

Health, Social Care and Sport Committee

8th Meeting, 2021 (Session 6), Tuesday, 26 October 2021

Transvaginal Mesh Removal (Cost Reimbursement) (Scotland) Bill

Note by the clerk

Background

1. The Transvaginal Mesh Removal (Cost Reimbursement) (Scotland) Bill was introduced on 23 June 2021 by the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care, Humza Yousaf MSP.
2. The Health, Social Care and Sport Committee was designated as the lead Committee by the Parliamentary Bureau for Stage 1 scrutiny of the Bill. It was referred to the Committee by correspondence on the same day.

Purpose of the Bill

3. The Transvaginal Mesh Removal (Cost Reimbursement) (Scotland) Bill seeks to reimburse people who have paid for private surgery to remove transvaginal mesh from their body. The cost reimbursement is intended to include the costs of removal surgery and reasonable connected expenses.
4. The Bill contains the following sections:
 - Section 1 empowers the Scottish Ministers to reimburse relevant persons for costs relating to transvaginal mesh removal surgery by putting in place a scheme for the making of such reimbursement payments. Section 1 defines “mesh removal surgery” and sets the criteria for mesh removal surgery which qualifies for reimbursement. The provision also sets out what reimbursable costs are incurred in relation to qualifying mesh removal surgery.
 - Section 2 makes further provision about the scheme of reimbursement payments. This includes provision on application and applicant requirements and review processes.
 - Section 3 confers power on the Scottish Ministers to make ancillary provision in relation to the Bill.
 - Section 4 provides for commencement, and

- Section 5 sets out the short title of the Bill.

Scrutiny

5. The Committee agreed its approach to Stage 1 scrutiny of the Scottish Government's Transvaginal Mesh Removal (Cost Reimbursement) (Scotland) Bill during its meeting on 31 August 2021.
6. The Committee issued a call for written views on the Bill on 1 September 2021, which ran until 13 October 2021 and received 15 submissions¹.
7. Contracts have been awarded to Mercy Hospital in Missouri America, and the Spire Health Care in Bristol where Dr Veronikis and Professor Hashim respectively perform surgery, to carry out mesh removal where patients wish it to take place outside of the NHS. The Committee wrote to Dr Veronikis² and Professor Hashim³ for more information. Professor Hashim replied on 5 October 2021 and this letter is included at Annexe A.
8. The Committee's Stage 1 scrutiny will consist of four sessions in October and November over two dates; 26 October and 2 November 2021.

26 October 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private informal roundtable with women who have privately paid for transvaginal mesh removal surgery. • Evidence session with the Bill team from the Scottish Government.
2 November 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence session with representatives from NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde, the Complex Mesh National Surgical Service and NHS National Services Scotland. • Evidence session with the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care.

9. The Public Finance and Administration Committee issued a call for views on the estimated financial implications of the Bill as set out in its accompanying

¹ [Transvaginal Mesh Removal \(Cost Reimbursement\) \(Scotland\) Bill - Scottish Parliament - Citizen Space](#)

² [Letter to Dr Veronikis from Convener inviting him to give written evidence to the Committee | Scottish Parliament Website](#)

³ [Letter from Convener to Mr Hashim inviting him to give written evidence to the Committee | Scottish Parliament Website](#)

Financial Memorandum (FM). This ran from 14 September 2021 until 15 October 2021 and received 2 submissions⁴.

10. At its meeting on 28 September 2021, the Delegated Powers and Law Reform (DPLR) Committee considered the Bill at Stage 1. The DPLR Committee reported that it was content with the delegated powers provisions contained in the Bill⁵.

Clerks to the Committee

21 October 2021

⁴ [Transvaginal Mesh Removal \(Cost Reimbursement\) \(Scotland\) Bill - financial memorandum - Scottish Parliament - Citizen Space](#)

⁵ [Transvaginal Mesh Removal \(Cost Reimbursement\) \(Scotland\) Bill: Stage 1 Report: DPLR Committee](#)

Annexe A

Letter from Professor Hashim to the Convener of the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee – 5 October 2021

Thank you for your letter dated 14/09/2021.

Please find below replies to your questions.

How many individuals from Scotland have travelled to you for mesh removal surgery so far?

Three patients.

How many individuals from Scotland have already entered into private arrangements with you for future mesh removal surgery?

None

When do you anticipate surgeries to start taking place under the new contract with the NHS?

I am not aware of the starting date. Spire health care will be discussing that with NHS Scotland.

Can you provide an estimate on how many more individuals will come forward to use your services under the new contract with the NHS?

I don't have that information as it's the NHS Scotland decision. All I know there is a lot of interest from patients.

We understand that removal surgery can be different for every individual, but can you provide an average cost for complete mesh removal?

The cost for each type of mesh removal was already provided to NHS Scotland at the time of tendering.

Can you give us some indication on what makes the surgery so complex or specialised?

- 1. The position of the mesh in the vagina and/or pelvis means that there are several organs, nerves and blood vessels in close proximity to the mesh making it a specialised surgery.**
- 2. Female functional and reconstructive urology is a sub specialist area within Urology.**
- 3. Mesh removal can lead to complications and therefore needs special skills to avoid these complications and manage them if they occur.**
- 4. A multidisciplinary team is often required with Urologists, orthopaedic surgeons, Urogynaecologist and/ or colorectal surgeons.**

5. Some patients require concomitant procedures at the same time of mesh removal.

In your opinion, is it possible that individuals may require any other physical or mental health treatment related to their transvaginal mesh or mesh removal?

Yes. Many patients require non-surgical multidisciplinary input including clinical psychologist, pain specialist and pelvic floor physiotherapist.

Does the average cost for the surgery also cover the treatment of other conditions or circumstances that arise either prior to, in the course of surgery, or post-operatively?

No

Does the cost cover post-operative care and support, and if so, for how long?

No

Yours sincerely,

Professor Hashim Hashim
Consultant Urological Surgeon