

Deputy First Minister & Cabinet Secretary for
Health and Wellbeing
Nicola Sturgeon MSP

T: 0845 774 1741
E: scottish.ministers@scotland.gsi.gov.uk



Frank McAveety MSP
Convener
Public Petitions Committee
TG.01
The Scottish Parliament
EDINBURGH
EH99 1SP

17 February 2009

Dear Frank

Thank you for your letter of 12 February 2009 regarding Petition 1105 in respect of the St. Margaret of Scotland Hospice, Clydebank.

It is incumbent upon both organisations to explore the sustainability of service provision in accordance with the needs of the population and I have consistently underlined the need for constructive dialogue in order to identify strategic solutions which reflect national and local priorities. The provision of NHS services is a matter for NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde. As such, it is for the NHS Board to determine its response to the rejection of the options it put to the Board of St. Margaret's.

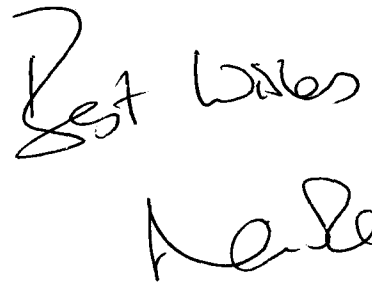
These matters have been under consideration for some period of time and I agree that appropriate resolution should be reached without undue delay. However, this remains a matter for NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde to determine through engagement with its stakeholders.

I can confirm that NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde will discuss this issue at their next Board meeting, which will be held on 24 February 2009. I am hopeful that this discussion will result in substantive options being put to St. Margaret's which will lead to a solution, agreeable to both sides, being reached.

Each hospice in Scotland is independent and offers a range of services. The amount of funding is determined by the respective NHS Board in discussion with each hospice. As you will be aware, the upper limit on the amount of funding to be provided from the NHS was intended to ensure that the hospices would maintain their independence. However, as has been indicated previously, I would be pleased to consider any representations from the Scottish Hospices Forum regarding the current arrangements for NHS funding provided to the voluntary hospices in Scotland.

I would wish to underline that the future development of palliative care and end of life services will be in accordance with *Living and Dying Well*, the Scottish Government's national action plan for palliative and end of life care and the delivery plans being developed by each NHS Board in conjunction with their stakeholders. This includes the way in which services are planned and commissioned, funding and securing value for money

I hope this information is helpful.

Handwritten signature of Nicola Sturgeon in black ink.

NICOLA STURGEON