

Patients 'considered suicide'

by **Graeme Strachan**

SOME PATIENTS "considered suicide" in the aftermath of surgery by a suspended former Tayside surgeon, it has been claimed.

Patrick Kelly from Dundee said he has listened to the harrowing tales of former patients of Professor Muftah Salem Eljamel after they got in touch with Mr Kelly following his calls for a public inquiry.

Mr Eljamel, pictured, who was a consultant neurological surgeon at NHS Tayside from 1995, was suspended from his post last year after a patient underwent surgery on the wrong spinal disc.

He also stepped down from his teaching and research posts at Dundee University following the interim order by the Medical Practitioners Tribunal Service, before eventually leaving NHS Tayside.

Mr Kelly said: "I have heard some really harrowing tales and some have even considered suicide because things are that bad.

"These are brave people who are coming forward and I know this is not an easy thing to do.

"It's frightening what I am hearing. Young men doubled up, people bedridden, suicidal feelings, feeling they are all alone — the list is endless.

"None of us are having a go at NHS Tayside as we know they have some of the most talented and professional people in the UK.

"However, all we want is honesty and for them to put things right. After all they have a duty of care to us and need to resolve all our issues now.

"This is sad case for everyone involved but I am a compassionate person and can

forgive him for what he has done to me.

"At the end of the day he has to live with what he has done and I hope he would be brave enough to apologise."

Mr Kelly, who underwent major back surgery by Mr Eljamel in 2007, believes a public inquiry is the only way to know what actually happened to him and other patients.

The 55-year-old former Radio Tay broadcaster continues to suffer chronic back pain and believes the operation was never actually carried out, despite the fact he was opened up on the operating table.

Accident claims solicitors in Scotland are dealing with a number of cases relating to surgery by Mr Eljamel.

A Scottish Government spokesman said: "This Government is clear that health boards should be taking all appropriate steps to prevent avoidable injury or harm to patients and we are implementing a wide range of initiatives to achieve this.

"The majority of patients treated in our NHS receive excellent and high-quality care. However, when this doesn't happen we would expect the health board to take forward all appropriate actions.

"The General Medical Council (GMC) is the independent regulator of the medical profession in the UK.

"Its statutory responsibility is to protect the public by registering and licensing doctors, setting standards for education and good medical practice, and investigating when concerns are raised that a doctor is not meeting those standards.

"The GMC has imposed strict conditions on the registration of this surgeon and he does not hold a licence to practise medicine."

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