

PE1393/F

**NHS Grampian Email Response To:
Child Sexual Exploitation in Scotland – Petition PE1393**

The issue of child sexual exploitation is of concern to NHS Grampian and has been a consideration in the development of policy and practice. Our staff are expected to refer children and young people who have been sexually exploited or at risk of being sexually exploited to social work and police.

NHS Grampian is a partner in the North East Scotland Child Protection Committee (NESCPC) which has developed a number of multi-agency protocols to guide staff working with children who may have been sexually exploited e.g.

- Child Protection Guidelines
- Guidance for Working with Young People who are Sexually Active

We recognise that there needs to be ongoing awareness raising as well as guidance and protocols. The NESCPC is raising professional awareness of the issues through specific training “*Working with Young People who are sexually active*” (currently being delivered) and *Child Exploitation* (3 sessions due to be delivered March 2012). There are CEOP ambassadors across Grampian raising awareness within schools.

We would welcome new research on the nature and scope of child sexual exploitation in Scotland because it is very difficult to have a comprehensive understanding of this given the secrecy and criminality issues. In addition, greater understanding of child trafficking would help influence the on-going development of our services and our multi-agency working arrangements.

We would also appreciate the review and development of dedicated Scottish Government guidelines. This is especially important given the demographic and societal changes that have taken place since 2003 and the updated National Child Protection Guidelines.

In conclusion, we are not complacent about the challenges presented by the issues raised and welcome the opportunity to contribute further to local and national developments.