



Dr Peter J. Gordon

Monday, 10th February 2014

To:

Andrew Howlett
Assistant Clerk
Public Petitions Committee
The Scottish Parliament

Dear Mr Howlett,

Scottish Parliament Public Petition PE1493 on a Sunshine Act for Scotland

I understand from Chris Hynd, Committee assistant that my petition is now to be considered by the Public Petitions Committee at its meeting on Tuesday 18th February 2014. This letter is in addition to my letter of the 18th January 2014 and I hope can also be considered as evidence by the Committee.

(1) The letter to the Committee from NHS Greater Glasgow:

http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/S4_PublicPetitionsCommittee/General%20Documents/PE1493_K_NHS_Greater_Glasgow_and_Clyde_30.01.14.pdf

This reply to the Parliamentary Committee from NHS Greater Glasgow fails to mention that regarding a register of interests for all NHS Greater Glasgow staff that such "*information is not necessarily routinely collated.*" I believe that NHS Greater Glasgow should have informed the committee of this. The Petition Committee may thus be interested to note that the register of interest, kept by NHS Greater Glasgow, records a total of 64 entries from 2009 to summer 2013. This averages 17 entries per year for the "*largest Health Board in the UK*".

(2) The letter to the Committee from NHS Tayside:

http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/S4_PublicPetitionsCommittee/General%20Documents/PE1493_L_NHS_Tayside_30.01.14.pdf

This reply from NHS Tayside makes no reference that the actions they have made have been the result of multiple FOI enquiries. NHS Tayside eventually agreed that they would have a publicly open, searchable database of extant declarations of interest for all staff. NHS Tayside confirmed that this would be in place by 31 January 2014. Unfortunately this has not yet transpired and I felt that the Petition Committee should be aware of this.

(3) The letter to the Committee from NHS Forth Valley:

http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/S4_PublicPetitionsCommittee/General%20Documents/PE1493_O_NHS_Forth_Valley_31.01.14.pdf

This reply from NHS Forth Valley makes no reference that the petitioner first wrote to NHS Forth Valley about its Register of Interests in May 2011. Nearly three years on, despite the assurance from Jane Grant Chief Executive to the committee, that as employers, NHS Forth Valley "*follow the requirements of NHS Circular MEL (1994)48 Standards of Business Conduct for NHS Staff*", it remains the case that not one member of staff, outside Board level, are included in any of its Registers of Interest. Three years on, NHS Forth Valley governance on this has improved, but the latest Register for 2013 to 2014 has only one member of staff included on it, and that is the previous Medical Director, Dr Iain Wallace, who left Forth Valley last year:

<http://www.nhsforthvalley.com/publications/policies-and-procedures>

(4) Update on the ABPI proposals:

http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/S4_PublicPetitionsCommittee/General%20Documents/PE1493_A_ABPI_29.10.13.pdf

The Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry (ABPI) says the drug industry will soon declare all payments to doctors. Dr Ben Goldacre, in a published letter in the British Medical Journal¹ has outlined several

¹ Goldacre, B. **Problems with ABPI proposals to release data on payments to doctors** Published 5th February 2014. BMJ 2014;348:g1301

problems with this ABPI proposal. Firstly, Dr Goldacre states *“industry has been promising such transparency for years, without delivering. At the same time, the same companies are campaigning against transparency in other areas.”* Secondly, Dr Goldacre confirms *“industry representatives now say—when directly questioned about completeness—that EU privacy law will permit individual doctors to opt out of having their payments declared. Some of the most important data will still be hidden.”*

I hope these reflections are of some assistance to the Committee in their further considerations and hope that this letter can be considered in conjunction with my letter of the 18th January 2014.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Peter J. Gordon

