Officers
- Medical Committee: Dr Counsell who as part of his contract is also the Island's Medical Officer of Health.

All of these people are approved by Chief Pleas and are non-voting members who are there purely in an advisory capacity.