

PE2081/C: Make chronic kidney disease a key clinical priority

Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care written submission, 12 June 2024

Thank you for your letter of 20 May regarding Petition PE2081 – ‘Make chronic kidney disease a key clinical priority’, created by Professor Jeremy Hughes on behalf of Kidney Research UK in Scotland. You have asked for more information about:

- the criteria for determining ‘clinical priorities’;
- why chronic kidney disease is not already designated a ‘clinical priority’; and
- the Scottish Government’s decision not to increase the number of health strategies for individual conditions, including chronic kidney disease.

I believe there may have been a misunderstanding about how the Scottish Government approaches policy-making on long-term conditions that I hope my response can clarify.

I would like to make clear that the Scottish Government does not have a designated list of conditions that are ‘clinical priorities’ and therefore there is no set of criteria. Our policy work is driven both by policy need and by parliamentary and stakeholder interest. In some cases this results in policy work that is specific to individual conditions or groups of conditions, but even in cases where there is no specific policy or strategy, the Scottish Government is still undertaking work to support all people living with long-term conditions to access the best possible care and support to enable them to live longer in better health. An example of this for chronic kidney disease is the national policy on the reimbursement of electricity costs for home dialysis which we launched earlier this year to protect kidney dialysis patients from the impact of the cost of living crisis.

On the question of health strategies for individual conditions, there are already a number of these and we do not believe that publishing more of them is currently the most effective way to improve care. We keep our approach to policy-making in this area under regular review and engage with the input of partners such as Kidney Research UK, along with the views of people living with the conditions, in doing so. The Minister for Public Health and Women’s Health met with Kidney Research UK on 5 June to listen to their views.

I hope this response is helpful.

Yours sincerely

NEIL GRAY