



PUBLIC PETITION NO.

PE01592

Name of petitioner

Shaheen McQuade

Petition title

Group B Strep Information and Testing

Petition summary

Calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to ensure all pregnant women receive information about Group B Strep and are given the option to be tested; and to set aside funding to find more reliable methods of testing.

Action taken to resolve issues of concern before submitting the petition

I have attempted to set up a meeting with the senior midwives at Wishaw General Hospital, I have emailed NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde Health Board, I have contacted the Meningitis Research Foundation, I have twice e-mailed Nicola Sturgeon MSP and contacted the press. This is something I feel very strongly about.

Petition background information

On the 2nd of August 2015, I gave birth to my first baby, my beautiful, happy, healthy, perfect baby boy Zach. I could not believe how lucky I was to have such a content and happy baby. They say when babies smile that it is the hives, yet my son smiled every single day.

On the 14th of August he was unwell and my health visitor advised it was just colic. However, a couple of hours later I could see he was getting worse and called an ambulance. Zach was taken to Wishaw General where he was tested for meningitis. A couple of hours later my world was shattered forever when the doctor advised that he did in fact have bacterial meningitis and would not survive. He was moved to Yorkhill Hospital where he fell asleep the following day. No words can explain the devastation and heartache this has caused me.

I have since had a meeting with the consultant who treated Zach at Yorkhill to explain what had happened. The consultant explained that Zach had Group B Strep strain of meningitis, which was picked up during labour. I have contacted the Meningitis Research Trust and have also read numerous articles and I am devastated to learn that a simple swab would have alerted midwives that I was carrying this in the birth canal. Had I had a swab at the beginning of my labour, I would have been given antibiotics and my baby would have been delivered by cesarean and Zach would still be here. This is something I was never made aware of during pregnancy.

The Meningitis Research Foundation is researching a vaccination for pregnant women to protect unborn babies from the Group Strep B infection. I hope this will prove effective but in the meantime I believe every pregnant woman should be routinely tested, made aware and educated on Group B Strep infections. Every baby and parent should be spared a lifetime of pain, suffering and disability if it can be avoided by a simple routine test and precautions throughout labour.

I have asked why mothers are not routinely swabbed when they go into labour and as of yet have not received a satisfactory explanation. No mother should ever have to cope with losing a baby, however to live with the knowledge that it was preventable is a million times worse. I fight for there to be more awareness surrounding Group B Strep and for the Group B Strep test to be compulsory for all expectant mothers.

Unique web address

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/GettingInvolved/Petitions/groupbstrep>

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

28 / 12 / 2015

Comments to stimulate online discussion

I feel very strongly about this as I lost my precious son to this awful infection when it could have been prevented. I want to ensure no other parent has to experience the pain and devastation I have.