The Cross Party Group for Heart Disease and Stroke (hereafter The CPG) was established in 2008. The group has a membership of around 100 individuals (representing nearly 40 organisations), meets on average quarterly and each meeting can be attended by up to sixty guests. Details of its membership and office bearers are provided in Appendix A.

Q1. What do you understand the role of CPGs in the Scottish Parliament to be?

The CPG’s stated purpose is:

To provide a forum for discussion on prevention, care and treatment of heart disease and stroke, between Members of the Scottish Parliament, people living with these conditions, the charities working in the field, and the health professionals involved.

We feel that, in particular, the prominent role that patients and carers have in discussions and agenda items has been the key element in what we see as the CPG’s success.

Q2. What benefits does the existence of CPGs bring to non-MSPs in terms of engagement with MSPs and the work of the Scottish Parliament?

Over this period we believe the group has provided a practical focus for policy in heart disease and stroke in Scotland in the following ways:

1. Stimulated parliamentary questions, motions, and debates on key issues
2. Raised awareness of key and up and coming issues related to the prevention and treatment of heart disease and stroke
3. Featured presentations and question and answer sessions by key decision makers including the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Wellbeing, senior civil servants and the National Clinical Leads for Heart Disease and for Stroke
4. Influenced priorities of the National Advisory Committee for Heart Disease (The CPG and issues arising from it is now a standing item on its agenda)
5. One of the key factors in what we see as the contributing to the success of the group has been the key role that parents and carers have in proposing topics, presenting and leading debates. For example, the Cabinet Secretary indicated at her last appearance at the CPG that a contribution from a member of the group who was a carer for someone with heart failure had directly influenced the content of the Government’s Heart Disease and Stroke Action Plan.

Q.16 Do you have any other comments on the operation of the CPG system in the Scottish Parliament?

Additional issues that the Committee may wish to consider

The remainder of this document is intended to highlight some practical and logistical issues that have been raised by group members over this period.

- Committee room layout- for example, screen sizes are relatively small, and can be difficult to discern text for people with limited vision. This has been raised with us by group members, some of whom are elderly and/or suffer from visual impairment. Additionally, the shape of the committee tables mean that presenters are not always directly facing their audience, which can be a challenge for people who have to rely on lip-reading.

- Lack of dedicated support/facilities staff- this means that we have to rely on the goodwill of the staff of individual MSPs to assist in work of the group.

- Provision of Official Report services- to allow for accurate transcription of discussions. Currently the secretariat has to transcribe these, and this inhibits discussion and means the minutes can be less accurate than would otherwise be.

- Consider issuing CPG secretariat with time limited parliamentary passes- currently a passholder has to escort all guests from the public entrance to the Committee rooms. This is challenging for the secretariat, who often have to distribute agendas and load presentations etc. in a very short timeframe.

Despite these minor logistical issues, we believe that the CPG has operated very successfully since its inception and would reiterate our gratitude to the Parliament’s staff, including visitor services and security, as well as all of the CPG’s members, for their contribution to this.
Appendix A

Group Officers

- Convener: Helen Eadie MSP
- Deputy Convener: Dave Thompson MSP
- Deputy Convener: Dennis Robertson MSP

MSP Group Members

- Alison McInnes
- Fiona McLeod
- Jackie Baillie
- Malcolm Chisholm
- Mary Scanlon
- Maureen Watt
- Nanette Milne
- Richard Simpson
- Ruth Davidson

Secretariat

- Ben McKendrick (British Heart Foundation Scotland)
- Louise Peardon (Chest Heart & Stroke Scotland)

Non MSP Individual members

- Susan Kennedy
- Morag Thow
- Carol Walford

Organisations

- Angus Cardiac Group
- Astra Zeneca
- Boehringer Ingleheim
- British Heart Foundation Scotland
- British Medical Association (BMA)
- British Psychological Society (BPS)
- Cardiac Rehabilitation Interest Group Scotland (CRIGS)
- Cardiac Risk in the Young (CRY)
- Cardiovascular Interest Group (ABPI Scotland)
- Chartered Society of Physiotherapy (CSP)
- Chest Heart & Stroke Scotland (CHSS)
- College of Occupational Therapists (COT)
- Division of Health Psychology Scotland
- Familial Arrhythmia Network Scotland (FANS)
- Grampian Cardiac Rehabilitation Association (GCRA)
• Health Inequalities Alliance
• Healthy Valleys
• Heartsmart Lochaber
• Inverclyde Globetrotters
• Inverclyde Stroke Matters Group
• Irvine Stroke Group
• Jordanhill Cardiac Group
• Kirkcaldy Heart Support Group
• Living Streets
• Long Term Conditions Alliance Scotland (LTCAS)
• Medtronic
• Morhamburn
• National Advisory Committee for Heart Disease
• National Advisory Committee for Stroke
• Pfizer
• Roche Diagnostics
• Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists
• Sanofi Aventis
• Scottish HART
• Scottish Heart Failure Nurse Forum (SHFNF)
• Scottish Stroke Allied Health Professional Forum (SSAHPF)
• Scottish Stroke Nurse Forum (SSNF)
• The Stroke Association
• Nairn Cardiactives