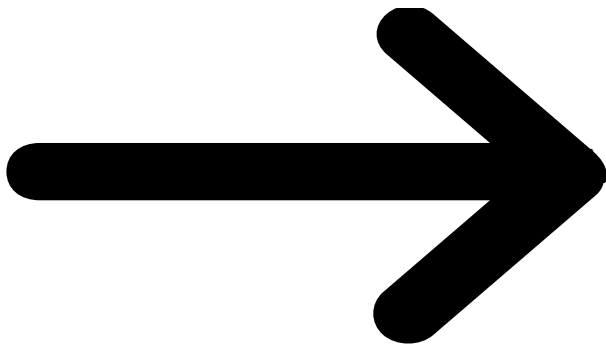


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An official review into Scotland's mesh implant scandal contained "systematic" failings and conflicts of interest, a further report has found.

It has been reported today that a damning report by Prof Alison Britton made a series of recommendations for the Scottish Government to improve such reviews in future, and was critical of how the scandal was handled by ministers.

It comes a day after the Scottish Conservatives raised the issue at First Minister's Questions, demanding the thousands of women north of the border given a mesh implant are offered a full and formal apology.

Now interim leader Jackson Carlaw has said an apology should also be given for the way in which the initial review was conducted.

Last year, shortly before the original review was published, three panel members resigned, calling it a whitewash.

Scottish Conservative interim leader Jackson Carlaw said:

"It's well-established that mesh implants are a national, self-inflicted scandal which has impacted on thousands of women.

"It's why I brought it centre stage in my first FMQs.

"Now we learn from Professor Alison Britton that the SNP government's review into this scandal was utterly compromised by the inclusion of those with clear vested interests which they were never asked to declare.

"Yesterday, I secured from the First Minister a full, formal and unequivocal apology to all the women affected by mesh for the crippling pain and anxiety

they've experienced from life-changing injuries.

"Ministers must now also apologise for this inadequate review and explain why anyone can now have confidence in the conclusions it reached.

"Those who resigned from the original review panel in the later stages when the draft report was subject to sinister and sensational amendment have now been utterly vindicated.

"It was not just a 'whitewash' in name, Professor Britton has found it to be a 'whitewash' in fact.

"There are very serious lessons to be learned here for the Scottish Government, not just in terms of the mesh response, but how it establishes all and any future enquiries.

"The recommendations of Professor Britton must be accepted in full."