

PE1568/A

Letter of submission in support of petition PE1568

Petition Title: Funding, access and promotion of the NHS Centre for Integrative Care

Name of petitioner: Catherine Hughes

Action taken attached: Original Letter submitted at Cross Party Chronic Pain meeting 20 May 15 to Public Health Minister Maureen Watt MSP From Irene Logan Secretary/Treasurer of Fibromyalgia Friends Scotland

I would like to support this petition on behalf of the members of Fibromyalgia Friends Scotland.

I believe that National Funding would allow the NHS Centre of Integrative Care to continue to provide the excellent care and services already provided by an extremely specialised team in this unique facility. It has given hope and a better quality of life to many people living with Long Term Conditions from all over Scotland in the past and with a guarantee of National Funding hopefully many more people from Scotland in the future. But nationally many are already denied what is supposed to be a national service, the latest example of which is below.

I would like to know if the Public Health Minister and all MSPs and the Public Petitions Committee are aware of the effect of Lanarkshire Health Board refusing to refer any more patients to the NHS Centre of Integrative Care has on people living with Long Term Conditions in the Lanarkshire Area.

Most people with Long Term Conditions have lived for years with chronic pain and fatigue like myself and have exhausted every avenue. They have usually tried all the medications and treatments the NHS has to offer with little or no success.

I represent sufferers of Fibromyalgia which is an extremely debilitating condition and very difficult to treat. There is no cure for the condition at present and treatment is very much trial and error as there is no specific medication designed to treat Fibromyalgia also many sufferers have adverse effects of medication. Alternate treatments and remedies seem to be the most effective treatment in managing Fibromyalgia. This can be very expensive and many people have had to give up work because of their illness and don't have enough income coming in to pay for the treatments.

Our group has many members living in the Lanarkshire area who have attended the Centre of Integrative Care for treatment including myself. Although they have not

been able to cure their Fibromyalgia the treatments have given them many tools to manage their condition such as physiotherapy, pacing, Tai Chi, Heart math, gentle exercise, relaxation, acupuncture, Homeopathic remedies, listening to your body and many more. People have access to all of the services in the one place rather than having to attend lots of different clinics which can be extremely difficult and exhausting when you have severe pain and fatigue. Now Lanarkshire Health Board is denying any further patients getting referred to the Centre. They have said that they can supply the services in Lanarkshire. I am sorry but this is just not true we have had several people waiting months for an appointment at a Pain Clinic, Physiotherapist or Psychologist only to be told after 1 or 2 appointments that there is nothing that they can be do for them. If Lanarkshire Health Board listened to some of the patients who have attended the Centre especially the people who signed the petition rather than just judge the treatment on Homeopathy they would realise how some people cannot manage without the Centre of Integrative Care. The Health Board said they had consulted patients in Lanarkshire regarding services but I don't know of anyone who has been consulted regarding services.

In The Charter of Patient Rights and Responsibilities which was passed by the Scottish Parliament on the 24 February 2011, and received Royal Assent on the 31 March 2011. It states in Introduction:

The Act gives patient the right that the health care they receive will:

- . consider their needs,**
- . consider what would most benefit their health and wellbeing, and**
- . encourage them to take part in decisions about their health and wellbeing, and provide them with the information and support to do so**

It also gives patients a right to give feedback or comments, or raise concerns or complaints about the care they have received from the NHS in Scotland I do not believe that Lanarkshire Health Board have given consideration to patient's rights when they ceased referral to the Centre of Integrative Care.

It also states in Access:

- . You have the right that the NHS services you receive in Scotland are free of charge.**

This includes NHS services provided by GP practices, local pharmacies, hospitals, or clinics and emergency services in Scotland.

There are some exceptions to this. For example, you may have to pay for some services like dental treatments (in most cases) or if you are not a UK resident. There is no mention of private prescription.

I believe the Centre of Integrative is part of the NHS service in Scotland under GGC Health Board.

Therefore why are patients being asked to pay for prescriptions given by medical staff at the Centre of Integrative Care when it clearly states in the Charter that you have the right that the NHS services you receive in Scotland are free of charge? I am very fortunate that I still receive my services free of charge as my GP believes that a combination of NHS prescribed drugs and Homeopathic treatment is the best treatment for me at present but I don't know how long this is going to last which is extremely worrying.

I would be very grateful if you would look into the points that I have mentioned in this letter and look forward to a favourable reply.

Kind Regards,

Irene Logan
Secretary/Treasurer of Fibromyalgia Friends Scotland