FRANCINA ARMENGOL
PRESIDENTA DEL GOVERN DE LES ILLES BALEARS
CARRER DE LA LLOTJA, 3
07012 PALMA (ILLES BALEARS)

Formentera, 17 December 2020

Madame President,

Healthcare services at the national and regional levels are deeply impacted by the public health crisis in which we are today immersed. We are aware of this fact, as we are aware of efforts in the Balearics to guarantee a quality public service for all, no matter the illness. Nevertheless, the declaration of emergency orders affected certain islanders particularly, and some of these circumstances have yet to be put right, requiring immediate attention. I am referring to dialysis treatments.

Under the state of emergency, dialysis patients residing on Formentera were made to travel to Eivissa receive treatment. Severely reduced ferry service meant this was no easy endeavour, as it amounted to spending an entire day on our sister island. The situation would be inconvenient for any Formentera resident, but in this case those affected were people suffering ill health.

The patients' situation has remained unchanged since the lifting of emergency orders. They are still called upon to travel to Eivissa, an undertaking that involves three days per week of ferry travel at the very least.

We must put ourselves in the places of these doubly vulnerable individuals. The first risk they face is on account of the chronic illnesses they suffer. The second is on account of Covid-19.

Frequent travel magnifies both.

These individuals' suffering has galvanised islanders' sense of solidarity, apparent in the 2,829 signatures which we share with you today. In September, plenary members of the Consell de Formentera voted to urge the regional government to reinstate dialysis on Formentera, not least because our hospital, having already provided the service in the past, is already equipped with the necessary machinery and personnel. In June representative Sílvia Tur proposed a non-legislative motion for debate in the Balearic commission on health, and more recently, local decision makers approved an amendment to the Formentera budget creating funding to reinstate the service.

I, myself, as president, have had the opportunity to sit down with an association of Formentera dialysis patients and to hear their description of the situation.

These patients and I speak for the Consell de Formentera and all of the undersigned when we insist on the following point: There must be a way to reinstate dialysis treatment on Formentera and improve the quality of life of these already vulnerable patients.

May the signatures collected and here attached support our call for a hasty restitution of dialysis service, taking into account the ongoing public health crisis and the affected individuals' distinct vulnerability.

We welcome any efforts to respond to this issue in greater depth, and to shape collaboration or proposals to deliver resolution.

Cordially,

Patient representatives

Alejandra Ferrer

President, Consell Insular de Formentera