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Cabinet Secretary for Health and Sport
The Scottish Government
St. Andrew's House
Regent Road
Edinburgh
EH1 3DG

Our Ref: AR01/OHF/SR/dm

5th April 2018

Dear Cabinet Secretary,

I am writing to you regarding the news that three out-of-hours services will be closing in Fife.

From Monday the 9th of April for three months, Queen Margaret Community Hospital, Dunfermline; Glenrothes Community Hospital; and St Andrews Community Hospital will no longer operate any out-of-hours services from midnight until 8am. Instead patients will have to travel to the Victoria Hospital in Kirkcaldy.

Fife Health and Social Care Partnership have explained this is due to staff shortages. They have expressed difficulty in ensuring appropriate nursing and medical staff within the Primary Care Emergency Service. As such they have implemented the contingency protocols of shutting the services and moving them to the Victoria in Kirkcaldy.

I am writing to ask you what the Scottish Government is doing to help resolve this problem with out of hours staffing difficulties in Fife?

As you know, this issue of recruitment is not unique to Fife, and as the Clinical Director of Fife Health and Social Care Partnership has stated: "As with most areas in Scotland, difficulty in recruiting GPs and Primary Care medical staff for out of hours work has put enormous pressure on delivering the service."

What is the Scottish Government doing to encourage adequate levels of staffing in our NHS? It is simply not acceptable that staff are being put under enormous pressure to deliver necessary services due to a failure to recruit sufficient levels of staffing.

A crisis is engulfing our NHS, and we must act before it spirals further out of control. I urge you to look into this development and take appropriate measures to address the problem.

Yours sincerely,



Alex Rowley MSP
Mid Scotland and Fife