

# Cross-Party Group on Chronic Pain

24 November 2025, 1.30pm

Minute

Present

MSPs

Miles Briggs MSP  
Jackson Carlaw MSP  
Clare Adamson MSP

Invited guests

Professor Chen from the Institute of Biomedical Sciences in Taipei, Taiwan  
Dr Robert Banks, from Durham University  
Dr Guy Bewick of Aberdeen University, senior lecturer on neuroscience

Non-MSP Group Members

Alan McCrone, Alex Stobart, George Welsh, Anne Marie Diamond, Dr Robert Banks, Dr Gus Bewick, Brian Whitters, Caroline Gould, Chih-Cheng Chen, Claire Daisley, Kirstin Laing, Kirsteen Luke, Lisa Megginson, David Caulfield, DesQuinn, Dorothy-Grace Elder, Margaret Dunham, Dr Emma France, Evelyn McKechnie, Niall Fancy, Hazel Borland, Hazy Young, Ian Semmons, Jill Falconer, John Mack, Long Covid charity, Amber Welsh, Mary Craig, Andrene Maxwell, Mo Ameen, Nicola Kemp, Dr Patrick Trust, Pete McCarron, Philip Chan, Rob McDowall, Sharon Turnbull, Sonia Cottom, Steve Kent, Stuart High

Apologies

Kirsteen Campbell

Agenda item 1

Miles Briggs MSP, chairing, thanked members for their usual good turn out although at an unusual time to get our link with Taiwan. He thanked scientists from Taiwan, Aberdeen and Durham for attending to explain their exciting new discoveries on the triggers for chronic pain in a patient.

Agenda item 2

Dr Robert Banks described how a mixture of generations of Far East knowledge and hi tech approaches to chronic pain had shown new insight into how pain is triggered. This is through discoveries by him at Aberdeen and links with Durham University's world authority on muscle movement detectors Dr Robert Banks and Professor Chen in Taiwan, whose researches are into the control of the sensation of pain. Now, they're working on how to curb triggers which will take more time to produce relief eventually. He invited anyone interested in illustrations and more information to contact him

## Agenda item 3 AGM

Minutes of last meeting approved.

Miles Briggs and Fergus Ewing have kindly agreed to be nominated as conveners to continue until Parliament ends prior to the May election - approved.

This group has kept going through volunteers for SIX Parliaments. It is totally independent and does not take funding from the Scottish Government or parties.

Dorothy-Grace Elder agreed to continue as voluntary secretary to end of this session after 25 years with the group.

## Agenda item 4 Medical Royal Colleges Dismiss Long Term Conditions Proposals Which Affect Around Two Million In Scotland

The Government's Long Term Conditions document met with the complaint letter below to public health minister Jenni Minto from the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh and the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow and seven other medical groups, charities and 35 patients. They said there is "lack of strategic thinking" likely to have "significant negative impact". Heart disease was their particular concern but others also dismissed the documents as no use.

These proposals were compiled by most of the same team which produced the seriously flawed chronic pain report costing £40,000. Our group requested ministers they should not be used for long term conditions affecting around two million in Scotland.. Minister Jenni Minto has used these officials a lot.

## Agenda item 5 Secretary's report

Latest on private discussions which may stop lidocaine infusions, injections and radiofrequency ease of chronic pain.

No patients receiving these treatments were on the discussion group when the secretary found out through FOI the subject had been referred by Scottish Government to the Scottish Health Technologies Group for a recommendation.

Many patients find treatments "life changing" some say they saved them from suicide. Some endometriosis patients have been added, recently starting lidocaine infusions and finding life change after decades.

## Agenda item 6

Government withdraws funding from residential pain service- a last hope for some islanders.

Discovery that health boards are now being charged to send some patients to the chronic pain residential service in Glasgow. Scottish Government had committed to paying since 2015 as services were non-existent in islands and rural areas. Patient groups and Parliament were not informed this change happened over a year ago although this CPG's campaign with the Parliament created the service. Boards are cash strapped, they are almost bound to cut sending those in serious pain. One board has already halved numbers. Before this CPG group won this service and the backing of then health secretary Alex Neil, and a unanimous Holyrood vote, patients were sent to England for residential care for weeks. What will happen if the centre is now endangered?

Minister Jenni Minto approved Government cutting funds. She is MSP for Argyll and Bute, an area with no island specialist help.

Ms Minto claims the centre is not set to shut. But some Boards are millions short.