

**PE1463/MMM**

Carolyn Wileman Letter of 21 February 2016

Dear Convener and Members of the Committee

I would like this email to be considered a submission to the committee.

Having watched the video of the meeting of 9<sup>th</sup> February 2016 I wish to register my disgust at the sorry performance of Professor Graham Leese & the Minister Maureen Watt. That 2 so-called professional people should be so totally unprepared is appalling. Their responses were useless at best and frankly wrong at worst.

The current BTA guidelines (which are widely interpreted as rules) for the treatment of hypothyroidism are barbaric, and I fully support the petitioners attempt to have these properly reviewed. At present treatment is withheld until a single blood test, the TSH, reaches an arbitrary figure of 10. A truly healthy person would have a TSH of around 1. Mine only ever got to 4 and I was so unwell I could barely stand up, had 47 separate symptoms and was off work (ironically within the NHS) for 4 months. My GP obviously considered I was unfit for work as the sick certificates kept coming, but still refused to give me any treatment at all, either for my obvious hypothyroidism or anything else. On presenting private blood tests to my GP to prove that I had antibody levels 100 times above the reference range, indicating autoimmune thyroiditis, I was reluctantly referred to an endocrinologist (at the very hospital where I work) who also refused me any treatment based solely on my TSH.

I subsequently had no other choice but to buy my own medication online, without any medical support whatsoever. Within days of starting on Natural Dessicated Thyroid, my symptoms began to abate, and within 6 weeks I was back at work. You would think that, presented with this dramatic evidence that my thyroid was indeed the cause of my severe illness, the doctors would have apologised and agreed to prescribe the treatment I so clearly needed and am entitled to under the NHS. But no, I have still been refused any treatment, they have refused to sign the form granting me free prescriptions which I am also entitled to, and I am left buying my own medication, paying for my own blood tests and going it alone. I was paid full sick pay for 4 months by the NHS, an utter waste of public money due entirely to the dogmatic view taken by the medical profession, who would rather I suffer and the public purse pay for me to be absent from my job, than to even offer me a trial of medication. I have been utterly appalled to learn of the magnitude of this suffering being inflicted on so many. The shock and distress I felt on being abandoned by the medical profession that I believed were there to help people cannot be overstated.

This situation needs to change, both for the thousands of suffering people and for the public purse spending needless fortunes on both a substandard thyroid medication and on the numerous other prescriptions patients need to counteract the side effects and remaining symptoms caused by poor treatment.

I urge you to allow this petition to continue

Carolyn Wileman