



All Party Parliamentary Group on Vascular Disease

To raise awareness of vascular disease and to encourage actions to promote a greater priority for its prevention and treatment; to encourage research into the causes of the vascular disease; to advance excellence and innovation in vascular health; and to inform parliamentarians of the work of medical professionals and those who provide support services for patients and their relatives.

Minutes of the inaugural Annual General Meeting held at 4pm on 5th December 2011 in Committee Room 9, Palace of Westminster

PRESENT

MEMBERS – Neil Carmichael MP (Chair), Baron Kakkar of Loxbeare, Peter Bottomley MP

OTHERS – Professor Matt Thompson, Dr Jonothan Earnshaw, John Morley, Jon Boyle, Paul Hayes, Jeanette Robey (CEO Vascular Society), John Brennan, Jonathan Hornsby, Violaine Carlier, Leena Sevak (NHS Diabetes), Marina Munialo, Spencer Jones, Paul Hughes, Mark Cook, Ayan Absia, Rache Bell, Nicky Prime, Elika Kashef, Obi Agu, Ramen Uberoi, Donna Wright, Anne-Marie Gannon

SECRETARIAT – Paul Bristow, Andrew Brown

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – Mike Hancock MP, Charles Kennedy MP, David Ward MP, Lord Riberio, Baroness Gardner of Parkes, Chi Onwurah MP, Nigel Dodds MP, Oliver Colvile MP

1. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The election of the following officers took place:

Chair: Neil Carmichael MP

Vice Chairs: Chi Onwurah MP, Peter Bottomley MP

2. GROUP PURPOSE

The following statement of the Group's purpose was agreed:

To raise awareness of vascular disease and to encourage actions to promote a greater priority for its prevention and treatment; to encourage research into the causes of the vascular disease; to advance excellence and innovation in vascular health; and to inform parliamentarians of the work of medical professionals and those who provide support services for patients and their relatives.

3. MEMBERSHIP

It was reported there are over 30 parliamentarians interested and willing to join the APPG and support their activities.

4. REGISTRY OF ENTRY

It was agreed that the registry of entry be signed by Neil Carmichael MP and be returned forthwith to the Assistant Registrar at the Office of the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards.

5. WORK PROGRAMME 2012 – Q&A

Neil Carmichael MP and Paul Bristow answered a number of questions from the visitors attending the meeting about the purposes of All Party Parliamentary Groups (APPGs) and potential activities of the APPG on Vascular Disease. The following points were made:

- While APPGs have no formal place in the legislature, they are an effective way of bringing together parliamentarians and interested stakeholders. They can raise the profile and awareness of an interest and dialogue with decision makers or influencers can be started
- Meetings can be a forum where parliamentarians can be educated on issues and hear from experts – such as physicians
- APPGs can also compliment or criticise government policy and thinking. They can be used to challenge policies and scrutinise decisions
- Effective groups may also develop a media profile and leading officers can act as spokesman for a cause or interest.

There was also a discussion on a work programme for the APPG and topics which might be considered – the following suggestions were made:

- Increasing awareness of vascular disease in general – two particular forms are abdominal aortic aneurysms and peripheral arterial disease
 - Create a profile
 - Parliamentary Reception – potential to partner with a patient group
- Geographical disparities in patient outcomes
 - Patient access to the latest technologies and therapies
 - Varying demographics facing vascular surgeons
 - The National Outcomes Framework and how that might improve outcomes for patients with vascular disease
 - Access to technology and training
- New risk factors for the AAA screening programme and for vascular disease in general – such as diabetes, obesity and smoking – DH preparation for this
- Potential for collaboration with other APPGs

It was agreed that these ideas would form the basis of a work programme for the group. A draft 2012 programme would be completed and sent to attendees and other stakeholders for feedback.

6. CONTRIBUTION FROM PROFESSOR MATT THOMPSON

Professor Thompson made the following remarks on challenges to improve patient outcomes:

Lack of awareness of Vascular Disease – while the disease has a higher patient profile than diseases such as Prostrate Cancer awareness among the public is still low. A greater profile for the disease will keep it fresh in the minds of decision makers and influencers.

Geographical Variation in Outcomes – the specialisation of vascular services at regional centres is the best way to develop economies of scale and ensure premium patient outcomes. However, the closure of vascular services at local hospitals, and their relocation and consolidation at tertiary centres, is likely to be unpopular.

Varying Demographics for Vascular Disease – with increases in the incidences of diabetes and obesity the need for specialist vascular services is likely to only increase.

Patient Access to Technology – there exists disparity in access to certain therapies and technologies – rapid and equitable access remains a significant issue as does guidance issued by NICE.

7. UPDATE ON THE NHS AAA SCREENING PROGRAMME

Mr Jonothan Earnshaw gave the group an update on the NHS AAA Screening Programme and answered questions:

- 40% of England is now covered by the programme – it is hoped that by the end of April over 80% of England will be covered
- The programme is expected to be fully rolled out by 2013
- So far 100,000 men have been screened – with 1,000 AAA's identified and 130 operated on
- A gradual roll out of the programme was the most practical way of achieving effective full implementation – there was a reluctance to publicise the programme until full roll out
- Uptake has been approximately 70% - over 80% in rural areas and 60% in urban areas.

Peter Bottomley MP queried the age of AAA Screening, asking why screening is set at 65 and not 60. To which Mr Earnshaw explained that age for screening is being reviewed with the potential to extend to 70 in order to identify more AAA's.

Peter Bottomley also recommended the group put Anne Stevenson forward for a National honor for her involvement in setting up the screening programme.

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was agreed a further meeting of the APPG will be called in the first quarter of 2012 possibly complimented by a parliamentary reception.

There being no further business the meeting then terminated.

Feedback on the minutes – please send to Andrew Brown at andrew@pbpoliticalconsulting.com