Health (Tobacco, Nicotine etc. and Care) (Scotland) Bill

Stage 2 Amendment on the provision of voice equipment: Call for Views

NHS Lanarkshire

NHS Lanarkshire is supportive of the proposed amendment to the Health (Tobacco, Nicotine etc. and Care) (Scotland) Bill at stage 2. The Board recognises the role Health Boards have to play in the right of access to the provision or procurement of Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) equipment.

In addition, there is recognition of the need and importance of ongoing support and education and not just merely providing the equipment.

People who experience a vocal disorder often have difficulties with social communication and social inclusion. These issues often reduce the individual’s access to recreation, education, employment, and participation in family life, such as forming relationships and expressing their personality. Therefore, the provision of the AAC equipment does have a major impact upon the person’s quality of life.

It is therefore essential that following a clinical assessment a route for the provision of voice/AAC equipment to enhance alternative means of communication exists.

The insertion of the 4th Bullet point around respecting the clinical judgment to meet “all reasonable requirements” of people affected by the new right is particularly welcome.

This amendment will ensure that the needs of people with voice disorders as well as speech and language disorders have an equal right to access AAC equipment should there be such a requirement.

NHS Lanarkshire