

Cross-Party Group Annual Return

Name of Cross-Party Group:

Medicinal Cannabis

Cross-Party Group on

The prescribing and availability of medicinal cannabis in Scotland

Date Group Established

9th September 2021

Date of Most Recent Annual General Meeting (AGM)

30th September 2022

Date Annual Return Submitted

3rd October 2022

Date of Preceding AGM

N/A

Group Meetings and Activities

15th September 2021

Attendance: 2 MSPs, 8 Non-MSPs

- Pauline McNeill MSP
- Oliver Mundell MSP

Theme: Initial meeting of the CPG on Medicinal Cannabis

- Discussion: Discussion of the purpose of the group and proposed topics for discussion.
- Consensus reached that broadly this CPG seeks to better understand the benefits of Medicinal Cannabis and recognise case studies indicating its positive impact on patients suffering from a variety of conditions. It also seeks to support patient rights to get access to medicine.
- Convenors and Office Bearers are chosen
 - Convenors – Pauline McNeill MSP & Rona Mackay MSP
 - Deputy Convenor – Oliver Mundell MSP
 - Secretary – Anna Ross

10th November 2021

Attendance: 4 MSPs, 18 Non-MSPs present:

- Pauline McNeill MSP
- Natalie Don MSP
- Oliver Mundell MSP
- Rona Mackay MSP

Theme: Research trials and funding for prescription. This session had 2 expert speakers on the topic of trials and funding.

Discussions:

- Barriers to prescribing (lack on education within medical community, a reluctance to go against institutional guidance, a lack of evidence)
- issues with supply chains, and wider discussion on access via the private sector.

A letter was drafted and sent to the Scottish Government seeking a 1 off payment for the children currently relying on private prescriptions. This was subsequently refused.

2nd February 2022

Attendance: 1 MPs and 5 MSPs present, 28 Non-MSPs Present

- Pauline McNeill (MSP)
- Beatrice Wishart (MSP)
- Oliver Mundell (MSP)
- Rona Mackay (MSP)
- Collette Stevenson (MSP)
- Ronnie Cowan (MP)

Theme: Education around cannabis-based medicines. This session had 3 speakers who spoke to the difficulty in educating the medical profession on cannabis-based medicine:

- Dr Leon Barron – Founder of the Primary Care Cannabis Network, and a member of the Medical Cannabis Clinicians Society
- Dr Sunil Arora - Medical Director of My Access Clinics
- Kayleigh Ross and David Johnston – PLEA

Discussions:

- Cannabis is the oldest medicine known to man, and was legal to prescribe until 1971. Therefore, concerns around safety should not be such a huge concern.
- Understanding that stigma and 50 years of propaganda has resulted in cannabis being viewed as a drug of abuse, and difficult to change this persona.
- Agreement from all speakers that the medical community are at times wilfully ignorant of both the law and the evidence, and that more needs to be done to counter stigma and lack of engagement by the medical profession.

Agreement to submit a motion to parliament to debate the prescribing of cannabis-based medicines (this took place on the 5th May 2022).

Second letter sent to CMO after first letter requesting the CMO attend the meetings.

27th April 2022

Attendance: 1 MP and 5 MSPs, 24 Non-MSPs Present

- Pauline McNeill (MSP)
- Beatrice Wishart (MSP)
- Oliver Mundell (MSP)
- Rona Mackay (MSP)
- Collette Stevenson (MSP)
- Ronnie Cowan (MP)

Theme: Evidence in cannabis-based medicine: This session had 3 speakers who are experts in the field of evidence and cannabis-based medicine:

- Professor Roger Pertwee – The University of Aberdeen
- Rayyan Zahar – Imperial College London & Drug Science

- Dr Lucy Troup – The University of the West of Scotland and Sapphire Medical Clinic

Discussion:

- There is significant evidence underpinning the use of CBMs for certain illnesses and ailments, and less robust evidence for other conditions.
- The hierarchy of evidence needs to be re-evaluated in light of the fact that cannabis is not a single compound, and therefore cannot be subjected to the same controlled testing as single molecule substances
- Needs to be wider acceptance of a range of evidence, and prescribing based on proof of concepts and observational trials.
- Unlikely to see MHRA cannabis products because no market in the UK so companies not interested in doing trials, except the UK company G.W. Pharma (now Jazz Pharma).

MSP Members of The Group

- Pauline McNeill - Labour
- Paul Sweeney - Labour
- Natalie Don - SNP
- Oliver Mundell – Conservative
- Rona Mackay - SNP
- Collette Stevenson - SNP
- Monica Lennon – Labour
- Miles Briggs – Conservative
- Beatrice Wishart – Liberal Democrat
- Mercedes Villalba - Labour

Non-MSP Members of The Group

- Rosie Anfield – GMO & Crops Policy Officer, ScotGov (attending as an observer)
- Scott Aitken – Collette Stevenson’s researcher
- Carol Dew – Office of Emma Harper, but attending in personal capacity

- Ben Lawrie – Spokesperson for the Drugs Emergency, Scottish Lib Dems
- Monique McAdams – Councillor, South Lanarkshire Council
- Dionne Mackison - Head of Medicines Policy, Scottish Government
- Gemma McCormack – Senior Policy Manager, Medicines Division
- Ronnie Cowan MP

Individuals

- Rob Forbes
- Linda Hendry
- Ruby Deevoy
- Karin Goodwin
- Sarah Sinclair
- Tyler Cary
- Andrew Westall
- Marc Landers
- Lisa Quarrel
- Jim Davidson
- Andrew Lundy
- Linda MacPhee
- Liam Lewis
- Edward Douglas
- Laura Brennan-Whitefield

Organisations

MS Society

NLRP12 and Autoinflammatory UK

Patient Led Engagement and Advocacy (PLEA)

University of Edinburgh

University of the West of Scotland

Recovering Justice

Sapphire Clinics

	Scottish Hemp Association LeafCann Rokshaw Laboratories CanCard Homeless Network
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Group Office Bearers

Please provide names for all office bearers. The minimum requirement is that two of the office bearers are MSPs and one of these is Convener – beyond this it is a matter for the Group to decide upon the office bearers it wishes to have. It is permissible to have more than one individual elected to each office, for example, co-conveners or multiple deputy conveners.

Convener (s)	Pauline McNeill MSP & Rona Mackay MSP
Deputy Convener	Oliver Mundell MSP
Secretary	Anna Ross
Treasurer	Not needed

If the Group is not disclosing any financial information please tick the box to confirm that the Group has considered the support received, but concluded it totalled under the threshold for disclosure (£500).

Subscription Charged by the Group

No subscription charged

Convener Contact Details

Name	Pauline McNeill MSP and Rona Mackay MSP
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