

PE1690/TT

Petitioner submission of 17 December 2019

MEAction Scotland - Questions for Jeane Freeman for Committee of 19 December

Research

Question: Could the Cabinet Health Secretary describe the progress made by the Scottish Chief Scientist Office in working with academics to increase the level of ME research, as reported in her evidence submission of September 2019?

Question: Will the Cabinet Secretary for Health describe what work is underway to gather data on the prevalence of ME and when this will be available?

Education of healthcare professionals

The responses submitted by 10 of the 14 health boards in Scotland (Lanarkshire, Shetland, Tayside and Western Isles have not responded) highlights provides evidence of the inconsistency of care provided across Scotland. In addition, the evidence submitted by health boards confirm that there is no evidence based guidance available for healthcare professionals, including GPs.

Question: Whilst NES' commitment to developing a Practice Based Small Group Learning (PBSGL) module for GPs is welcome, this module has a very limited audience and the material will not be made available outside a small group of practitioners. Will the Cabinet Secretary ask NES to identify ways of co-producing, with patients, education and training material for ME which have wider access than the PBSGL Module?.

Question: At the Committee meeting in January, the Cabinet Secretary described writing to the chair of the board for academic medicine about the lack of awareness of ME amongst general practitioners. The letter was forwarded to Scotland's medical schools. Given that it is a year since the original letter to Sir Peter Rubens, would she follow up this letter to find out the impact this has had on the inclusion of ME in the curriculum of medical schools?

Patient Support and Care

Question: Would the Cabinet Secretary take immediate action regarding NHS Forth Valley's evidence that it no longer recognises ME, regarding it as a 'historic diagnosis'. Will she explain to NHS Forth Valley that the Scottish Government recognises ME as a diagnosis and as a neurological condition and require them to urgently update the information given to their healthcare professionals to reflect this?

The recent evidence submitted by the petitioner and Professor Brian Hughes confirms previous evidence submissions on the harm done to patients who have undertaken Graded Exercise Therapy (GET). Although a number of health boards stated that they do not offer GET, other health boards continue to offer GET. *Question: Will the Cabinet Secretary request Healthcare Improvement Scotland issue a Patient Safety Alert about GET to primary healthcare practitioners?*

Question: Could the Cabinet Health Secretary inform the committee on the progress for the Scottish Good Practice Statement being updated and when this will be published?

Question: Given the response from Forth Valley and other health boards highlighting the inconsistent approach taken to supporting people with ME, would the Cabinet Health Secretary contact all health boards to ensure that Scottish Good Practice Statement (SGPS) is being used? (recognising that although the SGPS needs updated, it is still the current Scottish guideline)

Children and young people are not included in the current work commissioned by the Scottish Government and described in the Cabinet Health Secretary's submission of September 2019. (These are the Gathering Views Exercise by the Scottish Health Council and the update of the 2011 healthcare needs assessment by the Scottish Public Health Network.) In addition, children are not included in the National Action Plan for Neurological Conditions. *Question: What are the Government's plans to provide support for children and young people with ME?*