Cross-Party Group on Germany
Wednesday 17 September 2025 at 18:00

In Scottish Parliament and on Microsoft Teams

Present

MSPs

Colin Beattie MSP
Kenneth Gibson MSP
Graham Simpson MSP
Paul Sweeny MSP

Invited guests

Claire Headspeath
David Bowie
Paul Pambakian
Jonny McCartney
Leigh Mair
Harish Lokhun
Mark Cook
Magdalena Klann
George Davidson
John Macgill
Barry McHoull
Louise Glen
Heather Rankine
Esmé Pringle
Dr Ally Hughes
Jamie Allan
Professor Dame Anna Dominiczak
Clemens Hoch
Professor Eckhard Thines
Professor Mike Barrett
Peter Carroll
Dr Louise Mason
Dr Anna Kranzdorf
Professor Chris Turney
Professor Seshadri Vasan
Graeme Rose
Jack Hope
Professor Dr Martha Eckkrammer
David Freichel
Professor Dr Maik Kschischo
Professor Deborah Williamson
Steve Brown
Sophie Sellers
Sarah Beddoes
Matthew Bell
Michael Sturrock
Stephen Peacock
Sarah Hunt
Catriona Kennedy

Bethan Owen
Kathleen Nutt
Robert Crawford
Professor Felicitas Kexel
Professor Thomas Kindler
Barbara Blaney
Professor Frauke Zeller
Dr Till Bachmann
Stuart Forbes
Professor Brad MacKay
Dr Alan Stewart
Professor Frank Gunn-Moore
Professor Zahra Rattray
Jeremy Grant

Non-MSP Group Members

Maximillian Munch
Oliver St John
Christiane Hullmann
Judith Blum
Nele Heinsohn
Yannick Bärsch
Annette Götzkes
Arne Muus
Catherine Reeves
Peter Muller-McDougall
Hanna Dede
Professor Sigrid Rieuwets
Gray Allan

Apologies

Gillian Renwick
Michelle Thomson
Sarah Beddoes

Welcome

CB welcomed the group to a joint meeting between the Germany and Life Sciences Cross-Party Groups.

Item 1 – Approval of Previous Minutes and New Members

CB asked if there were any objections to the minutes of the regular meeting on March 25th. No objections were made. The previous minutes were approved.

Item 2 – Approval of New Members

No objections and new members were approved.

Item 3 - Guest Speaker: Clemens Hoch, Minister of Science and Health of Rhineland-Palatinate

Minister Clemens Hoch discussed the partnership between Scottish universities and Rhieland-Pfalz, a hub for biotech and life sciences, enabling students and universities to contribute to global challenges.

Item 4 – Guest Speaker: Professor Dame Anna Dominiczak, Chief Scientist

Professor Dame Anna Dominiczak provided an overview of Scotland's health research and innovation pathway, highlighting the CATALYST programme, which is establishing commercial research delivery centres across Scotland. She emphasised the importance of the "triple helix" model – collaboration between NHS, industry and academia – in driving innovation from research through to adoption at scale.

Professor Dominiczak shared successful examples, including:

- **GRACE (Grampian Radiology Assisted Chest X-ray Evaluation):** collaboration between NHS Grampian Innovation Hub and Annalise.ai, reducing recalls and enabling 95% of patients to be seen 30 days sooner, with a 12% increase in detection of treatable cancers.
- **Digital Dermatology (ANIA programme):** a national initiative allowing GPs to attach images to dermatology referrals via mobile devices, already rolled out across all practices, improving referral quality and speeding up access to treatment.
- **Genetic Testing initiatives:** work underway to introduce pharmacogenetic testing for stroke patients and newborn babies, supporting precision medicine and preventing adverse outcomes.

Professor Dame Anna concluded with a focus on Scotland's ambition to lead in precision public health, shifting from late hospital interventions to prevention, early diagnosis and personalised care, underpinned by strong research and innovation partnerships.

Item 5 - Joint Academic Panel – International Collaboration in Biotechnology and Research

- Professor Mike Barrett (SULSA)
- Professor Sigrid Rieuwerts (JGU Scotland Hub)
- Professor Eckhard Thines (Rhineland-Palatinate)

Professor Mike Barrett highlighted SULSA's work as establishing a strategic partnership of 13 higher education institutes in Scotland and their work in acting as a gateway into the life sciences community in Scotland.

Professor Dr Digrid Rieuwerts discussed the JGU Scotland Hub who work with SULSA and Rhineland to promote collaboration. They also host events, workshops and delegation visits with more planned for the future.

Professor Eckhard Thines discussed the important contribution biotechnology has made in developing solutions for societal challenges and joined calls for collaboration to address these challenges.

AOB

None