

# **PE2020/F: Provide fertility treatment to single women**

## **Scottish Government written submission, 25 June 2025**

Thank you for your letter of 28 May 2025 in relation to public petition [PE2020: Provide fertility treatment to single women](#) calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to provide the same fertility treatment to single women, as is offered to couples through the NHS for the chance to have a family.

As the Committee will be aware from the previous Scottish Government response dated 18 May 2023, access criteria for NHS IVF treatment in Scotland is set at a national level and initial discussions on any proposed changes to access criteria for NHS IVF treatment take place within the National Fertility Group. The group brings together experts in their field, to consider clinical research, evidence and data and make recommendations to Scottish Ministers who make the final decisions in relation to access criteria.

In that letter we also advised that Public Health Scotland (PHS), in their role as members of the National Fertility Group, were working collaboratively to use modelling techniques which will enable the group to better understand the capacity implications of any future expansion of access to NHS IVF to single people.

At the National Fertility Group meeting that took place on 29 April 2024, PHS colleagues presented the results of their modelling in relation to the work they carried out to better understand the eligibility, demand and cost implications of any future expansion of NHS IVF treatment, including Intrauterine Insemination (IUI) for single people. They also advised that there was still further work to be done to better understand the capacity implications for the four NHS Assisted Conception Units (ACUs), which would involve reconciling demand against capacity.

At the National Fertility Group meeting on 17 September 2024, PHS provided a recap on the demand modelling that had been completed earlier in the year and provided some further information on capacity and cost modelling. It was subsequently agreed that Scottish Government and PHS would discuss further work on capacity modelling in regard to the possibility of expanding NHS IVF treatment to single people.

That discussion took place on 4 December 2024 and it was agreed that the Scottish Government would consider commissioning PHS to carry out capacity modelling for the expansion of IVF access criteria to include single people. Scottish Government policy officials have started discussions with colleagues in the PHS sponsorship team on the commissioning process to get approval for a PHS team to be allocated to this work.

Timescales are dependent on PHS work plans for this financial year.

Once this work is completed the National Fertility Group would then need to schedule time to properly discuss the modelling implications and consider whether they would support a criteria change recommendation in the medium to longer term

as an aspiration when health budgets could support the increase in funding this would require. These conversations are likely to take place in early 2026.

I hope you find this information helpful.

**Improving Health and Wellbeing Division**