

Briefing for the Citizen Participation and Public Petitions Committee on petition PE1873: Provide Hypnotherapy for the treatment of mental health, psychosomatic disorders and chronic pain, lodged by Graham Harvey on behalf of the Scottish Hypnotherapy Foundation

Background

Clinical hypnotherapy is using the state of hypnosis to treat a variety of medical and psychological problems.

It can be used for a variety of therapeutic purposes but is most commonly used in managing the symptoms of long-term conditions or achieving lifestyle changes such as weight loss.

Hypnotherapy is considered as a complementary therapy and is not a regulated profession. This means anyone can set up a hypnotherapy business. However, organisations such as the British Society of Clinical Hypnosis, provide a level of self-regulation by setting standards of training and conduct for members.

There is nothing to prevent the NHS from providing hypnosis. Like any other treatment, NHS boards can commission a treatment if it believes it to be beneficial. This will usually come down to an assessment of its perceived clinical and cost effectiveness.

Some health professionals operating within the NHS may also use it in the course of their normal work. For example, it may be used in smoking cessation, for treating anxiety, phobias or for chronic pain control.

There is no estimate of the extent to which hypnotherapy is currently used in the NHS in Scotland.

Scottish Government Action

There has been no work by the Scottish Government specifically on the topic of hypnotherapy.

Scottish Parliament Action

There has been no work by the Scottish Parliament specifically on the topic of hypnotherapy.

Key Organisations and relevant links

British Society of Medical and Dental Hypnosis - Scotland

British Society for Clinical Hypnosis

The Health and Social Care Alliance

Healthcare Improvement Scotland

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