

Petitioner submission of 5 July 2022

PE1723/U: Essential tremor treatment in Scotland

Thank you for your last communication regarding **PE1723** back in March. Ahead of any future scheduling I would like to put forward a number of questions for the committee to consider in relation to my petition and to consider putting forward to the Scottish Government. Since our last meeting on 20 April 2022 I, and no doubt you, will have not heard or had any updates from the Scottish Government nor the National Services Division regarding commissioning of new services or treatments. We heard back in March that the National Services Division continues to engage with the clinical team in Tayside but no movement has been made and we are no further forward.

My question to the committee is as follows, could you look into why this process of approving new treatment in Scotland takes so long? The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) recommended use of the MRI-guided focused ultrasound to treat essential tremor back in **June 2018**. Since then NHS England has considered and found funding for the procedure for suitable patients in England. Since 2018 they have installed and opened two MRgFUS/Focused Ultrasound machines. St Mary's at Imperial in London and the Walton Centre in Liverpool. A number of countries around the world have been using this treatment for some time and yet Scotland seems to be lagging behind its counterparts.

I hear many times, throughout the weeks and months, that the Scottish Government proclaim that we have a nation that is so full of possibilities, that Scotland outperforms the UK in attracting investment yet, we cannot deliver quickly on a straight forward integration of a new treatment that would help alleviate the pain and debilitating disease that thousands of Scots suffer with every day. That even we have to travel at escalating costs south of the border to seek access to a treatment that should be available here in Scotland. Even more infuriating is that the technology is there, waiting to be rolled out, the willingness from clinicians and NHS trusts and teams is also there. All we seem to be waiting for, is the go ahead from the National Services Division and the Scottish Government. When arguments come down to finance, I have heard and been assured that the budget increase is comparatively miniscule. Therefore, I do not

understand why this process is taking so long and what the barriers to decision making are.

I would be grateful if members of the Petitions Committee can look carefully into and scrutinise why the Scottish Government processes appear to hinder access to new treatments for Scots, why roll out of treatments and services that have been approved by NICE take so long in our country in comparison to others and to identify the barriers in improving this system. By doing so, perhaps Parliament can assist in the equitable access to effective treatments and improve patients' wellbeing throughout Scotland.

I hope to meet with you all again in the near future, hopefully with some positive movement in regards to the petition.