

PE1495/EE

People Directorate

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Andrew Howlett
Assistant clerk to Public Petitions Committee
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Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

In 2014 Scotland Welcomes the World



Your ref: Public Petition PE1495

19 December 2014

Dear Mr Howlett,

CONSIDERATION OF PUBLIC PETITION [PE1495](#)

Calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to ban the use of confidentiality, or so called ‘gagging’, clauses in compromise agreements with NHS staff in Scotland, which may prevent staff speaking freely about matters that affect patient safety and quality of care, as well as employment issues such as workplace bullying.

I refer to the above and to your letter to the Permanent Secretary dated 20th November which set out the proposed timetable for the Public Petition Committee’s consideration of the above petition.

As your letter notes, the Scottish Government’s [submission of 11 June 2014](#) to the Public Audit Committee undertook to report to the Public Audit Committee on the first year of operation (April 2014 – March 2015) of the strengthened arrangements for settlement agreements in the Scottish public sector.

Your letter further notes that the Public Petitions Committee propose to delay consideration of the petition until March 2015 and requests that the Public Petitions Committee be copied into the Scottish Government’s report to the Public Audit Committee on the first year of operation.

The Permanent Secretary has noted your request and I confirm that the Scottish Government will copy the Public Petitions Committee into their report when submitted to the Public Audit Committee. You will note that the report will cover the period from April 2014 – March 2015 inclusive and you may therefore wish to advise the Public Petitions Committee to delay consideration of the above petition until such time as the report has been submitted,

as it will not be available for consideration by March 2015. We will of course continue to liaise with the Public Petitions Committee on the actual timing of the submission of the report to the Public Audit Committee once this becomes known.

If you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact me on (0131) 244 4535.

Yours Sincerely

James McConnell
Head of Employee Relations, Reward & HR Policy