

Fifth birthday photos show playtime fit for a prince

A smiling Prince Louis has been photographed being pushed in a wheelbarrow by his mother, the Princess of Wales, ahead of his fifth birthday today.

Louis, who is expected to accompany his siblings in the procession from Westminster Abbey following the King's coronation on May 6, was photographed sitting in a wheelbarrow pushed by his mother in the family portraits.

It is one of two pictures taken by photographer Millie Pilkington earlier this month on the Windsor Estate, released to mark Louis turning five today.

The family live in Adelaide Cottage in Windsor's Home Park and Louis attends the private Lambrook School near Ascot in Berkshire alongside his brother and sister Prince George and Princess Charlotte.

He was not at the Queen's state funeral at the abbey in September and is thought to have been considered too young to attend the service with his parents.

Meanwhile, it was announced yesterday that the King and Queen Consort will be honoured in a special Scottish service later this year. Charles will be presented with the Honours of Scotland during the service of dedication and thanksgiving at St Giles' Cathedral. The Honours of Scotland, which are on display in the Crown Room at Edinburgh Castle, are the oldest crown jewels in Britain.



Prince Louis is pushed in a wheelbarrow by his mother the Princess of Wales in photographs taken on the Windsor Estate in Berkshire and released by the Palace to mark the young prince's fifth birthday today

Picture
Millie
Pilkington

'Tough questions' over mesh ops

A survey found that women are left to wait in severe pain

By Marion Scott
CHIEF REPORTER



Mesh victim
Susan
Doyle

is damning. It is unacceptable patients are waiting years for appointments with no reasonable explanation why.

"There also appears to be no clear pathway for aftercare for those who do seek mesh removal overseas, which is astonishing given the circumstances of how these women have been injured.

"I will be seeking answers to some very tough questions when we get an opportunity to speak to the people running what the government describes as a centre of excellence."

The survey, which was produced for the Scottish Parliament's Health Committee, found the overwhelming number of women want removals carried out by world-renowned mesh expert Dr Dionysios Veronikis in the US.

Despite the Scottish Government making funds available to pay for overseas removals, patients were not supported by the service to access that care.

The survey concluded that it is almost impossible to get a straight answer over the number of successful full removals performed by the Glasgow-based team.

Conservative MSP Jackson Carlaw, who has repeatedly exposed failures in the service, said: "Is there no one who can take charge and deliver justice to the mesh

women? Why is it always one step forward and three steps back?"

The health committee will have the opportunity to quiz centre officials and surgeons over the results of the survey, which was published last week.

One patient told the survey: "The two consultants I saw who claim to be experts in mesh removal told me they had done 'lots' of removals. Pinning them down on factual, accurate numbers and outcomes proved impossible."

Others said they were "dismissed" once they asked to be treated elsewhere.

The survey concluded that the service has no consistent referral pathway, considerable variation between health boards and long waiting times, with poor communication between appointments.

It also found excellent care is only provided in "exceptional circumstances".

Susan Doyle, 57, from Nitshill, Glasgow, has been waiting more than two years for an appointment in Glasgow for the referral she needs to access mesh removal overseas.

She said: "I've had so many appointments cancelled, I've lost count."

Doyle, who takes 20 painkillers a day to try and relieve the pain from nerve damage caused by mesh, gave evidence on the horrific side effects to former health

secretary Jeane Freeman in 2019. She said: "I'm a ticking time bomb because Scottish surgeons actually placed two mesh devices inside me and I live in constant fear of developing sepsis."

Former Scottish Ambulance auxiliary Cathleen Macleod, 55, from Benbecula in the Western Isles, calls the Glasgow centre "every other week" begging for an appointment so she can get to the US for removal of the mesh. She said: "I've been waiting years and I'm no further forward. I was also implanted with two mesh devices, which means I'm living in constant agony and at risk of sepsis."

Women's Health Minister Jenni Minto said: "The service in Glasgow has also previously surveyed the views of patients and made several improvements to services, including in a move to a new location and in the availability of a wider range of professional support.

"It's positive to see that the service is responding to feedback."

NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde said: "We have just had sight of the report and will review the findings as appropriate."

It added that since the Complex Mesh Surgical Service started in Glasgow in April 2020, there have been 35 full removals carried out by the team.

Politicians are to quiz surgeons involved in the controversial multi-million-pound Complex Mesh Surgical Centre after a patient survey concluded injured women had no faith or trust in the service.

MSPs expressed concerns that women were waiting years for appointments and reported being dismissed when they asked for mesh implant removal outside the country.

The revelations appear in a damning new patient survey showing women are angry that surgeons who implanted them with the plastic mesh, which caused life-changing injuries, are continuing to play any role in whether they can seek removal outside of Scotland.

Scottish Labour's Shadow Health Secretary, Jackie Baillie, said: "This survey