

Cross-Party Group on Lung Health

1.00-2.30pm, 6 March 2026

Present

MSPs

Emma Harper MSP (Co-Convenor)
Alexander Stewart MSP (Co-Convenor)

Guests

Dr Olivia Swann
Anwar Arif
Cat Thomson
Jamie Cochrane
Martin Cardno

Non-MSP Group Members

Gareth Brown (Secretariat)
Amanda Walker
Damian Crombie
David Heffernan
Dianne Foster
Esme Allen
George Davidson
Joseph Carter
Karen Marshall
Laura Smart
Leigh Mair
Linda McLeod
Martin Sheppard
Mike Parker
Vivienne Gaynor
Willie McGhee

Apologies

Emily Kennedy
Katie Johnson
Liz Mason
Mark Prior

Welcome and Introductions

- Alexander Stewart (AS) MSP opened the final meeting of the parliamentary session, welcoming participants and expressing appreciation to all individuals and organisations who have supported the Cross-Party Group over the past five years.
- AS also acknowledged the contributions of co-convener Emma Harper MSP, who joined later due to another commitment.

Minutes of Previous Meeting

- The minutes of the meeting held on 27 February 2026 were approved without amendment.
- Proposed: Alexander Stewart MSP Seconded: Joseph Carter

Update on Respiratory Support by Chest Heart and Stroke Scotland

- AS welcomed Cat Thomson (CT) of Chest Heart and Stroke Scotland.
- CT provided an extensive update on CHSS' respiratory services, outlining the organisation's flexible and person-centred model supporting individuals with respiratory conditions from early symptoms through to long-term recovery.
- CT highlighted the recently launched six-week Chronic Disease Self-Management Programme, originally developed at Stanford University, which has demonstrated strong evidence in reducing pain, fatigue, distress, and social isolation while improving energy and physical activity.
- CT described successful partnership work, particularly with the Midlothian Community Respiratory Team, where all CRT patients are now automatically referred to CHSS for additional support via their advice line.
- CT outlined the development of multilingual health information (10 languages) and professional learning resources co-created with Scottish Government and the University of Edinburgh.
- An update was also provided on policy work led by CHSS' Amy Callaghan, particularly on short-life working groups established to redesign Scotland's pulmonary rehabilitation pathway.
- CT introduced newly developed respiratory information packs for COPD and bronchiectasis, co-designed with lived-experience contributors. She also announced a national expansion of 'The Chain Gang'—community singing groups supporting people with long-term breathlessness—with 18 new groups being established across three years.

The Homes, Heat and Healthy Kids study: The role of cold homes in preschool respiratory infections

- AS welcomed Dr Olivia Swann (OS) from the University of Edinburgh to discuss the Homes, Heat and Healthy Kids study.

- OS presented findings from the Homes, Heat & Healthy Kids study, highlighting Scotland’s ageing and energy-inefficient housing stock and its impact on respiratory infections in young children.
- OS emphasised that cold, damp, and poorly ventilated homes significantly increase viral survival and respiratory infection risk, doubling infection rates among affected children.
- OS detailed the innovative data linkage methodology enabling the study to connect anonymised child NHS records with property-level information, energy usage, air pollution data, and local climate conditions.
- The study covers approximately four million child-years across 250,000 homes, making it one of the largest analyses of its kind in Scotland.
- OS introduced the Parent Advisory Group, whose members have shaped research design and created powerful digital storytelling resources. One of these videos—made by parent contributor Anwar Arif—was shown to the group.
- The video by Anwar can be found here - [cold homes from pain to power by anwar \(1080p\)\(1\).mp4](#)

National Severe Asthma Pathway

- Emma Harper convened the rest of the meeting and introduced Martin Cardno (MC) and Jamie Cochrane (JC) from the Centre of Sustainable Delivery (CfSD)
- MC and JC outlined the newly finalised National Severe Asthma Pathway, a One for Scotland approach developed through the Respiratory Specialty Delivery Group to reduce variation and improve access to biologic treatments across all health boards.
- They described extensive clinical and patient involvement, referencing a nationwide Public and Patient Involvement workshop held to ensure lived-experience insights shaped the pathway.
- NHS Highland successfully piloted the pathway, demonstrating improved vetting processes, reduced patient contact points, and positive feedback from primary care training sessions.
- Implementation plans include national webinars, integration with Right Decisions Service, and data capture to monitor post-triage referral volumes and consistency of adoption across boards.

Round-up of CPG on Lung Health

- Secretariat Gareth Brown (GB) summarised achievements during the parliamentary session, including extensive work on COPD, IPF, asthma, air pollution, smoking, vaping, and lived-experience engagement.
- GB formally thanked Conveners Emma Harper MSP and Alexander Stewart MSP for their leadership, as well as Deputy Convener Mark Ruskell MSP.

AOCB

- Alison Stewart of Action for Pulmonary Fibrosis provided a brief update on the State of the Nation Report on pulmonary fibrosis. Survey findings will be published on 11 March 2026.

- GB and EH advised that due to the upcoming Scottish Parliament election, Cross-Party Groups will pause until late autumn 2026, but updates can continue to be circulated via mailing lists.
- EH closed the meeting thanking speakers, participants, and Secretariat for their contributions and collaboration over the parliamentary session.

End of Meeting