

PE1545/EE

Petitioner submission of 24 January 2020

In response to Scottish Government submission of 6 January 2020

PE1545 has been under consideration by the Petition committee for five years now and absolutely no progress has been made. The Petition has been considered by the committee fifteen times and on almost every occasion they write to Scottish Government. I am deeply disturbed by Scottish Government's inertia, and an unforgivable failure to address the urgent matter of residential care needs for those with learning disabilities and health needs of a more profound nature, who live in Scotland.

Though the current Petition committee has given some welcome attention to PE1545, the ever changing face of this panel allows Scottish Government and more specifically, the incumbent Health Minister, the opportunity to continually 'kick the can down the road,' hiding behind an absence of data which from the beginning Scottish Government has failed to provide and more recently, a pathetic debate around semantics in terms of how the group of people we are referring to should be described.

Despite clearly acknowledging the need for residential care in Scotland, the Government's inertia prevails. I am therefore at a loss, in fact near my wit's end, as to know how to progress this matter. I genuinely feel that this Government does not care 'a jot' about some of the most vulnerable people in Scottish society. My cynicism leads me to believe that this group's inability to vote because of their profound disabilities, makes them unimportant customers for Scottish Government and therefore forever to be ignored.

I am sick of this 'merry-go-round.' I refuse to debate the numbers that Scottish Government has no intention of providing. I refuse to debate the semantics of 'profound learning disabilities,' that frankly speaks for itself - the clue being in the name. I refuse to debate the model required when it successfully exists already in other parts of the UK. The matter is too transparent - Scotland urgently and desperately requires residential care facilities for the more profoundly learning disabled in its society. The Government is failing to address severe and complex care needs, preferring to dump the burden on exasperated and exhausted families who are beyond coping.

I believe Scottish Government has no intention of ever addressing this matter and for that many heads should hang in shame. It is a despicable scenario. These behaviours by ministers are quite immoral. In the pursuit of independence for Scotland, assuming it ever succeeds, what will the Government do with all those forced from out-of-area residential placements and back in to Scotland when Scotland has nothing comparable to offer them that will successfully meet their needs and no intention of ever providing it?