PARLIAMENT
OF THE CAYMAN ISLANDS

Answered on 26th February 2024
Third Meeting 2023-2024 Session - First Sitting

PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION
ASKED BY MR DAVID WHITE, JP, MP,
THE ELECTED MEMBER FOR GEORGE TOWN WEST

TO

THE HONOURABLE MINISTER RESPONSIBLE FOR THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH & WELLNESS

QUESTION: *Can the Minister advise the House when she will bring the amendments to the Misuse of Drugs Act to address the 'hallucinogenic substances and amphetamine derivatives', which are currently not included in the Act, that she mentioned last year in responding to a question from the Opposition on stricter sentences for importation and distribution of Fentanyl and other opioids?*

ANSWER:
Mr. Speaker,

The Chief Medical Officer has commissioned the Pharmaceutical Council to give advice and guidance to him on the amendments needed to Schedules 1, and 3 of the Misuse of Drugs Act 2017.

Schedule 1 of that Act relates to the drugs that are controlled by that Act.

Schedule 3 of that Act is of increasing importance, in that it deals with substances useful for manufacturing controlled drugs, and I am sure that we are all aware of the trends to manufacture drugs when there are effective controls on the importation of controlled drugs.

This work is not simple as in many cases the persons who manufacture synthetic drugs may take a named controlled drug, make a simple small change to the molecule, making it in legal terms a new chemical, and escape from control under the Schedule 1 list.

However, this work is progressing well and we hope to present a revision of these two schedules to Cabinet for approval under section 13 of the Act soon.

The Chief Medical Officer advises me that the principal changes are likely to surround certain narcotic substances, especially the fentanyl class of drugs which are causing so much devastation in many parts of North America, and certain new amphetamine derivatives that have no recognized clinical utility.

The Chief Medical Officer is also working to identify appropriate definitions for a number of plant based hallucinogenic alkaloids that we see being imported that are not currently listed in the Act. Currently only psilocyn, one of the important psychedelic components of ‘magic mushrooms’ is listed.