



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

**PUBLIC PETITION NO.**

**PE01739**

### Name of petitioner

Tom Aldridge

### Petition title

Improve access to weight loss surgery

### Petition summary

Calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to amend its criteria for the qualification of bariatric surgery (also known as weight loss surgery) in line with National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidance.

### Action taken to resolve issues of concern before submitting the petition

I have sent correspondence to—

- The Health Minister for Scotland
- NHS Scotland, NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde Health Board
- The Royal College of Surgeons

I have also sought assistance from local MSPs and MPs.

### Petition background information

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) recommends Bariatric Surgery for patients with a BMI of 40 or more; or a BMI of 35 or more when the patient has other comorbidities which would benefit from significant weight loss such as Diabetes, Sleep Apnoea etc.

Despite this guidance and NHS England having implemented this policy, NHS Scotland have developed a policy which takes NICE Guidelines but adds in a huge inequality in that patients MUST have Type 2 Diabetes to qualify for Bariatric Surgery despite the aim of surgery being to prevent such diseases. The consequence of this is that patients are having to suffer, and in some cases wait until they develop diabetes, before being allowed the operation.

It is my view that in an attempt to save money, NHS Scotland will only operate on obese patients who have diabetes, regardless of any other comorbidities. This is despite the aim of Bariatric Surgery being to prevent diseases such as Diabetes and other more serious comorbidities.

serious comorbidities.

Obesity is a growing concern worldwide. The way we see food, eat food, make and manufacture food is changing. The way we live our lives is evolving. Gone are the days where people walk several miles to work, we now rely on trains, buses, cars and other methods of transport more than ever. Obesity is not the end, it doesn't need to take over. For some people, obesity is life limiting, it stops them working, going out, enjoying and living life but it does not need to.

This petition is for NHS Scotland to bring its policy in line with NICE Guidelines and help make the NHS a preventative service rather than a disease fighting and curing service. We have the ability to stop morbid obesity forming.

Why should we wait for patients to be riddled with disease before giving them the help they are asking for? We have the ability and resources to prevent illness and in some cases cure associated comorbidities.

To be clear, the Bariatric Surgery Pathway should be for patients who have exhausted all other pathways such as weight loss through dieting, medical intervention through pharmacology and ruling out other causes of weight gain

#### Unique web address

<https://www.parliament.scot/GettingInvolved/Petitions/weightlosssurgery>

#### Related information for petition

**Do you wish your petition to be hosted on the Parliament's website to collect signatures online?**

YES

**How many signatures have you collected so far?**

0

**Closing date for collecting signatures online**

05 / 09 / 2019

#### Comments to stimulate online discussion

Do you think a patient seeking support for obesity should be turned down and told to come back when their condition is worse and potentially life threatening?

Do you agree with the NICE guidelines that recommend that patients with obesity follow a structured program to reduce their weight, if patients are able to lose 5kg over 12 weeks and remain above or equal to a BMI of 40 or a BMI equal to or above 35 with comorbidities such as Diabetes, Sleep Apnoea then Bariatric Surgery should be considered?

Do you agree with NHS Scotland policy which states that it will only operate on obese patients who have diabetes regardless of any other comorbidities?