Cross-Party Group Registration Form

Please read Section 6 of the Code of Conduct before completing this form.

Name of Cross-Party Group
Cross-Party Group on Deafness
Purpose of The Group and Proposed Discussion Topics 1. **Please state the purpose of the Group.** To act as a channel of communication between the Scottish Parliament, individuals with deafness / hearing loss / deafblindness and organisations working or supporting individuals with deafness / hearing loss / deafblindness. 2. **Please also provide a brief explanation of the purpose of the Group and why the purpose is in the public interest.** 1 in 3 people in Scotland are deaf or deafblind; most of us will experience deafness in our lives. Incidence rates are expected to rise in Scotland, with an aging population. Yet deaf and deafblind people face systematic inequality and barriers to accessing education, employment, health and social care (among other areas). The CPG on Deafness plays a vital role in providing public scrutiny and awareness raising of key issues, and in supporting collaborative work among organisations working or supporting individuals with deafness / hearing loss / deafblindness. Examples of recent and effective collective action from the CPG on Deafness includes: • Continuation of Contact Scotland BSL service (after official confirmation of end of service) (December 2024) • Education (Scotland) Act 2025 – amendments on BSL (June 2025) • Campaign for and Scottish Parliament acceptance of definition of Deafblindness for Scotland (27th June 2025). • Support for the Parliamentary scrutiny of delivery of BSL plans, after EHRCJ Committee inquiry into impact of the BSL (Scotland) Act 2015 (2025). • Evidence review carried out by Healthcare Improvement Scotland into dementia assessments and sensory care (with a

Please email this form and all other CPG enquiries to crosspartygroup@parliament.scot.

view to influencing SIGN 168 Dementia guidelines when they are reviewed in Nov 2026)

Examples of our recent publications in the last Parliamentary term include:

- Members of group contributed to the *Independent Review of Audiology Services in Scotland* (published 25 August 2023).
- Co-produced a definition of Deafblindness for Scotland, published by Deafblind Scotland on behalf of the Cross-party Group on Deafness. Definition formally accepted in June 2025.
- The ALLIANCE, *Dementia Assessments for People with Deafness, Deafblindness or Visual Impairment: A report for the Scottish Parliament's Cross-party Group on Deafness* (April 2025).
- NDCS, *How do we reverse the fall in the number of Qualified Teachers of Deaf Children and Young People in Scotland? Report for the Cross-party Group on Deafness in the Scottish Parliament* (revised May 2025).
- The ALLIANCE, *Ministerial Roundtable on audiology and Deafblindness: a report for the Scottish Parliament's Cross-party group on Deafness* (April 2026)

Members of the CPG on Deafness provided the following statements of support for its re-registration:

"Deaf Links strongly supports the reforming of the Cross-party Group on Deafness. […] As an active member, we find the Group invaluable in ensuring Deaf and sensory impaired people's experiences are represented at a national level. It provides a vital forum for meaningful discussion, collaboration with other organisations, and collective action to influence policy and practice. Membership keeps us informed about developments across the sector, strengthens our partnerships, and enables us to contribute directly to shaping positive change for Deaf communities across Scotland." Alana Harper, CEO of Deaf Links

"Over the past three years when with the support of partners in the sector, and importantly the Cross-party Group on Deafness, we have been able to achieve something we did not think was possible. That is formal recognition in Scotland that Deafblindness is a distinct

disability. […] The work continues this year to develop our own Scottish guidance, showing what a care and support pathway should look like for Deafblind children and adults." Isabella Goldie, Chief Executive of Deafblind Scotland

"One particularly significant example [of the value of the CPG on Deafness] was when the Scottish Government was planning to discontinue the Contact Scotland BSL service. For Deaf BSL users across Scotland, this decision would have been catastrophic. […] The CPGD took an active role by raising concerns directly with the Scottish Government and writing multiple letters highlighting the real-world impact this decision would have on Deaf BSL users. This advocacy helped ensure that Deaf voices were heard at the highest levels. As a result, the Scottish Government reversed its decision and Contact Scotland BSL was preserved. […] The group provides an essential forum for Deaf issues to be raised, understood, and acted upon, and its continuation is crucial." Matthew King, General Manager, Sorenson

3. **Please also provide details of any overlaps with the purpose of existing Cross-Party Groups and an explanation of why, regardless of any such overlap, the Group should be established.**

CPGs currently approved include:

Armed Forces and Veterans

Beer and Pubs

Housing

India

Science and Technology

Ukraine

There is no significant overlap between the work of the CPG on Deafness and current CPGs – although there is a higher rate of Deafness among members of the armed forces and veterans than in the wider population, and accessible housing is of interest to many disabled people (including people who are deaf/deafblind). Historically, we have worked effectively with other CPGs on key issues of mutual

interest (on a fixed term basis), while retaining a clear and distinct purpose.

4. **Please also provide an indication of the topics which the Group anticipates discussing in the forthcoming 12 months.**

Our topics are led by our membership on a rolling basis, but we expect to discuss the following topics within the next 12 months (among others):

- Dementia and sensory care - support for people who have dementia and are deaf/deafblind, and their families (including review of SIGN 168 dementia guideline).
- Workforce planning to support deafblind people (focusing on guide-communicators).
- Qualifications and guidance for qualified teachers of children and young people who are deaf or deafblind (QToDs).
- Legal Aid reform and access to justice (including BSL interpreters in first assessment meetings for Legal Aid).
- Support for BSL users who experience domestic violence.
- Deaf and deafblind children and young people's educational attainment gap (and connections to GIRFEC pathways).
- Progress towards implementing the recommendations of the Independent Review of Audiology Services in Scotland.
- Access to Work reforms (particularly regarding access to BSL-English interpreters and guide-communicators).
- Scrutiny of interim report (Dec 2026) to Scottish Parliament of progress on national BSL plan.

MSP Members of the Group

Please provide names and party designation of all MSP members of the Group. In doing so please note:

- Section 6 of the Code of Conduct requires there be 5 members from the parties represented on the Parliamentary Bureau. The SPPA Committee agreed a waiver for this session that requires 5 MSP members from 5 parties represented on the Bureau;
- MSPs can be on no more than 10 CPGs of which fulfil no more than 3 office-bearer positions;

Please email this form and all other CPG enquiries to crosspartygroup@parliament.scot.

Cross-Party Group Registration Form

• If the group fails to comply with MSP membership requirements, the Convener must ensure this is resolved within 90 days.	
MSP Colin Beattie Karen Adam David Smith Mark Griffin Stephen Kerr Cara McKee	**Party** SNP SNP Reform Labour Conservative Greens
Non-MSP Members of the Group For organisational members please provide only the name of the organisation, it is not necessary to provide the name(s) of individuals who may represent the organisation at meetings of the Group.	
Individuals	Janis McDonald Donald Richards Danny Sweeney John Whitfield Bill Pagan
Organisations	Association of Teachers of Lipreading to Adults Scotland (ATLA Scotland) British Academy of Audiology (BAA) British Association of Teachers of the Deaf (BATOD) British Deaf Association Scotland (BDA Scotland) Deaf Action Deaf Links

Please email this form and all other CPG enquiries to crosspartygroup@parliament.scot.

Cross-Party Group Registration Form

	Deafblind Scotland (DBS) Deaf Equality and Accessibility Forum South Lanarkshire (DEAF South Lanarkshire) Disability Equality Scotland (DES) Dumfries and Galloway Hard of Hearing Group Educational Institute for Scotland (EIS) Edinburgh Napier University Forth Valley Sensory Centre (FVSC) Hayfield Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland (the ALLIANCE) Health in Mind Highland Blindcraft Sensory Services Hearing Link/Hearing Dogs for the Deaf Heriot Watt University Paediatric Audiology Services, NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde LEAD Scotland Lothian Children's Deaf Club Lanarkshire Deaf Hub National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS) North East Sensory Services (NESS) Police Scotland Queen Margaret University Respect Me RNID

Please email this form and all other CPG enquiries to crosspartygroup@parliament.scot.

Cross-Party Group Registration Form

	Royal College of Speech and Language Therapy (RCSLT) Scottish Audiology Heads of Service Group Scottish Cochlear Implant Programme (SCIP) Scottish Sensory Centre at the University of Edinburgh Sense Scotland Sensory Impairment Support Group Ayrshire (SISG) Signature Skills Development Scotland Tayside Deaf Forum The Association of Sign Language Interpreters Scotland (ASLI Scotland) The Donaldson Trust The NHS Highland Deaf Services The Scottish Mental Health Services for Deaf People West Scotland Deaf Children's Society (WSDCS) Sign Language Interactions (SLI/Sorensen)
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	

Please email this form and all other CPG enquiries to crosspartygroup@parliament.scot.

more than one individual elected to each office, for example, co-conveners or multiple deputy conveners.

Please note:

- No more than 3 named contacts per CPG - the Convener, the Secretary and one other individual who can provide information to the Standards Clerks about the activities of the Group. The Convener of a Group must confirm the name of this individual.

Convener	Colin Beattie MSP
Deputy Convener	David Smith MSP
Secretary	Dr Hannah Tweed, the Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland (the ALLIANCE)
Named Contact	Dr Hannah Tweed, the Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland (the ALLIANCE)

Financial Benefits or Other Benefits

Please provide details of any financial or material benefit(s) the Group anticipates receiving from a single source in a calendar year which has a value, either singly or cumulatively, of more than £500. This includes donations, gifts, hospitality or visits and material assistance such as secretariat support.

The ALLIANCE provides Secretariat support and covers the costs for the communication support professionals required at approximately £600 per meeting (BSL-English interpreters and Electronic Notetakers), up to a maximum cost of £2,500 a year.

The ALLIANCE typically receives £2500 a year from the Meikle Trust towards the costs of their work supporting the CPGD.

Subscription Charged by the Group

Please provide details of the amount to be charged and the purpose for which the subscription is intended to be used.

Please email this form and all other CPG enquiries to crosspartygroup@parliament.scot.

Cross-Party Group Registration Form

No subscription is charged by the CPG on Deafness.
Statement on Compliance with the Code of Conduct. Must be read and signed by the Convener.

Please read the following:
• The Convener of a Group is primarily responsible for ensuring that the Group complies with the Code of Conduct;
• The Convener is solely responsible for providing Standards Clerks with:
  ○ The names of new MSP members of the CPG and changes to office-bearers;
  ○ Named contact details;
  ○ The registration form;
  ○ All minutes of meetings within 30 days of the meeting being held; **(Substantially verbatim minutes will not be accepted and will be returned)**
  ○ The AGM return (to be submitted within 30 days of the AGM to be held within 11 – 13 months of the initial meeting).
• Groups are required to have five MSPs from five of the parties represented on the Parliamentary Bureau;
• CPGs must hold at least two formal meetings per year (not on the same day), where two MSPs members of the Group are present;
• CPGs must provide Standards Clerks with 10 calendar days' notice of all meetings;
• If a CPG meeting is cancelled or rearranged, notification must be provided to the Standards clerks by no later than the day after the meeting was originally scheduled to take place;
• If a Group fails to comply fully with the Code for more than one year in a row, the Committee will withdraw recognition from that Group.

Please email this form and all other CPG enquiries to crosspartygroup@parliament.scot.

Cross-Party Group Registration Form

I declare that I have read the above and that the Cross-Party Group on Deafness is constituted and will comply with the terms of Section 6 of the Code of Conduct for Members of the Scottish Parliament.	
Signed (Convener)	Colin Beattie
Date	09.10.2026

Please email this form and all other CPG enquiries to crosspartygroup@parliament.scot.