NHS Borders
Planning & Performance

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Freedom of Information request 244-17

Request

Given the report recently published by the Scottish Parliament, which went well short of banning mesh implants, an outcome chased by women who have suffered due to failed mesh operations, I have a few questions.

1. As all mesh implants are now classed as High Risk class 111 across the EU, what is NHS Borders' stance on using them?

2. Did NHS Borders use mesh implants during the moratorium between 2014-17?

3. Did NHS Borders transfer any patients to Edinburgh, which was still using the mesh?

4. Are there any ongoing issues with patients who have had mesh implants in the Borders?

5. How many patients have had mesh implants in the Borders, and how many have experienced health related problems with them afterwards?

Response

1. The final implant procedure in NHS Borders was in October 2015.

   Prior to this following the Scottish Government directive in July 2014, only patients already on the waiting list for a Mid-urethral sling using synthetic material and those enrolled in a multicentre randomized controlled trial (SIMS Study) have had these procedures for stress urinary incontinence.

   The patients who were already on the waiting list were all offered a further appointment and given the information and consent leaflet prepared by NHS Scotland. In addition, the patients also received a locally prepared information leaflet on TVT-O. The majority of patients who were already on the waiting list decided to go ahead with the operation.

   As for patients involved in the SIMS study, consent to be randomized was obtained and the patients received the NHS Scotland 'Information and consent' leaflet, the Trial Consent sheet and the locally prepared information sheet on TVT-O.

   The side-effects of the operation, likely outcome and implications of any complications are also discussed at the out-patient appointment when booking the procedures, and again on the day of the procedure by the operating surgeon.

2. In this time period NO procedures using synthetic mesh were used for Pelvic Organ Prolapse surgery. The procedures done at the BGH in this time period were for Stress Urinary Incontinence.

3. NHS Borders have not sent any patients to Edinburgh for Mid-urethral slings.

4. Information on ongoing issues for patients are described in the following literature: http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0045/00453999.pdf

5. During the period 17 June 2014 - 9 June 2016 35 women were implanted with polypropylene transvaginal mesh medical devices as part of their treatment for Stress Urinary Incontinence (SUI) and no women as part of their treatment for Pelvic Organ Prolapse (POP). We are unable to provide details on how many patients experienced health related problems with them afterwards as this is not recorded on the electronic patient management system.

If you are not satisfied with the way your request has been handled or the decision given, you may ask NHS Borders to review its actions and the decision. If you would like to request a review please apply in writing to, Freedom of Information Review, NHS Borders, Room 2EC3, Education Centre, Borders General Hospital, Melrose, TD6 9BS or foi.enquiries@borders.scot.nhs.uk.

The request for a review should include your name and address for correspondence, the request for information to which the request relates and the issue which you wish to be reviewed. Please state the reference number **244-17** on this request. Your request should be made within 40 working days from receipt of this letter.

If following this review, you remain dissatisfied with the outcome, you may appeal to the Scottish Information Commissioner and request an investigation of your complaint. Your request to the Scottish Information Commissioner should be in writing (or other permanent form), stating your name and an address for correspondence. You should provide the details of the request and your reasons for dissatisfaction with both the original response by NHS Borders and your reasons for dissatisfaction with the outcome of the internal review. Your application for an investigation by the Scottish Information Commissioner must be made within six months of your receipt of the response with which you are dissatisfied. The address for the Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner is, Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner, Kinburn Castle, Doubledykes Road, St Andrews, Fife.