

PE1460/S

The Quality Unit

Planning and Quality Division

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Dear Mr Howlett

CONSIDERATION OF PETITION PE 1460 - CHRONIC PAIN

Thank you for your letter of 4 October, requesting the views of the Scottish Government regarding the Petition PE 1460, lodged by Susan Archibald on behalf of the Cross Party Group on Chronic Pain. The petition calls on the Scottish Parliament:

“to urge the Scottish Government to (a) hold a debate on the matter with a vote or voting rights (b) transfer more of the management for chronic pain into primary care (c) provide more social model care instead of medical model (d) change its policy to provide direct funding to ensure radical improvements to the service can be made including establishing a residential unit in Scotland to prevent Scottish pain patients being sent to Bath in Somerset for treatment.”

Our response to the Committee’s latest question follows:

As agreed by the Committee following the evidence session with the Minister for Public Health and Healthcare Improvement Scotland at the meeting on 25 June 2013, please can you provide an update on the Scottish Government’s short term commitments in relation to the treatment of patients suffering from chronic pain, such as the delivery of the intensive pain management service?

During the committee meeting on the 25 June the Minister advised that the options for the future provision of specialist chronic pain services would be subject to a public consultation. As the committee will be aware the consultation was launched on the 3 July. Initial feedback highlighted that the consultation was technical in nature and may not be as accessible as we would wish to ensure that we received as wide a range of views as possible. In responding to this feedback the consultation was suspended and redrafted with the engagement of stakeholders. The consultation was subsequently re-launched on 2 September and closed on Sunday 27 October.

To support the consultation, the Health and Social Care Alliance (ALLIANCE) in conjunction with the Scottish Government held four consultation events in Glasgow, Inverness, Dumfries and Glenrothes. These events provided the opportunity to discuss the consultation and chronic pain services more generally. The responses and the feedback from the consultation events are currently being independently analysed. Those responses where permission to publish has been provided will be made available on the Scottish Government website and in the Scottish Government library. Once the analysis is complete, a report will be published detailing the findings along with an analysis summary. As noted in the consultation document, it is anticipated that the Cabinet Secretary will announce a decision on the provision of the service in January 2014.

The committee may also wish to note that in terms of the development of local services proposals have been received and approved for all NHS Boards in Scotland, and funding to support the establishment of local Service Improvements Groups has been released.

The primary focus of local groups is to align services with the Scottish Service Model for Chronic Pain. All Boards must include chronic pain service improvement in their Local Delivery Plans for 2014.

In addition the Committee may already be aware that the SIGN guideline on chronic pain will be published and launched at the national 'Improving Chronic Pain Services in Scotland' event on 12 December 2013. The guideline is primarily focussed at primary care clinicians and provides evidence based guidance on the treatment and management of chronic pain.

I hope that the Committee finds this reply, the terms of which have been approved by the Minister for Public Health, helpful.

Yours sincerely

Mark O'Donnell
Deputy Director