



T: 0300 244 4000
E: CabSecNRHSC@gov.scot

Clare Haughey MSP
Health, Social Care and Sport Committee
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

hscs.committee@parliament.scot

Via Email

07 September 2023

Dear Clare,

I am writing to advise the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee of the outcome of Public Health Scotland's (PHS) independent review into the adherence to National Waiting Times Guidance within the Paediatric Scottish National Spinal Deformity Service (SNSDS) which is hosted in NHS Lothian.

Working in collaboration with NHS Lothian and the National Services Division (NSD) within NSS, the review focused on the application of National Waiting Times definitions, guidance and reporting for children who have been referred to and seen by the SNSDS based at the Royal Hospital for Sick Children and Young People. In particular, children who require further diagnostic tests before decision to treat has been made or surgery has been deferred until appropriate. In addition, the review examined the number of cancelled operations reported locally compared to national figures. The review took place from April 2023 – June 2023.

I am pleased to report that PHS have concluded that SNSDS is adhering to National Waiting Times Guidance and definitions with consistency, that data is reported openly and transparently, and that there is no apparent variation with the locally held cancellation data compared to that published by PHS. Furthermore, Standard Operating Procedures, Quality Assurance and Service Improvement processes are built into SNSDS service.

In addition, PHS have credited SNSDS and NHS Lothian for being fully engaged in the review, and showing PHS the significant volume of guidance and training relating to Waiting Times that is made available to all staff via their Intranet pages and LearnPro modules, as well as the level of ongoing quality assurance/audit that is applied across the Waiting Times data.

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The full report will be available on Public Health Scotland's website [Publications - Public Health Scotland](#) from 7 September.

I am sure you will join me in thanking PHS for their diligence and NHS Lothian and SNSDS for their full engagement in the PHS review.

Yours sincerely,



Michael Matheson

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St Andrew's House, Regent Road, Edinburgh EH1 3DG
www.gov.scot

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