

PE1865/YYYY: Suspend all surgical mesh and fixation devices

Katy Clark MSP written submission, 7 October 2025

I'm writing to you in relation to petition 'PE1865: Suspend all surgical mesh and fixation devices' which will be further considered by the Citizen Participation and Public Petitions Committee on Wednesday 8th October 2025.

I want to thank you and the other committee members for the work that has been undertaken so far in relation to this petition.

You will be aware that the petition was brought before the committee by two of my constituents from the West Scotland region, Roseanna Clarkin and Lauren McDougall, who have both been affected in different ways by the complications which can arise from the use of surgical mesh in hernia repair.

Roseanna and Lauren rightly feel that the Scottish Government's response to the serious issues and questions raised by the petition largely remain unaddressed.

Although there have been some meetings with the Minister for Public Health and relevant health officials, these meetings haven't led to the change or progress on this issue that Rosanna, Lauren and others who support their petition feel is necessary.

You will be aware that in her most recent correspondence to the committee, the Minister highlighted the development of a new registry by the British Hernia Society.

This registry aims to facilitate voluntary submissions from individuals who have suffered complications arising from hernia mesh repair. The Minister suggested that this could be an effective tool to gather information about the scale of these complications.

However, you will be aware that I previously submitted Freedom of Information requests to health boards across Scotland, seeking information about the number of patients who were readmitted to hospital due to complications arising from surgical mesh.

Only three health boards – Ayrshire and Arran, Lanarkshire and Grampian – responded with this information. The other health boards were either unable or unwilling to provide this information.

I believe that instead of relying on a voluntary self-reporting registry operated by a third party, the Scottish Government should require all health boards to maintain records about patients affected by complications arising from surgical mesh. This would enable us to gain a more accurate and comprehensive picture about the scale of the problem across Scotland.

I raised this issue with the Cabinet Secretary in the chamber on Wednesday 1st October and he indicated that the Scottish Government would write to me in response.

I believe it would be appropriate for the committee to keep this petition open until a response on this point from the Scottish Government is received. I also think both

Roseanna and Lauren have made clear in their submissions to the committee that there are several issues which they also feel need to be further explored.

I hope that the committee will consider keeping the petition open given the importance of this issue.

Yours sincerely,

Katy Clark MSP

Member of the Scottish Parliament for West Scotland Region