

8th January 2015

Andrew Howlett
Assistant Clerk to the Public Petitions Committee
Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

Dear Mr Howlett

PE01446: Scottish Standards for the Care of Adult Congenital Heart (ACHD) Patients

I am responding to the letter dated 5th December, 2014 from Craig Bell, National Planning Manager, in answer to the questions set out by the Public Petitions Committee.

It is very sensible for the Scottish standards to be based on the standards being consulted on for England and it is important for the results of the consultation, now closed, to be given time to be considered. Once this has occurred, which will hopefully be in the next couple of months, then it should be possible for Scotland to determine what standards would be sensible to implement.

Whilst it is true that "the service in Scotland will never meet the English standards on staffing numbers" as a whole, the standards are based upon what individual Specialist Centres and outreach centres should have and not based upon national populations. It is worrying therefore that even before the final standards have been properly considered that there is a view that they will not be able to be applied in Scotland in the same way as they apply in England. In order to have a service in Scotland which lives up to the service in England it is important to have the right number of the right people in the right place and that is the underlying principle which is addressed in the standards. The standards contain numerical ratios which will address the different population numbers and these should be what determines staffing needs rather than what appears to be a predetermined position.

Therefore, whilst the response is welcomed that good progress has been and will be made, it is of concern that there might be an acceptance that an inferior level of care than in England is going to be the outcome. Further, it is also important that the Scottish Congenital Cardiac Network achieves formal designation so that it can continue to oversee the important work of improving of Scottish services for adults with congenital heart disease.

It is imperative that the Public Petitions Committee keeps a watching brief until at least the Scottish Standards have been approved and moved to an implementation stage.

Yours Sincerely,

Dr Liza Morton