

PE1651/NNNNN

Laurie Oakley submission of 31 January 2018

I am writing in support of this petition while living with long-term effects from having taken a benzodiazepine as prescribed for 8 years. I had specifically asked if becoming addicted was a risk of taking the medication and was told by the prescribing doctor that it was not. Because I never abused the drug, the dependence I developed was not taken seriously, and when I asked for help to discontinue the drug I was dismissed.

I didn't know about tapering or have any help, so I quit cold-turkey and have never been the same. If I'd had help with this I may have avoided the long-term injury. For the past two decades I have had medication side-effects and withdrawal damage repeatedly diagnosed as mental illness and/or malingering, when the effects of this drug should be well known. These have been deeply humiliating experiences. Because my condition is unacknowledged in the medical field, and cannot be attributed to fibromyalgia or any other condition that people with drug injuries are sometimes diagnosed with, and because I am wary of further treatment with pharmaceuticals, I receive neither a recognized diagnosis nor disability status.

Looking back years from now, the world will recognize the insanity of what humans have done to humans, in our time, in the name of professional medicine. Might the Scottish Government be credited as having been one of the first to offer a sane response to what injured patients have reported, or will they choose to sit by while members of their society continue to be gutted for profit? Tomorrow's history is written today. I hope you will write carefully. I hope you will write well.