

Joint meeting of the Cross Party Groups on Visual Impairment, Deafness and Heart Disease and Stroke, Annual General Meeting in the Scottish Parliament

Minutes of the joint Cross Party Groups on Visual Impairment, Deafness and Heart Disease and Stroke held on Wednesday 9 March 2016 in Committee Room 3, Scottish Parliament

Present:

Stuart Mcmillan MSP; Dennis Robertson MSP, Neil Bibby MSP; Paul Bartley, Optelec; Ian Brown, RNIB Scotland; Catriona Burness, RNIB Scotland; Amanda Burt; Marion Butchart, Novartis; Pamela Chater; Jamie Cuthbertson, Macular Society; Jane Donnelly, Insight Radio; Catherine Finestone, Falkirk Council; Caitlin Howie, RNIB Scotland; Colin Howie, SCOVl; Jane Horsburgh, Guide Dogs; Rod Murchison; Hussein Patwa; John Paterson, SCOVl; Ken Reid; Ann Robertson, North East Sensory Services; Terry Robinson; Hal Rollason, Optometry Scotland; Allan Russell, Insight Radio; Leila Theiner, Disability Agenda Scotland; Sandra Wilson, RNIB Scotland; William Wykes, Eyecare Scotland.

1. Welcome and Introductions

Dennis Robertson MSP and Stuart McMillan MSP welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made.

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from: James Adams, RNIB Scotland; John Donaldson, Scottish Braille Press; Dominic Everett, RNIB Scotland; Sheena Guz, ADA Scotland; Nigel Harvey, RNIB Scotland; Richard Hellewell, Royal Blind, Scottish War Blinded; Clair Henderson, RNIB Scotland; Mercy Jeyasingham, VISION 2020 UK; Ross Macfadyen, RNIB Scotland; Nanette Milne MSP; Gillian Mitchell, Highland Sensory; Wendy Rankin, Guide Dogs; Dr John Ravenscroft, University of Edinburgh; Fiona Sandford, Visibility; Janelle Scotland, Association of Scottish Talking Newspapers; Richard Simpson MSP; Mhairi Thurston, Abertay University; Mary Travers; Emma Whitelock, Lead Scotland; Sally Paterson, Royal Blind.

3. Heart Disease and Stroke Cross Party Group Annual General Meeting

3.1. Financial Return: This will be approved and submitted by 20 March.

3.2. Nomination and election of Office Bearers: Office Bearers will be elected at the next meeting following the Scottish Parliament elections. Dennis Robertson MSP noted his interest in continuing the role of Secretariat.

4. Cross Party Group on Visual Impairment Annual General Meeting

4.1. Financial Return: This will be approved and submitted by 20 March.

4.2. Nomination and election of Office Bearers: Office Bearers will be elected at the next meeting following the Scottish Parliament elections. Stuart McMillan MSP noted his interest in continuing the role of Secretariat.

Actions

- Office Bearers to be elected at next meeting of the Cross Party Groups on Visual Impairment and Heart Disease and Stroke.

5. Matters Arising

5.1. Cross Party Group on Deafness minutes from 8 December 2015: The minutes from the last meeting will be approved in due course. Jenny Marra MSP intends to stand for election at the next meeting, there have been no further notes of interest. The financial return will be approved and submitted in advance of the deadline.

5.2. Cross Party Group on Visual Impairment minutes from 3 December 2015: The minutes from the last meeting were approved with 2 amendments:

- Sandra Wilson, RNIB Scotland to be added to list of apologies.
- Chair to be amended to Dennis Robertson MSP.

5.3. Heart Disease and Stroke Cross Party Group minutes from 9 December 2015: The minutes from the last meeting were approved.

6. Presentations

5.1. Heart Disease and Stroke risk in the deaf community: Pauline Campbell was invited to give a presentation on the risk of heart disease and stroke in the deaf community. Highlights included the following:

- It is estimated that 80-100 BSL users will have a stroke every year.
- A third of stroke sufferers are left with a long term disability.
- Stroke affects 4 areas: cognition, vision, language and physical abilities.
- Pauline conducted a study with adolescents to find out what they knew about the connection between heart disease and stroke, finding that many were unaware of the risks.
- There is little focus in the health needs of deaf people and health information such as leaflets are rarely provided in BSL.
- The 4 main barriers are media, education, health care and socio-economics and community.

5.2. The impact of post-stroke visual impairment on daily life: Christine Hazelton thanked the group for the opportunity to present. The following key points were noted:

- Christine interviewed 12 stroke survivors in a study measuring the impact of visual impairment following a stroke.
- The 3 main affected areas are:
 - Practical: reading; driving; everyday activities; mobility
 - Social: relationships; their family; how others see them; leisure activities; work
 - Emotional: fear; confidence; self image; independence; denial
- Christine shared quotes from her research which demonstrated the impact loss of sight can have.
- Around 15k people in Scotland will have a stroke, with one fifth being left with a visual impairment.
- Vision services tend to focus on problems in the eye rather than the brain.

7. Discussion

Dennis Robertson MSP thanked Pauline and Christine for their presentations and opened the subjects for discussion.

The issue surrounding support to those who are deafblind following a stroke was discussed. Ruth Dorman noted that NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde conducted a health needs assessment and found that there are 120 service users within the health board area who have experienced heart disease and stroke. There are around 4k deafblind people living in Scotland, however just over 800 of them are registered. NHS GGC are also developing an app to assess patients at the bedside.

John Paterson queried as to whether a care pathway should be followed in order to ensure that clinicians acknowledge someone's visual impairment before and after a stroke. It was noted that the need for someone to be provided with a hearing aid within 4 hours of being assessed is recommended in RCP's guidelines, however pathways for other disabilities are unknown.

David Ross noted that NHS Fife are currently training stroke patients with a light box using scanning techniques. This treatment has been known to be of huge benefit.

Ken Reid noted that inaccessible health information has been discussed at previous Cross Party Groups on Visual Impairment. With the See Hear strategy in place, it is hoped the issue will lessen.

It was highlighted that little support is made available to lip readers and many people are unsure of how to communicate. The importance of raising awareness was stressed to ensure people are not forgotten.

It was suggested that training of simple BSL signs should be included in the curriculum for professionals. Ruth Dorman noted that following the BSL Scotland act a national advisory group will be established.

It was agreed that the Cross Party Groups should share information following the meeting.

Action

- Cross Party Groups to share and circulate organisation information.

8. AOCB

There was no further business.

9. Future meetings

- Heart Disease and Stroke Cross Party Group, Wednesday 22 June 2016
- Cross Party Group on Visual Impairment, TBC
- Cross Party Group on Deafness, TBC