

Roseanna Clarkin submission of 6 March 2024

PE1865/RRRR: Suspend all surgical mesh and fixation devices

I am one of the petitioners for petition PE1865: Suspend all surgical mesh and fixation devices.

I am an umbilical hernia mesh patient, experiencing many health complications since. I find myself writing this submission in sheer desperation.

I now find myself with a rectocele, which is a bowel prolapse into the vagina. I have attended hospital as an emergency day case due to complications of the prolapse and was advised it will need surgery. The hospital offers mesh pelvically for this procedure. I asked for other options and wasn't met with any. So, when the Scottish Government say vaginal mesh is banned, this isn't true as I've been offered it implanted pelvically into my vagina. No other option and no complications mentioned. When I made it clear I'm a hernia mesh injured patient they closed down and didn't seem to want to help me more.

Not only that I've been told it's an 18 month wait for urgent referral to urogynaecology, who would repair this. As a woman I have been told to split when having bowel movements to stop it prolapsing into my vagina. This is where you put 2 fingers into your vagina and push on the back wall. This is degrading to say the least for a woman. This is the answer whilst you wait 18 months for help. It's unacceptable.

I have requested an out of area referral to an urogynaecologist who supported the transvaginal campaign. Luckily my GP and board accepted this, as well as the urogynaecologist. My wait will now be between 5 and 6 weeks. I now have the option of a non-mesh repair by a surgeon we all trust for campaigning against mesh.

Since finding out and learning of my new condition I have spoken with woman who have had mesh repairs. Since their return from Bristol and America, where they had mesh removed, they have had very little to no support from the NHS here. They are on waiting lists to be reviewed after incontinence and prolapses reappear. Knowing removing this mesh

they would need more surgery to correct this. The NHS and Scottish Government haven't put anything in place. Patients are being told revision surgery needs to be done in Scotland – how, where, when? They still haven't been seen by anyone. There doesn't seem to be clear patient pathways that are working to get the women's mesh removed let alone revision surgery. It seems there still isn't the non-mesh repair skills in Scotland that are required. This isn't acceptable. These women have suffered enough. It's taken for me to experience my own issue for me to fully understand why a woman shouldn't be left with this medical issue.