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Dear Colleague

In the coming months, The Scottish Independent Review of the Use, Safety and Efficacy of Transvaginal Mesh Implants in the Treatment of Stress Urinary Incontinence and Pelvic Organ Prolapse in Women will publish its final report. This will make recommendations that will affect the future treatment of these conditions in Scotland and how it is delivered. Consent will be identified as a factor that requires consideration and is the reason I am writing to you on this occasion. When finalised, the report will be considered by Scottish Government Ministers, and I will issue a statement.

In June 2014, the then Acting Chief Medical Officer [wrote to all Health Boards](#) to request that they consider suspending surgery involving the use of mesh products in the treatment of stress urinary incontinence and pelvic organ prolapse until the Independent Review published its final report. It was recognised that some patients would still wish to go ahead with these procedures; however, it was expected that surgery would only proceed when informed consent was given. A [patient information leaflet and consent form](#) was developed for use as part of this process and it is expected that the surgeons involved use this and adhere to guidance on consent from the General Medical Council, *Consent: patients and doctors making decisions together*. The significance of the consenting process in this setting was emphasised by Tracey Gillies at SAMD last month. I am grateful to Tracey for bringing this matter to your attention and, following on from this, I need to be sure that appropriate measures are in place for these patients.

Whilst I appreciate that the conduct and content of discussions with patients about their care – as well as shared decision making – are a matter of individual professional responsibility, I ask if you can give me assurance that within your Health Board, the discussions occur in the manner expected.

**From the Chief Medical Officer  
Dr Catherine Calderwood MA  
FRCOG FRCP (Edin)**

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Date 9 February 2017

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For action  
Medical Directors

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For information

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**Further Enquiries to:**

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I am grateful for your consideration and look forward to receiving your response at the earliest opportunity.

Yours sincerely

*Catherine Calderwood*

**DR CATHERINE CALDERWOOD**