

Public Petitions Clerks
Room T3.40
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

Date: 27th July 2015
Your Ref:
Our Ref: EM /PN/SFL (WIP 5151)

Dear Mr Sharratt

Consideration of Petition PE1568 (Funding, access and promotion of the NHS Centre for Integrative Care)

Thank you for your letter and for providing us with details of the petition that you have received. We take patients views very seriously. We recognise the value of this petition in that context and recognise the strength of feeling that lies behind it.

NHS Highland continues to provide access to some therapies at the Centre for Integrative Care. However, the health board has taken the view that the current evidence base does not provide an adequate basis for referral to a range of complementary therapies including homeopathy. A position in relation to homeopathic therapies was taken by our Board in October 2010, in the context of the board's quality & safety framework.

Whilst there is some evidence for a range of complementary therapies including homeopathy, the board has taken the view that this does not reach a threshold that would justify general access to this therapy. The Board is committed to prioritising the funding of those treatments that have the strongest evidence base.

It is still clearly a patient's right to seek homeopathic remedies and other complementary therapies outside the NHS.

NHS Highland is always open to the emergence of new evidence and would be willing to consider any new evidence that petitioners believe we have not adequately considered.

NHS Highland also has a process for considering individual requests for treatment through our process for managing exceptional cases. The petitioner's GP or secondary care clinician would be able to discuss this process, if required.

Yours sincerely

Elaine Mead
Chief Executive



Headquarters: Assynt House, Beechwood Park, INVERNESS IV2 3BW

Chair: Garry Coutts
Chief Executive: Elaine Mead