

Email from Patient Safety Learning to Nadine Dorries MP

Monday 9 November 2020

Dear Minister,

I am writing to you in your role as Minister for Patient Safety, Mental Health and Suicide Prevention.

I am the Chief Executive of [Patient Safety Learning](#), a charity and an independent voice for patient safety. We have just published [a new blog](#) exposing the issues of painful hysteroscopy procedures in the NHS. I am aware this is something you are familiar with having recently responded to an Adjournment Debate on the 24 September 2020 on this issue.

Our blog highlights significant patient safety issues of access to pain relief, informed consent and the failure to address patients concerns. Recent research, published in the *British Journal of Anaesthesia*, shows that 17.6% of women rate their pain during hysteroscopy as greater than 7/10, and only 7.8% report no pain at all.

This has been informed by the experiences that patients have shared with us on our patient safety platform [the hub](#) and by the patient group the Campaign Against Painful Hysteroscopy, who have recently [written to yourself and Matt Hancock](#) on this issue. In their letter they highlight both empirical data and the personal stories of women to illustrate the prevalence and seriousness of the issue.

[In the context of the Cumberlege report](#), this is another group of women patients who are having to 'join the dots for patient safety.'

Patient Safety Learning is calling for:

- National guidance for outpatient hysteroscopy to be consistently applied
- Women to be provided with information and advice to inform their consent
- Women to be offered and provided with pain relief
- Significant pain to be considered an adverse event and recorded and reported as such
- Research to assess the scale of unsafe care and pain, the extent to which women are suffering and to inform the implementation of national guidelines and the appropriateness of financial incentives without proper safeguards.

We'd really welcome your support for urgent action to prevent future harm and any advice on how best to achieve this.

Best wishes

Helen

Helen Hughes

Chief Executive

Patient Safety Learning