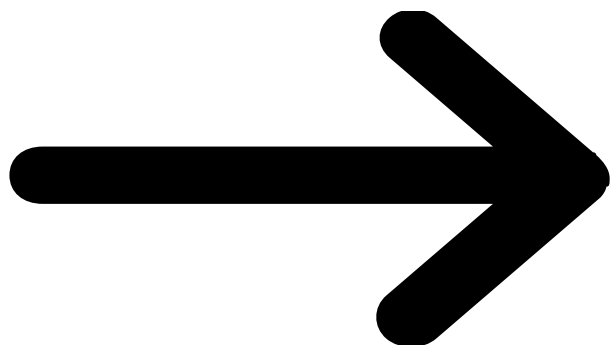


Mesh implant report a 'whitewash'

30 Mar 2017



The Scottish Conservatives have described the Scottish Government report into mesh implants as a 'whitewash'.

This was after the report claimed that the procedure was an appropriate procedure for women despite the many cases of severe suffering that it has caused.

It comes after several sufferers and an expert clinician resigned from the review as they were concerned about evidence being buried.

Scottish Conservative deputy leader Jackson Carlaw MSP said:

"This final publication which bears little if any resemblance to the interim review published last year, and it is now clear why some of those involved felt that they had to resign from the review.

"It is a whitewash of the damning evidence that was received by the Parliament, and is a disservice to the many women who are still suffering as a result of these implants.

"It is certainly not a justification for lifting the suspension on mesh implants, and we need to ensure that the procedures are still banned until further evidence is taken.

"What is especially disappointing is that the SNP have chosen to hide the publication of this report in the final day before recess amongst a string of other announcements.

"They seem to be determined to bury bad news rather than allow parliament to properly scrutinise this report."

Scottish Conservative shadow secretary for health Donald Cameron MSP said:

"Today's statement will have done little to reassure the many women who have suffered as a result of mesh implants.

"Given that the effects of the treatment cannot occur until years after the

procedure, we need to ensure that we closely track all of those patients who undergo it.

“That is why we’re calling for the Scottish Government to commit to using a comprehensive and independent database, to allow a wider range of medical professionals to report adverse incidents and concerns.

“Only then will we be able to fully understand the true extent of the damage being done by mesh implants.”

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30 Mar 2017



The Scottish Conservatives have described the Scottish Government’s new Mental Health Strategy as a ‘missed opportunity’ after the details of it were announced in Holyrood today.

In his response, Scottish Conservative mental health spokesman Miles Briggs called for far greater investment in services than what the SNP is proposing.

Scottish Conservative mental health spokesman Miles Briggs MSP said:

“Like many of the organisations involved in delivering mental health services and supporting those with mental health problems, I do not believe this strategy will make the transformative change we all want to see.

“This mental health strategy simply doesn’t live up to the promises the First Minister has made on rights, resources and reforms.

“It is clear that the mental health sector is not satisfied with the strategy and increasingly feel they have not been listened to and included.

“If the Mental Health Strategy is going to signpost the development of better mental well-being in Scotland for the next decade, then we need to see a far greater investment in services and vision than what the SNP is proposing.

“We also need guarantees that the Scottish Government will be able to deliver it, especially as no report card was ever produced for the last strategy.

“The Mental Health Strategy is a missed opportunity and is simply not good enough to deliver a new approach to mental health in Scotland. SNP Ministers need to think again.”

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30 Mar 2017



The SNP’s threat of a second independence referendum is having a negative effect on the Scottish housing market, experts have warned.

Estate agency McEwan Fraser Legal revealed that as a result of Nicola Sturgeon’s independence obsession, interest from foreign buyers had “virtually dried up.”

The estate agency admitted that there has been a dramatic increase in the number of foreign investors deciding to no longer invest in properties across Scotland.

Ken McEwan, the estate agency’s chief executive, voiced the Scottish housing markets concerns, stating that a referendum is “the last thing the Scottish property market needs.”

McEwan added: “Property investors are quite rightly nervous, as many view a future independent Scotland as bad for the property market.

“With uncertainty about the Scottish currency, job and investment, these main factors will all have a detrimental effect on the Scottish housing market.”

The Scottish Conservatives are now demanding that the SNP stops brushing aside the worries from Scottish businesses.

Scottish Conservative shadow finance secretary Murdo Fraser said:

“The housing industry can now be added to the growing list of sectors negatively hit by the SNP’s selfish push for independence.

“The threat of a UK separation is quite clearly hindering foreign

investment, and the ongoing uncertainty caused by Nicola Sturgeon is resulting in an unstable future for the property industry.

“For the SNP to be content with causing so many issues for our economy as a result of its obsession with independence shows an irresponsible tunnel vision and staggering arrogance.”

Ken McEwan quotes in The Times:

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/foreign-buyers-back-off-as-independence-push-hits-the-housing-market-rklpk9pzq>

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30 Mar 2017



A report from HMICS has given a damning assessment of the treatment of victims of sexual assault in Scotland.

The review looked into how victims of sexual crime receive medical attention while forensic evidence is also gathered for possible prosecution.

It found that the services offered in Scotland lagged way behind those in the rest of the UK, and highlighted an urgent need to find appropriate healthcare facilities for forensic medical examinations.

It also mentioned examples of some victims being asked not to wash for a day or more after an assault.

The Scottish Conservatives have said the report must act as a ‘wake-up call’ for the Scottish Government, and asked them to outline how they plan to improve services in the immediate future.

Scottish Conservative shadow justice secretary Douglas Ross MSP said:

“This is a damning report that gives us further insight into the appalling treatment received by victims of sexual assault.

“These individuals have already been through a traumatic experience, so for them to be treated in this manner is simply inexcusable.

“Examples highlighted in the report of victims being asked not to wash for over a day after an assault is cruel in the extreme, and the SNP need to use this as a wake-up call.

“When the facilities in Scotland are described as unacceptable and far worse than those in the rest of the UK, there is no excuse for the catalogue of failings in this report.

“If we don’t see improvements soon we risk seeing further examples of victims being let down when they need support the most and possibly deterred from reporting their assault.”

You can read the report here:

<http://www.hmics.org/publications/hmics-strategic-overview-provision-forensic-medical-services-victims-sexual-crime>

No to separation, yes to education

30 Mar 2017



The number of supply teachers in Scotland’s schools has plummeted across the country under the SNP, the Scottish Conservatives have said.

During First Minister’s Questions, Scottish Conservative leader Ruth Davidson revealed that in council regions all over Scotland, the banks of supply teachers who can fill in to help schools are significantly down on the start of the decade.

Following a Freedom of Information request, it emerged that:

- The number of supply teachers in Glasgow has fallen from 2396 in 2011-12 to 1391 in the current year.
- In Edinburgh, reserves have halved – from 305 to just 165.
- In the Scottish Borders the numbers have gone down from 346 to 217.

It comes as teaching leaders warn that the short supply of teachers across Scotland is now reaching critical levels – and Education Scotland said this week that the recruitment crisis is damaging the quality of education.

The lack of supply teachers means that many schools are struggling to maintain staffing numbers when permanent teachers are unavailable.

Earlier this month, it emerged that Blairgowrie High School put out a call to parents to see if any were able to help teach maths.

Following First minister's Questions today, Ruth Davidson said:

"We know the lack of teachers in schools is damaging the quality of education on offer to children. That's the view of school inspectors and teacher leaders.

"Now we learn today that the number of supply teachers giving crucial back up to schools is nose-diving right across Scotland too.

"For parents who just want their children to get a decent standard of education, it is deeply worrying.

"This failure to properly staff our classrooms is the result of ten years of neglect by this incompetent SNP Government.

"We face a crisis in classrooms across Scotland and Nicola Sturgeon must sort out her priorities. She said education would come first.

"Instead, her government has delayed its education reforms and failed to propose a single debate on education since October last year.

"Today Nicola Sturgeon claimed she 'delivers'. Yet this is the First Minister whose government hasn't passed a substantive bill in over a year in office and – since last summer – has spent a staggering 43 hours debating the constitution.

"The First Minister must think again. No to separation – yes to education."

Please see the figures on supply teachers here:

<http://www.scottishconservatives.com/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Supply-Teachers-UPDATE.xlsx>