

PE1105/F

Deputy First Minister & Cabinet Secretary for
Health and Wellbeing
Nicola Sturgeon MSP



The Scottish
Government

T: 0845 774 1741
E: scottish.ministers@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

Frank McAveety MSP
Convener to the Committee
Public Petitions Committee
TG.01
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

RECEIVED 09 JUN 2008

Your ref: PE1105
7 June 2008

Dear Frank

CONSIDERATION OF PETITION PE1105

Thank you for your letter of 29 May 2008 regarding Petition 1105 by Marjorie McCance on behalf of the St Margaret of Scotland Hospice, Clydebank.

The Committee has been provided with extensive background information by NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde and the Board of St Margaret's.

It is important that there remains a clear focus regarding the distinctions in the services provided i.e. palliative care; and continuing care for the elderly. As I recently stated in the Scottish Parliament, there is no threat to the existence of St Margaret's and no change is proposed to the palliative care service currently provided by St Margaret's. I am determined to ensure appropriate palliative care services are provided to those who need them regardless of diagnosis and this will be highlighted in our Palliative Care Action Plan which will be published later in the year.

Turning to funding issues in relation to palliative care services (as opposed to continuing care or care of the elderly services) the current guidance to the NHS requires that arrangements are in place to ensure funding of 50% for agreed running costs is provided. I understand that the latest annual figures for 2006/07 indicate that St Margaret's received this agreed level of funding. As indicated previously, I would be pleased to consider representations from the Scottish Hospices Forum on this issue rather than from individual hospices.

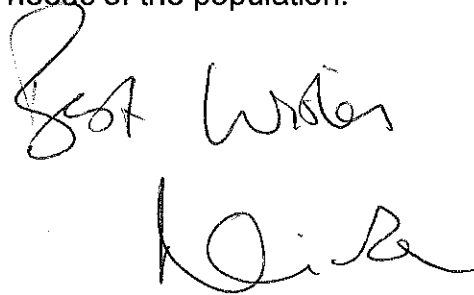
In summary, Scotland's health care challenges require a shift in the balance of care towards community-based services. For some people with particularly complex needs, this means ensuring the availability of the most appropriate services in the right setting with the best support and this is also important for families and carers. Those organisations, like St Margaret's which provide services to the NHS need to do so in line with NHS strategic priorities.



NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde are responsible for planning, providing and securing the provision of NHS services for its population and the St Margaret of Scotland Hospice receives NHS funding for particular services which it provides. The nature of these services determines the type of funding provided.

As I have indicated previously, I have asked NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde to discuss the development of substantive options for future service provision with the Board of St Margaret's. A number of meetings have already taken place and arrangements have been made to meet again on 11 June 2008, at which time the Board of St Margaret's will have the opportunity to respond to the options put to them by the Health Board.

I have asked that NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde provide me with regular updates on these meetings and I expect both organisations to work together to ensure that they reach an outcome in accordance with the needs of the population.



NICOLA STURGEON