

PE1657/B

Dr Daniel Goodare's written submission of 7 September 2017

I have been asked to share my experience as a doctor working at the Galloway Community Hospital in Stranraer, with relation to the importance of the A77 road to the safety of our patients.

The Galloway Hospital provides care for roughly 10000 patients per year. We have an Accident and Emergency department which is the first port of call for patients up to 40 miles away. We do have good medical facilities here, and the hospital is staffed 24 hours by a doctor with expertise in Emergency medicine, as well as a doctor trained in Anaesthetic medicine.

As such, the patients who arrive here can be expected to get access to prompt, high quality care.

Naturally, a large number of the patient's who arrive here are suffering from life threatening, serious emergencies. Most particularly, heart attacks, strokes, major trauma, and other life threatening events such as aneurysm ruptures, surgical emergencies etc.

A number of those emergencies can not be dealt with by the limited staff at this hospital. In particular, there is no facility within our hospital, or elsewhere within Dumfries and Galloway, for emergency coronary vessel stenting. That is, the most important immediate life saving intervention for someone experiencing an serious heart attack is to have the blocked vessel in their heart opened up with a stent. For this to happen, our patients have to be transferred as quickly as possible to The Golden Jubilee Hospital in Glasgow.

This intervention is of such great importance, and the speed at which it is done make such a difference to the realistic chances of survival of the patient, that a delay of only a few minutes can, and frequently does, make the difference between the survival, or otherwise of the patient.

The longer the delay, or the journey, between Stranraer and Glasgow, the more likely it is that the patient dies. If the patient is fortunate to survive, the increased delay mean a larger amount of heart muscle will be damaged, and the outcome for the patient, with regards his or her on-going health will be so much reduced, with increased risk of further events and reduced life expectancy and increased disability for our patients.

Those members of the Scottish community that live in rural areas provide a vital part of our society, an essential part of our economy, and deserve equitable access to quality healthcare.

The poor quality of the road access to Glasgow, via the A77, means that for patients in our hospital catchment area, they will experience poorer health outcomes than they would if we had the same standard of high speed road access that is available to others in many parts of the country.

The A77 can be seen in much the same way as the Coronary vessels that affect our sick patients. It is tortuous, inadequate and full of blockages. And these blockages are what will, and do, lead to the early deaths of some of the people in our local area.

A dual carriageway would remove the dangerous delays, and serve to provide the lifeblood we need.

There really is a reason that major roads are called 'Arterial Routes'.