

To: Anne Peat

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

In 2014 Scotland Welcomes the World



10 April 2015

Dear Ms Peat,

Thank you for your letter of 11 March 2015 on behalf of the Public Petitions Committee regarding Petition PE1552 on the choice of treatment available for cancer patients.

I would like to take this opportunity to emphasise that the Scottish Government is committed to ensuring that people are at the heart of the decision making process regarding their cancer care and treatment. Through our work with the Scottish Cancer Taskforce and partnerships with third sector organisations we are working to ensure that cancer care in Scotland is second to none.

As the Committee will already be aware, all patients have a right to be involved in decisions about their treatment and care. Patients should also receive information tailored to their specific circumstances to support them in making the right treatment decisions for them. These rights have long been established and are set out more explicitly in the Patient Rights (Scotland) Act 2011. Additionally both our overarching Quality Strategy for NHS Scotland and our 2020 Vision for Health and Social Care make clear our determination to ensure that services are not only safe and effective but also person centred.

However it is important to recognise that before any new treatments or devices can be used by NHS Scotland, they must undergo careful evaluation to establish their safety and effectiveness. We have strong and effective evaluations mechanisms in place to facilitate this process.

The Scottish Health Technologies Group (part of Healthcare Improvement Scotland) provides advice to NHS Scotland on the evidence of the clinical and cost effectiveness of existing and new technologies that may have significant implications for patient care in Scotland. Additionally Healthcare Improvement Scotland advises on the applicability to Scotland of guidance published by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) in England – these include appraisals for medical technologies.

It is worth noting that anyone is able to submit a topic to the SHTG and or NICE for review subject to meeting certain criteria. The electromediacine treatments described by the

petitioners have not been approved for use in NHS Scotland as they have not been submitted for review.

As the Scottish Government have already put in place legislation, policies and robust assessment protocols regarding patient choice and the adoption of new technologies, we would request that the Committee consider closing the petition and request that the petitioners follow the existing protocols to establish the quality of the treatments described.

Yours sincerely,

Sinead Power
Team Leader
Strategic Planning and Clinical Priorities