

CROSS-PARTY GROUP REGISTRATION FORM

NAME OF CROSS-PARTY GROUP

Cross-Party Group on Autism

PURPOSE OF THE GROUP AND PROPOSED DISCUSSION TOPICS

1. Please state the purpose of the Group.
2. Please also provide a brief explanation of the purpose of the Group and why the purpose is in the public interest.
3. Please also provide details of any overlaps with the purpose of existing Cross-Party Groups and an explanation of why, regardless of any such overlap, the Group should be established.
4. Please also provide an indication of the topics which the Group anticipates discussing in the forthcoming 12 months.

1. The Cross-Party Group on Autism is a forum to raise awareness and promote the interests of autistic people, including those with Asperger syndrome, their families and carers; and to influence government policy.
2. Autism is a lifelong developmental disability. There are around 58,000 autistic people in Scotland¹, both children and adults, plus their more than 174,000 family members and carers. The Scottish Government's Scottish Strategy for Autism identifies autism as a national priority. However, the needs of this group are currently not being adequately met and many are falling through the gaps in services. The Cross-Party Group will seek to bring together individuals, organisations and Parliamentarians who have a shared interest in raising awareness of autism and promoting the interests of autistic people, their families and carers at the Scottish Parliament; with a view to influencing Scottish Government policy and improving the lives of this group of people.
3. Autism is often diagnosed alongside other conditions, some of which currently have a dedicated Cross-Party Group at the Scottish Parliament. For example, there are currently CPGs on dyslexia, epilepsy, mental health and learning disability. It will be the case that these CPGs undertake work that will be of interest to autistic people. However, as stated in the Scottish Strategy for Autism, autistic people "have a unique set of conditions which will not necessarily fall within the categories of learning disabilities or mental health, although these conditions may be present". It is because of the fact

¹ Baird, G. et al. (2006) *Prevalence of disorders of the autism spectrum in a population cohort of children in South Thames: the Special Needs and Autism Project (SNAP)*. The Lancet, 368 (9531), pp. 210-215, and Brugha, T. et al (2009) *Autism spectrum disorders in adults living in households throughout England: report from the Adult Psychiatric Morbidity Survey, 2007*. Leeds: NHS Information Centre for Health and Social Care. Available to download at <http://www.hscic.gov.uk/catalogue/PUB01131>

that the needs arising from autism are distinct, and are currently not being met, that a stand-alone CPG on Autism is required. Where opportunities exist to undertake joint work with other relevant CPG's, this option will be explored.

4. It is proposed that the CPG on Autism will take place quarterly and each session will be 1.5 to 2 hours long. In this time, it is proposed that the group will discuss one to two topics at each CPG with more time being given to broader subjects. In the first 12 months, it is proposed that the group will discuss the following subjects: Mental Health; Education; Diagnosis; and Service Provision.

MSP MEMBERS OF THE GROUP

Please provide names and party designation of all MSP members of the Group.

- Annie Wells MSP
- Alexander Burnett MSP
- Graeme Dey MSP
- Gillian Martin MSP
- Fulton MacGregor MSP
- Alex Cole-Hamilton MSP

NON-MSP MEMBERS OF THE GROUP

For organisational members please provide only the name of the organisation, it is not necessary to provide the name(s) of individuals who may represent the organisation at meetings of the Group.

Individuals

Organisations

- The National Autistic Society Scotland
- Scottish Autism
- Autism Network Scotland
- Association for Real Change
- SWAN
- Scottish Autism
- The Richmond Fellowship Scotland
- Autism Initiatives
- Autism Rights Group Highland
- Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service
- AMASE (Autistic Mutual Aid Society Edinburgh)
- Grampian Opportunities
- Speak Out Advocacy Project
- Artlink Edinburgh and Lothians
- Lothian Autistic Society
- Caern Project Learning Disabilities & Autism Services (Barnardo's)
- Highland Cycle Ability Centre
- Perth Autism Support

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Into Work • TCV Scotland • The Shirlie Project • Tailor Ed Foundation • Disability Shetland • Central Advocacy Partners • Independence
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GROUP OFFICE BEARERS

Please provide names for all office bearers. The minimum requirement is that two of the office bearers are MSPs and one of these is Convener – beyond this it is a matter for the Group to decide upon the office bearers it wishes to have. It is permissible to have more than one individual elected to each office, for example, co-conveners or multiple deputy conveners.

Co-Convener	Annie Wells MSP
Deputy-Convener	Graeme Dey MSP
Secretary	Jointly held by The National Autistic Society Scotland & Scottish Autism
Treasurer	N/A

FINANCIAL BENEFITS OR OTHER BENEFITS

Please provide details of any financial or material benefit(s) the Group anticipates receiving from a single source in a calendar year which has a value, either singly or cumulatively, of more than £500. This includes donations, gifts, hospitality or visits and material assistance such as secretariat support.

Please see below the estimated costs of the joint secretariat for year 1:

The National Autistic Society Scotland - £2850
 Scottish Autism – £610

SUBSCRIPTION CHARGED BY THE GROUP

Please provide details of the amount to be charged and the purpose for which the subscription is intended to be used.

n/a

CONVENER CONTACT DETAILS

Name	Annie Wells MSP
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Parliamentary address	Office M2.17
Telephone number	01313485991

STATEMENT ON COMPLIANCE WITH THE CODE OF CONDUCT

I declare that the Cross-Party Group on <SUBJECT> is constituted and will comply with the terms of Section 6 of the Code of Conduct for Members of the Scottish Parliament.

Signed	Annie Wells
Date	13/12/2017