



11 Netherton Place  
Whitburn  
BATHGATE  
West Lothian  
EH47 8JG

18/08/2017

Nicola Sturgeon  
The Scottish Parliament  
Royal Mile  
EDINBURGH  
EH99 1SP

Dear Ms Sturgeon

**Withdrawal of day care for dementia patients at St Johns Hospital**

My wife Janet Johnstone suffers from severe dementia and has been attending day care at the mental health unit at St John's Hospital.

I was advised last week by the mental health team that this service is being discontinued as from 25<sup>th</sup> August 2017.

I am her sole carer and unfortunately have no close family living near me to assist me with her care or to allow me time to carry out domestic type requirements outside our home.

Until 3 to 4 months ago she was attending a local care centre known as "Answer House" in Whitburn but unfortunately due to the demands of her condition they were unable to cope with her due to the shortage of voluntary staff and her requirement for one to one care.

The mental health team at St John's Hospital said that they would arrange for her to attend the day care centre for 6 hours each Friday as they were aware that I am "a prisoner" in my own home except for a 2-hour visit from "Crossroads Caring Scotland" one day per week. Having attended for 6 weeks each Friday the service is now being withdrawn.

What I require from you under the **Freedom of Information Act** are answers to the following:

1. Are you aware that this service is being withdrawn?
2. If so is it a government instruction and for what reason?
3. If not a government instruction, who has decided the day care should cease.
4. Why has it not been made public before the participants carers have been told.
5. What other arrangements are being put in place to assist carers like myself from the 24/7 pressure with no respite.
6. Is this another service being withdrawn from this hospital with a view to its eventual closure?

I have been invited to attend a meeting with the Team Mental Health Manager M Nick Clater at the unit on 30<sup>th</sup> August so it would be appreciated if you or one of your staff could reply to me before that date.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "G. Johnstone".

George Johnstone