

PE1517/TTTT

Cabinet Secretary for Health and Sport submission of 10 March 2021

Thank you for your letter of 19 February concerning the above named petition.

It is vitally important that we work to rebuild trust and confidence amongst all those affected by mesh complications, including the petitioners. In my previous letter I outlined measures being taken forward that are intended to help with this, including the Case Record Review and introduction of GMC credentialing in mesh removal. However, I must stress that I am in complete agreement that patient engagement is essential and, as I said in my previous letter, I am clear that patient voices must be listened to as we develop the new specialist service and wider NHS support for women in Scotland.

We will continue, in particular, to work with the Health and Social Care Alliance ('the Alliance') to build on their 2019 report *My Life, My Experience*, as well as more recent engagement undertaken at the end of last year and in January of this year. The Alliance's report on the findings of this work is due for publication very shortly and we will carefully consider any recommendations made, in conjunction with NHS National Services Scotland and NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde. In the meantime, however, the Alliance has already agreed to begin work on establishing a stakeholder participation group. This group will be expected to meet on a regular basis, and will gather views on the specialist service as well as services provided more widely across the NHS. These views will be considered in conjunction with the results from patient satisfaction surveys, as well as other relevant outcome data, and will be reflected in our services here in Scotland.

You will be aware that participation in previous Alliance engagement events, including those that led to *My Life, My Experience*, was via open call. This approach is key to ensuring as wide a range of views as possible are reflected, and I would therefore fully expect identification of members of the stakeholder participation group, and participants in any additional engagement undertaken, to be similarly open in nature. You will recall that, in my 27 November letter, I noted that I had met with one of the petitioners and, at that time, I set out some of the engagement work that the Alliance subsequently undertook late last year and early this year. I therefore hope that the petitioners felt welcome and able to participate and, similarly, I hope that petitioners will, in the coming months, wish to engage in the forthcoming work I have set out here.

I hope this is helpful.

Jeane Freeman