

# HOLYROOD PROTEST BY SURGEON VICTIMS DYING FOR ANSWERS



**MAKING A POINT** Mock coffin, left, at protest. Right, Neil Gray with surgeon victims



**MESSAGE**  
Protest at Holyrood

## Campaigners say botched op scandal probe could come too late for some

**VICTIMS** of brain butcher surgeon Sam Eljamel staged a powerful protest outside Holyrood yesterday.

BY **VIVIENNE AITKEN**  
Health Editor

Four mourners led by a piper carried a coffin as they chanted "they dither, we die" and demanded a full public inquiry into the scandal.

Shamed Eljamel was a brain surgeon at NHS Tayside blamed for causing harm to more than 100 patients over a number of years with botched operations.

He has now returned to Libya, where he continues to carry out operations.

Patients who had been harmed by the disgraced neurosurgeon addressed a cross-party group of MSPs yesterday, each summing up how Eljamel had ruined their lives.

Lead campaigner Jules Rose said: "This group of harmed patients has heard little in way of the promised timelines for the public inquiry into the Eljamel and NHS Tayside scandal, or the patients' individual clinical reviews.

"We are represented here today by the patients themselves, relatives of patients, and our supporters.

"It is shocking to consider that some of our group may die without knowing answers to what happened to them.

"This is why our protest today has a funereal feel. None of us is getting any

younger. Perhaps the Scottish Government could advise us when both of their promises are going to see progress. They dither, we die."

Health Secretary Neil Gray met some of the victims outside Holyrood.

He said: "I wanted to come out to speak to the victims. We are committed to holding a public inquiry.

"The victims deserve answers. As soon as I came into office, I wanted to see what progress had been made towards the appointment of a chair."

But he said he could not commit to a timescale for a chair of the inquiry to be appointed or when it would begin, adding: "Good progress is being made."

The protesters said there are currently 172 patients known to have been harmed with 132 of them – NHS and private – applying as a group for core participant status at the Public Inquiry.

Jules continued: "We are hoping Mr Gray, will do a better job than his predecessors. We have now had five health secretaries since the campaign for a public inquiry started in 2015.

"It is imperative he takes this matter seriously by recognising the escalating adverse impact on patients."