

## PE1463/IIII

Email from Maureen Hardie of 23 September 2016

I am writing in support of this petition. As I have been following the progress of the petition I am aware that the membership of the committee has changed following the recent election. I know that you must deal with many and differing petitions. This one is rather complex and even if you have been researching the subject for some time (as I have) there is a lot of information to digest. Some of the submissions in support of this petition are very detailed concerning the testing and treatment options. For this reason I am asking you to consider the following summary of mine which I hope will help you understand the frustration of patients and the desperate need for change.

- The thyroid gland is like a switch that turns on every cell in the body. If it is under-performing the consequences will be seen in all/any part of the body as the cells will not be doing their job properly.
  
- Ø *Some experts believe (and there are studies to support this) that poor thyroid function leads to high blood pressure, high cholesterol, heart disease (because the heart muscle becomes weak), susceptibility to asthma, frequent and recurrent infections, decreased circulation leading to skin problems, fertility problems*
  
- The current guidelines state that thyroid conditions must only be diagnosed by using a blood test measuring TSH. Even when symptoms cry out "thyroid" many are denied treatment because the results are "within range".
  
- Ø *The fact that only the TSH test is offered to patients is a disgrace because it is not measuring the correct thing - there are other tests which are much more helpful (T4, T3, reverse T3, and thyroid antibodies, not to mention that the adrenals should also be tested before treatment is started). I don't understand how the status quo has come about but the medical establishment somehow has come to insist that there is only one way to diagnose thyroid problems and only one way to treat them if (and it's a big if) diagnosed.*
  
- Ø *Reference ranges before treatment is offered are much higher here than in other countries and even different in various parts of the UK.*
  
- Ø *It seems that doctors are no longer allowed to diagnose by listening to the patient's symptoms – some are so obviously thyroid/adrenal related that there should be no question. Any doctor who does try to help patients pleading for a better deal is threatened with disciplinary action by the BMA. See my letter of 24 February 2015.*
  
- If diagnosed the only recognised treatment is use of a synthetic replacement thyroid hormone. This proves unsatisfactory for many patients for various reasons and they remain very unwell. Until the 1980s Natural Thyroid Hormone had been successfully used for 110 years but this is no longer recommended even though patients around the world find it gives far superior results.

- Ø *As far back as 1877 a doctor of the time noticed that patients who had died as a result of every system in their body slowing down and eventually stopping had something wrong with their thyroid gland. By 1892 another doctor tried giving such patients the ground up healthy thyroid glands from animals and this treatment worked. Eventually the thyroid glands of animals were dried and processed into tablet form and this treatment was used worldwide. In the UK it's use was discontinued in 1985. It is still widely used in the USA and many patients around the world are going back to this treatment when they remain symptomatic on the currently recommended treatment of synthetic thyroid hormone. It contains only one element of natural thyroid (T4). There is another synthetic hormone available (T3) but doctors are reluctant to prescribe it - in the UK there is currently only one supplier and the price is prohibitive – in other countries it is much cheaper.*
- As a result of current diagnosis and treatment being so unsatisfactory patients are turning to the internet and discovering that the problems are similar in many countries. Information is being exchanged by patients and individuals are being forced to self medicate - often buying medication on the internet. This cannot be a good thing, yet people get better. If they then ask their doctor to monitor their use or prescribe the treatment that works for them the doctor's hands are tied because of the "Recommendations".

I believe that if medical guidelines were to be changed as suggested by the petitioner not only would individual suffering be lessened but the country would benefit from the following:

- Individuals contributing to the economy rather than claiming benefit.
- Reduced costs to the NHS. Currently people go through extensive testing and treatment for illnesses they don't or needn't have. Often the cause of symptoms is undiagnosed thyroid or adrenal problems which have been missed.

Please support this petition and help to move it forward.

Regards  
Maureen Hardie