



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Dr Scott Jamieson
Royal College of General
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Via email only

Health and Sport Committee
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Dear Dr Jamieson,

Health and Sport Committee – Supply and Demand for Medicines Inquiry

Thank you once again for giving evidence to the Committee on 28th January. The Committee appreciates your time and the information you have provided.

The Committee has several points it wishes to pursue with you further.

In your response to questions on social prescribing, you intimated a 10 minute appointment time was restricting your ability to consider all potential treatments such non-medical interventions. The Committee would like to understand the basis of the restriction to 10 minute appointments if this impedes a GP's ability to fully assess the treatment options available to patients.

On research, you questioned whether there was national leadership in identifying and executing research required. The Committee would be interested to know what role you think the Royal College of General Practitioners can play in providing such leadership and gathering information on unanswered questions.

When responding to questions on curtailing the medicines budget, you said:

“..patients should be asked what they think are the benefits of them and why they think they are taking them. If a patient does not know why they are taking a medicine or what its intended benefit is, that is a failure of the system. When we have time to ensure that realistic conversations are being had with patients, and the positives of taking their medicine are being explained to them, they will be more likely to value the medicines and take them.”

The Committee would appreciate further detail as to whether such conversations are a part of the discussion between GP prescribers and patients as a matter of course, and, if not, why this is not the case. Furthermore, detail on the role the Royal College of General Practitioners could play in ensuring these conversations take place would be welcome.

You also noted improvements could be made to governance and effective use of non-medicines which are prescribed by “ensuring that patients get the reviews that they are entitled to and should be getting”. You continued “I note that being able to do that is very much to do with having the right conversations with patients and having enough GPs and time”. The Committee is surprised to hear reviews of non-medicine prescriptions are not taking place, and, again, seeks detail on the governance role the Royal College of General Practitioners could play in this regard. It would also appreciate detail of other mechanisms you believe could be utilised to achieve such improvements.

The Committee requests a response by 2 March 2020 and I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely



Lewis Macdonald
Convener, Health and Sport Committee