**Motion S5M-11521: Kenneth Gibson, Cunninghame North, Scottish National Party, Date Lodged: 06/04/2018**

**Improving the Mental Health and Wellbeing of Children and Young People with Epilepsy in Scotland**

That the Parliament notes with concern the prevalence of mental ill-health, behavioural disorder and educational underperformance among approximately 7,000 children and young people who have epilepsy in Scotland; understands that children with epilepsy are known to have poorer quality of life and more difficulties with emotional, behavioural, social and cognitive function compared with their peers with other chronic conditions; acknowledges the screening pilot by NHS Lothian, which found psychosocial difficulties in 50% of children with epilepsy who were in mainstream schooling and not already seen within the NHS's Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAHMS), and that these problems are underdiagnosed and undertreated; believes that the majority of these cases are lower-tariff and that early intervention in this group may avoid referral to CAMHS and more extensive use of mental health services in adult life; notes the view that a wider roll-out of such screening in epilepsy clinics, for example in Cunninghame North, could help if linked to a pathway of existing stepped interventions below the current CAMHS level; notes calls for greater provision of evidenced-based approaches such as psychosocial Intervention in epilepsy groups and greater involvement of third sector partners, and believes that National Epilepsy Week, from 14 to 20 May 2018, offers an ideal opportunity to develop an improved, pathway-based approach to this issue.

**Supported by:**Rona Mackay, Joan McAlpine, Mark McDonald, Monica Lennon, Clare Haughey, Gordon MacDonald, Stuart McMillan, Stewart Stevenson, Gillian Martin, Bill Kidd, Sandra White, Richard Lyle, Fulton MacGregor, Miles Briggs, Jenny Gilruth, Neil Findlay, David Torrance, Jeremy Balfour, Emma Harper, Anas Sarwar, Alex Cole-Hamilton, Ash Denham, Donald Cameron, Jackie Baillie, Ruth Maguire, Alexander Burnett

**Current Status:** Achieved Cross Party Support

SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT

WRITTEN ANSWER

**18 January 2018**

Index Heading: Health and Social Care

**Kenneth Gibson (Cunninghame North) (Scottish National Party):** To ask the Scottish Government what action it is taking to ensure that women who are prescribed sodium valproate are (a) adequately counselled regarding the risks of taking the drug while pregnant and (b) supported to plan their pregnancies in order to minimise the risk of foetal abnormalities.

**Shona Robison:** Regulation for the licensing, safety and efficacy of medicines is currently reserved to the UK Government and is the responsibility of the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) who operate on a UK wide basis. The Scottish Government has ensured that all relevant advice issued by the MHRA to highlight the risks associated with taking Sodium Valproate have been circulated to healthcare professionals in Scotland. This includes strengthened warnings and educational materials.

The Scottish Government will continue to work closely with the MHRA. This will include discussion on any outcomes from the current European wide review considering the effectiveness of measures taken so far and whether further regulatory measures are required to minimise risks of foetal abnormalities in girls and women of childbearing potential.

SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT

WRITTEN ANSWER

**29 January 2018**

Index Heading: Education, Communities and Justice

**Kenneth Gibson (Cunninghame North) (Scottish National Party):** To ask the Scottish Government what its response is to the recent MBRRACE-UK triennial report on UK maternal deaths, which reportedly found that, for 78% of women with epilepsy who died, improvements in their care were identified that may have changed the outcome, and what its position is on the evidence that there is "a lack of ownership for the care of women with epilepsy, fragmented services and inefficient or poor communication".

**Shona Robison:** The Scottish Government welcomes the recent MBRRACE-UK report and is currently working with the clinical community in Scotland to deliver the recommendations of the report. We also look forward to working with The Scottish Parliament’s Cross Party Group on Epilepsy. All Obstetricians in Scotland can refer women with epilepsy to a neurologist and/or an epilepsy nurse specialist.

The Scottish Government has ensured that all relevant advice issued by the MHRA to highlight the risks associated with taking Sodium Valproate have been circulated to healthcare professionals in Scotland. This includes strengthened warnings and educational materials.

The Scottish Government has also worked with NHS Health Scotland on the text for the revised for 2018 reprint of Ready Steady Baby! which includes a new section providing advice on epilepsy and pregnancy and the use of sodium valproate and valproic acid during pregnancy.

SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT

WRITTEN ANSWER

**13 February 2018** (Holding Reply Issued 1 February 2018)

Index Heading: Health and Social Care

**Kenneth Gibson (Cunninghame North) (Scottish National Party):** To ask the Scottish Government what its position is on NHS Dumfries and Galloway reportedly being the only mainland NHS board with no paediatric epilepsy specialist nurse.

**Shona Robison:** The Scottish Government has overall responsibility for health and social care policy in Scotland, however the statutory responsibility for delivering or commissioning services at a local level lies with local authorities, NHS Boards and integrated health and social care partnerships. Operational decisions, including whether there is a need for a paediatric epilepsy specialist nurse in NHS Dumfries & Galloway, are therefore matters for these bodies.

NHS Dumfries & Galloway has assessed local needs and arrangements are in place to support children and young people with epilepsy.

NHS Dumfries & Galloway has an acute paediatric nurse who has additional specialist training and she provides input into paediatric outpatient clinics locally and also tertiary clinics. The nurse also provides education and training to paediatric ward staff. The Community Children's Nursing Team provides support in the community across the region. Given the remote and rural aspect of Dumfries & Galloway this gives a responsive service regardless of the home location of the child or young person.

The Board is currently assessing its provision of support to education colleagues in relation to children with epilepsy and the administration of rescue medication and are working with an Epilepsy Specialist Nurse from Epilepsy Scotland to develop a robust model of delivery. I am advised that NHS Dumfries & Galloway feels that its current arrangements to support children and young people with epilepsy are satisfactory and it has no current plans to employ a Paediatric Epilepsy Nurse Specialist.