

**PE1426/D**

**Scottish Parliament Public Petitions Committee PE1426 – National Donor Milk Bank Service**

**Response by NHS Ayrshire and Arran**

**1. The Committee is interested to hear the views from health boards on what, if any, internal discussion they may have had in relation to donor milk banks.**

There have been no discussions with regards to establishing a milk bank in Ayrshire and Arran. The Neonatal Unit within NHS Ayrshire and Arran is part of the neonatal Managed Clinical Network for the West of Scotland and has good relations with, the donor milk bank in NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde. Several Ayrshire mothers have contributed milk to the Glasgow bank over the years and there has been no difficulty in accessing donor milk when needed for an infant in Ayrshire Maternity Unit.

When this facility first became available to us the use of donor milk was managed on a case by case basis but over the past 2 years we have formalised guidelines for requesting and using it. This might result in increased usage but our Neonatal Unit is not a surgical unit and, although the local breast feeding rate overall is disappointing, the vast majority of mothers of our sickest infants express milk when it is most needed. Thus our use of donor milk is mainly for sick, premature infants whose mothers' own supplies are dwindling and for occasional post-operative patients who have been transferred back to our care from Glasgow.

Given the extensive work required to establish and maintain a donor milk bank and the limited and sporadic need for donor milk locally, it would not be feasible to establish a local facility.

**2. The Committee would also be interested to hear if you would be interested in linking into a national infrastructure and / or whether you have given any consideration to establishing your own milk bank? If so have you undertaken any financial costings?**

The Neonatal Unit at Ayrshire Maternity Unit uses the established milk bank in Glasgow; we are aware that this facility is not readily available to all units in Scotland so can appreciate the case for a national donor milk bank. Consideration may be given to being part of a National Donor Milk Bank, this would be dependent on the continuing position of the Glasgow Donor Milk Bank which currently serves Ayrshire well.