

**PE1619/I**

NHS Highland submission of 25 April 2018

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the Public Petitions Committee regarding the above petition which primarily relates to the issue of the Abbott Freestyle Libre (FSL) Flash Glucose monitoring system being made available to patients with type 1 diabetes.

NHS Boards across the North of Scotland have begun considering the place of Flash GM monitoring within diabetes care. Clinical staff are aware of the potential benefits of such technology, in particular the potential effects on quality of life and the ability to gather more information regarding an individual's glucose control than can be measured with traditional finger prick testing alone. However, due to the current lack of published data with regard to clinical and cost effectiveness the North of Scotland Boards made a decision to await the outcome of the planned Scottish Health technology Assessment of the FSL. The output of this work should be available in June 2018. The North of Scotland Boards will use the outcome of that appraisal to help inform a policy position for the use of FSL across NHS Grampian, NHS Orkney, NHS Shetland, NHS Highland, NHS Western Isles and NHS Tayside. This position is likely to be formalised in mid – late summer 2018. Until that position is developed and agreed Flash GM will not be routinely available in the North of Scotland.

In response to the content of the official report, it is worth noting that the annual cost of FSL can only be considered cost equivalent to traditional finger prick monitoring in individuals undertaking a high number of finger prick tests per day (~8). In addition, due to the reduced accuracy of the FSL versus finger prick testing, the FSL cannot be considered a complete replacement for traditional testing e.g. due to legal requirements for driving. Staff time for training and support is also not taken into account. However, clearly if individuals can use the technology to improve their glycaemic control then this may be cost saving in the longer term, but as above there is a lack of high quality to support this, hence the need for the Health Technology Assessment.

In addition, perhaps some confusion has arisen because of some of the terminology associated with these emerging technologies. Strictly speaking the FSL is not considered a continuous glucose monitor (CGM) as these devices provide a real-time display and have additional functionalities such as alarms and the facilities to function in conjunction with an insulin pump. For this reason Abbott introduced the term Flash Glucose Monitor rather than CGM. Additional funding has been made available from the Scottish Government for the use of new technologies in diabetes but our interpretation was that this was primarily for insulin pump therapy and so called sensor augmented pump therapy using CGM. This does not include the FSL. NHS Highland has successfully met the targets and used our allocation of this funding.