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Convener
Health & Sport Committee

By Email.

June 2020

I am writing to update the Committee on the progress of the Queen Elizabeth University Hospital Independent Review and the establishment of the Public Inquiry into the construction of the Queen Elizabeth University Hospital Campus and the Royal Hospital for Children and Young People and Department of Clinical Neurosciences in Edinburgh.

The Independent Review, co-Chaired by Dr Andrew Fraser and Dr Brian Montgomery, has completed its work and the final report has now been published and can be viewed on the Review's website at <https://www.queenelizabethhospitalreview.scot>. I have provided an initial response to the report which can be found in attached PQ answer (S5W-29885) A formal response by the Scottish Government will be published shortly following thorough analysis and consideration of the report's findings and recommendations.

I can also confirm that the Remit and Terms of Reference for the Public Inquiry have now been published and can be viewed at <https://www.gov.scot/publications/inquiry-into-the-construction-of-the-qeuh-glasgow-and-the-rhcyp-dcn-edinburgh-terms-of-reference>. Work has been continuing on formally setting up the Inquiry, which will be chaired by the Right Honourable Lord Brodie QC PC. Some aspects of this work have been affected by the Coronavirus restrictions in place, particularly the selection of office accommodation and recruitment of personnel. However, we will continue to work closely with the Inquiry Team in the weeks ahead to minimise any disruption and to ensure that the Inquiry is ready to commence its important work at the earliest opportunity.

I will update the Committee with the formal set-up date and other matters pertaining to the Inquiry in the coming weeks.

JEANE FREEMAN

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SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT

WRITTEN ANSWER

26 June 2020

Index Heading: Health and Social Care

Bill Kidd (Glasgow Anniesland) (Scottish National Party): To ask the Scottish Government whether it will provide an update on both the Queen Elizabeth University Hospital Independent Review and the Public Inquiry into the Queen Elizabeth University Hospital Campus, Glasgow, and the Royal Hospital for Children and Young People and Department of Clinical Neurosciences, Edinburgh.

S5W-29885

Jeane Freeman:

The Independent Review of the Queen Elizabeth University Hospital (QEUH), co-chaired by Dr Andrew Fraser and Dr Brian Montgomery, has completed its work. The Review's final report has now been published and can be viewed at www.queenelizabethhospitalreview.scot .

I would like to express my gratitude to Dr Fraser, Dr Montgomery and the Review team for their dedication and diligence in conducting the Review and producing a report that will provide important lessons for those undertaking NHS infrastructure projects in the years ahead.

The Review has concluded that the QEUH has the modern safety features and systems that should be expected of a hospital of this type and that patients, staff and visitors can have confidence that the hospital offers a setting for high quality healthcare.

Nevertheless, the Review also concluded that patients, staff and visitors vulnerable due to immuno-suppression, or who are in proximity to patients with certain highly infectious communicable diseases, have been exposed to risk that could have been lower if the correct design, build and commissioning had taken place. The report notes that, since the building's opening, and particularly since 2018, measures are in place, or under development, to bring about a sustained reduction in these risks.

A range of secondary effects have also been highlighted in the Review report including eroding the confidence of the public in the hospital's ability to protect them adequately from healthcare hazards; disrupting treatment for defined groups of patients and creating additional concern for their families; providing additional workload for infection prevention and control teams, many clinical groups and management; and diverting resources and attention from the running of this large and complex facility. As I have set out in my updates to the Scottish Parliament in relation to the QEUH, an Oversight Board has been working with NHS GGC on improvements to its approach to infection prevention and control and communications and engagement. The Oversight Board is scheduled to provide its report in the summer.

The report also expresses concern that Scottish Government governance and assurance arrangements were not sufficient and did not adequately take account of the scale and complexity, and specialist nature of the building project. Plans for a National Centre that will focus on Health Hazards and the Built Environment have been welcomed by the Review. The Centre will provide greater focus and concentration of knowledge and expertise to ensure that lessons learned are applied across NHS Scotland infrastructure and that there is greater confidence in the delivery of future capital projects.

I share the Review's admiration for the resilience of clinical staff, hospital management, patients and families in their focus on effective and high quality care, recognising the opportunities and advantages of modern hospital facilities, whilst acknowledging the significant setbacks set out in the Review report. The issues identified in the report should in no way diminish the dedication and commitment of those who provide high quality care to patients on a daily basis within the hospital.

I also appreciate that patients and families most affected by the issues raised in the report may be understandably concerned and distressed by some of the findings, particularly in relation to whether deaths may have been avoided. I would emphasise that the purpose of the Review was not an investigation into civil or criminal liability. It is hoped, however, that the report may assist in providing responses to many of the questions and concerns raised by families and provide a wider understanding of the circumstances within the hospital with regard to its design, build, commissioning and maintenance and the effect this may have had on patient safety.

The Review report is comprehensive, detailed and forward-looking, providing a large number of recommendations and lessons learned that seek to provide assurance and confidence in respect of future major capital projects. The findings and recommendations will now be the subject of thorough analysis and consideration across a range of organisations, including the Scottish Government. A formal response to the report's findings and recommendations by the Scottish Government will be published shortly.

The report complements the work of other agencies including the Oversight Board and its subgroups and provides a wealth of information for the forthcoming Public Inquiry into the construction of the QEUH and the Royal Hospital for Children and Young People in Edinburgh, which will be chaired by the Right Honourable Lord Brodie QC PC. I can also now confirm the publication of the Remit and Terms of Reference of the Public Inquiry, which can be viewed at <https://www.gov.scot/publications/inquiry-into-the-construction-of-the-qeuh-glasgow-and-the-rhcyp-dcn-edinburgh-terms-of-reference> .

Work is continuing on setting up the Inquiry. Although some of the practical arrangements for the Inquiry have been affected by the Covid-19 restrictions, the Inquiry is on track to be formally launched in early August. I will provide a further update to Parliament in respect of the Inquiry launch date when this has been finalised with Lord Brodie.