

PE1105/NNN

2 March 2015

Ms Anne Peat
Clerk
Public Petitions Committee
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

Dear Ms Peat,

Consideration of Petition PE1105

Following the meeting which St Margaret of Scotland Hospice had with the Scottish Government and NHSGGC in October 2013, three points were agreed in order to move forward:

1. Agreement of the notice period and 'break' period within any contract between the Hospice and the Board.
2. Examination of equity of funding across all Hospices within the NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde funding area (including historical as well as comparative analysis).
3. A technical accounting issue not limited to financial year 2012-13.

An extract from the minutes of the meeting in October 2013 is noted below:

Edward McGuigan (Vice Chairman, St Margaret of Scotland Hospice)

I do not have a problem with that and I understand them. What I am saying is let's open the whole thing up and see what other Hospices are doing, see what they are providing, their range of services and what they are being paid by the Board for those services.

Catriona Renfrew (Director of Planning, NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde)

This would be part of it.

Edward McGuigan (Vice Chairman, St Margaret of Scotland Hospice)

Would you be comfortable with that?

Catriona Renfrew (Director of Planning, NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde)

I am comfortable with that, of course I am. I do not see how any third party could not look at our financial arrangements to other Hospices in order to answer the question of fair treatment.

Leo Martin (Chairman, St Margaret of Scotland Hospice)

Not necessarily for that end of the table but we have asked for this information before and been refused.

Catriona Renfrew (Director of Planning, NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde)

But there is a difference to an independent third party conducting a review and us sharing other people's information with you. It is absolutely not the same thing. We will be perfectly happy to work under Terms of Reference. It is not the same as handing over other Hospice details to you. They have every right to object to that and would do so.

Grant Thornton were appointed to take forward this independent review. In May 2014, following distribution of the terms of conditions by Grant Thornton setting out the three areas for review, Catriona Renfrew sent an email to Grant Thornton advising "while we are happy to share all documentation in relation to SMOSH we cannot share the information about the financial structure of other hospices which demonstrates that we apply the 50% funding fairly so we need to agree to exclude this."

As can be highlighted from the extract noted above, the goal posts have once again been moved dramatically by the Health Board.

Since the meeting in October 2013, there have been several exchanges of emails in order to clarify the points which Grant Thornton would be investigating. The second point, as agreed with all parties at that time was "Examination of equity of funding across all Hospices within the NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde funding area (including historical as well as comparative analysis)."

In addition, the Hospice had a concern regarding the impartiality of Grant Thornton. However, they were advised there was no conflict of interest. In November 2014, after many emails, Grant Thornton confirmed they had in fact undertaken work for both NHSGGC and the Scottish Government. Therefore, it is believed there is a conflict of interest with Grant Thornton carrying out this review.

We know that over many years the Health Board have been paying other Hospices far more than they have been paying St Margaret of Scotland Hospice, although it is recognised that with help from the Scottish Government and the local support, there was a significant contribution made last year. It would not take much more from the Health Board to put St Margaret of Scotland Hospice on the same financial footing as all other Hospices within NHSGGC. I am aware St Margaret of Scotland Hospice are able to provide evidence and demonstrate that their clinical activity exceeds that of the other Hospices.

I hope this helps the Committee to understand the current position in relation to the ongoing discussions with the Scottish Government and NHSGGC.

Kind regards

Jean Anne Mitchell
Petitioner