

31 October 2025

Dr Zubir Ahmed MP

Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Health Innovation and Safety

By email to pszubirahmed@dhsc.gov.uk

Dear Zubir,

Today marks the two-year anniversary since I first submitted my advice to the Department of Health and Social Care on options for redress for those harmed by valproate and pelvic mesh, prior to me publishing the Hughes Report in full in February 2023

(<https://www.patientsafetycommissioner.org.uk/our-reports/the-hughes-report/>)

To date, I have not received a substantive response to the advice I gave to Ministers, nor my report and recommendations.

In the last two years, there has been an abundance of contact, emails, letters, and questions to Ministers and the Department from a variety of sources including PQs and PMQs asking for updates on progress. I also continue to receive regular requests for updates from members of both Houses of Parliament, from patient groups and from the press. I have escalated these questions at regular meetings with the team at DHSC responsible for this policy area. The DHSC response continues to repeat that the Government is still 'carefully considering' the report, it being a 'complex issue' and that a response will follow in 'due course'.

I am aware that we have had a change of Government since I provided advice and published the Hughes Report, and that this area of policy has only recently been added to your portfolio. However, this delay, with no clear timetable for a response, is an intolerable situation for all individuals, patients and families affected and who continue to suffer every single day through no fault of their own.

I am writing formally to exercise the powers under the Medicines and Medical Devices Act 2021 (Sch 1, para 3), to request information (detailed below) from the Department of Health and Social Care for the purposes of carrying out my core duties. Under my statutory powers I request the following information before the end of November 2025:

- A clear timeline of work and steps undertaken by DHSC over the last 2 years (from 31 October 2023 – date) to consider the content of my report and recommendations on redress, including:
 - dates when advice has been given to Ministers by DHSC officials and more detail of the advice given
 - dates and details of meetings held, and with whom, including contact with other government departments
 - clarity on what information remains outstanding for Ministers to make a decision regarding redress and the timetable for a full response to my recommendations

I look forward to receiving your response in order that I can keep patient groups and parliamentarians who are in touch with me regularly updated. To this end, both this letter and the response received will be published on my website.

With many thanks.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Henrietta'.

Professor Henrietta Hughes OBE FRCGP SFFMLM
Patient Safety Commissioner