

**By E-mail**

Mr Stuart Todd  
Assistant Clerk to the Public Petitions Committee  
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Your ref:  
Our ref:  
6 March 2013

Dear Mr Todd

**CONSIDERATION OF PETITION PE1454**

Further to your letter of 31 January in regards to the above petition, I offer below the Scottish Government's response.

**Please set out how the Scottish Government ensures that health boards and professionals across the NHS are aware of the early pregnancy assessment service to women who experience complications in early pregnancy and are able to directly refer to it, as laid out in the *A Refreshed Framework for Maternity Care in Scotland* document?**

Responsibility for service provision is devolved to NHS Boards and the Scottish Government expects them to ensure services meet the needs of their local population and the principles and descriptors outlined in policy. Due to the range of early pregnancy complications, specific conditions are not mentioned within the Refreshed Framework, however we would expect Boards to ensure early pregnancy services are in place to deal with any complication.

Early pregnancy units as described in the Refreshed Framework for Maternity Care in Scotland are units which care for women with pain and bleeding in early pregnancy, or with a history of previous ectopic pregnancy or recurrent miscarriage. They were not designed to deal with hyperemesis, although some units have extended the role of the Early Pregnancy Assessment Service (EPAS) to include outpatient management of hyperemesis. A recent audit of management of hyperemesis in Scotland has confirmed that of 17 units in Scotland, women with hyperemesis attend gynaecology in five units and maternity in 12. All 17 units have a guideline for management in place. Nine units perform out patient management of hyperemesis, mostly in obstetric triage. Six units have a member of staff with a special interest in this area.

**How does the Scottish Government ensure that the Framework is implemented by health boards?**

Boards provide regular reports to the Scottish Government on their progress on implementing the Framework. An Implementation Group monitors Board's progress.

**Does the Scottish Government have any plans to consider national level guidelines on hyperemesis for the NHS in Scotland?**

The Scottish Government currently has no plans for national level guidelines on hyperemesis.

The Scottish Government would expect NHS Boards to implement and adhere to best practice guidance and national guidelines produced by professional bodies.

**Do you have any other views on what the petition seeks?**

We would expect NHS Boards to ensure that all staff providing early pregnancy care for women have the knowledge and skills to care for women experiencing complications associated with early pregnancy.

Yours sincerely

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**JOHN FROGGATT**

Head of Child and Maternal Health Division