

Citizen Participation and Public Petitions Committee
Wednesday 26 November 2025
18th Meeting, 2025 (Session 6)

PE1723: Essential tremor treatment in Scotland

Introduction

Petitioner Mary Ramsay

Petition summary Calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to raise awareness of essential tremor and to support the introduction and use of a focus ultrasound scanner for treating people in Scotland who have this condition.

Webpage <https://petitions.parliament.scot/petitions/PE1723>

1. [The Committee last considered this petition at its meeting on 11 September 2024](#). At that meeting, the Committee agreed to write to the National Services Division.
2. The petition summary is included in **Annexe A** and the Official Report of the Committee's last consideration of this petition is at **Annexe B**.
3. The Committee has received a new written submission from the National Services Division which is set out in **Annexe C**.
4. [Written submissions received prior to the Committee's last consideration can be found on the petition's webpage](#).
5. [Further background information about this petition can be found in the SPICe briefing](#) for this petition.
6. [The Scottish Government gave its initial response to the petition on 9 December 2021](#).
7. Every petition collects signatures while it remains under consideration. At the time of writing, 823 signatures have been received on this petition.
8. [At its meeting on 24 September 2025, the Committee took evidence on thematic healthcare issues](#) that have been raised in multiple petitions, including this petition.

Action

9. The Committee is invited to consider what action it wishes to take.

Clerks to the Committee
November 2025

Annexe A: Summary of petition

PE1723: Essential tremor treatment in Scotland

Petitioner

Mary Ramsay

Date Lodged

4 July 2019

Petition summary

Calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to raise awareness of essential tremor and to support the introduction and use of a focus ultrasound scanner for treating people in Scotland who have this condition.

Previous action

I have raised this issue with Rhoda Grant MSP who held a debate in the Parliament on this matter.

Background information

I have essential tremor and have been to hell and back for the past 62 years. The effects of essential tremor can have a serious impact on a person's life, with lack of understanding and awareness of the condition leading to ineffective treatment but also bullying. I want to prevent any child or adult going through verbal and physical abuse like I did.

There are over 4000 people in Scotland with essential tremor. The main treatment at the moment is brain surgery or deep brain stimulation (DBS) which some people with the condition do not want to endure. DBS is expensive. The cost to the NHS in Scotland is approximately £30,000. The cost of a focus ultrasound scanner is approximately £10,000. The focus scanner is also a much less invasive procedure.

The introduction of a focus ultrasound scanner together with an awareness raising campaign of essential tremor could help Scotland take the lead in looking at innovative, more effective treatments for the condition.

Annexe B: Extract from Official Report of last consideration of PE1723 on 11 September 2024

The Convener: Item 2 is consideration of continued petitions. First, PE1723, which was lodged by Mary Ramsay in the previous parliamentary session and was carried forward into this one, calls on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to raise awareness of essential tremor and to support the introduction and use of a focused ultrasound scanner for treating people in Scotland who have the condition.

We previously considered the petition in October 2023, when we agreed to request an update from NHS Tayside on its application for a designated magnetic resonance-guided focused ultrasound service. In August this year, NHS Tayside advised us that its plan had been to submit a funding application to the national services division in March, but that division advised that there would be

“a change to the funding available in 2024/25 which impacted on the usual annual submission process.”

That led NHS Tayside not to proceed with the bid. It has stated that, should the normal submission process recommence in 2025, it will progress with a bid as planned.

Members will be aware that Rhoda Grant, who has taken an interest in the petition, was hoping to join us this morning but has been unable to do so, although she has provided a written submission.

As I said, the petition was carried forward from one session to another, and the fact that the funding stream has not materialised is quite disturbing.

Do colleagues have any suggestions about how we might proceed?

David Torrance (Kirkcaldy) (SNP): Would the committee be inclined to write to the national services division to seek clarification on its approach to applications in 2024-25 and to ask for information about its funding position for 2025-26?

The Convener: Are colleagues content with that proposal?

Members *indicated agreement.*

Annexe C: Written submission

National Services Division written submission, 9 October 2024

PE1723/DD: Essential tremor treatment in Scotland

Thank-you for your letter regarding the current position in relation to funding being available for the commissioning of a new national MR-guided Focused Ultrasound Service to treat Essential Tremor in NHS Tayside.

As previously intimated due to the difficult fiscal challenges currently being faced across the public sector, no new applications for national services have been progressed through the designation cycle in 2024-25 with a view to funding to deliver a new service in financial year 2025-26. This position has been endorsed by the NHS Scotland Board Chief Executives.

Due to continuing uncertainty as to the likely available resources for new services we are unable to confirm our position for applications for 2025-2026 with a view to commencement in financial year 2026-2027.

Whilst we cannot provide any further update on the designation of a national service, NHS Tayside may be able to update your committee on whether patients continue to be treated in their service in Dundee via an NHS Scotland pathway with their local Health Boards reimbursing the costs of their treatment.

We hope this update on our position is helpful to you.