

Cross Party Group on MS Minutes of initial meeting

Date Wednesday 2 October 2013

Time 12:00 – 13:00

Venue TG 20-21, Scottish Parliament

Agenda

Purpose and objectives of proposed Cross Party Group on MS

Membership

Format of future meetings

Election of office bearers

Next steps

Attendees

MSPs:

George Adam MSP

Lewis MacDonald MSP

Neil Findlay MSP

John Finnie MSP

Jim Hume MSP

Other attendees:

Sarah Richard Policy, Press and Campaigns Manager, MS Society

Becky Duff Head of Policy and Communications, MS Society

David Macartney Parliamentary and Constituency Manager, George Adam MSP

1 Purpose and objectives of proposed Cross Party Group on MS

George Adam MSP welcomed the members who had all expressed an interest in setting up the Group. He proposed that the objectives of the CPG are to:

- Ensure the voices of people affected by MS are heard in the Scottish Parliament
- Develop and implement a focused action plan on key areas of concern, including:
 - Financial security and welfare
 - Healthcare standards
 - Access to MS treatments
 - Support for unpaid carers
 - Social care provision
- Work with other CPGs and Committees on areas of shared interest (e.g. CPG on Carers, CPG on Disability, Health and Sport Committee, Welfare Reform Committee)
- Monitor and influence relevant legislation to ensure that it reflects the needs of people affected by MS

Members agreed to these objectives.

2 Membership

Should the Group be established by the Committee it was proposed and agreed to invite broad stakeholder membership from:

- Cross Party MSPs
- Health and Social Care Professionals
- Voluntary sector organisations with a focus on MS
- People affected by MS
- Others with an interest and expertise in MS

- Pharmaceutical industry representatives. It was proposed and agreed to invite the two industry interest groups: the Association for the British Pharmaceutical Industry (ABPI) and the Ethical Medicines Industry Group (EMIG) to nominate up to two members each to represent the umbrella groups, and to avoid the risk of members attending to represent individual company interests.

3 Format of future meetings

It was proposed and agreed that:

- Meetings would take place quarterly
- Meetings would focus on specific topics agreed by members and to time with agreed priorities and relevant Parliamentary business.
- There would be opportunities to hear from expert speakers at meetings
- CPG members would have opportunity in between meetings to visit specialist treatment and research centres and meet local constituents affected by MS.

4 Election of Office Bearers

George Adam MSP was nominated and elected as Convener.

Lewis Macdonald MSP was nominated and elected as Vice Convener.
The MS Society was nominated and elected as Secretariat.

5 Next steps

It was agreed to progress with applying for registration of the CPG on MS. George Adam MSP to complete and submit the registration form for review by the Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee.