Cross Party Group on Health Inequalities

Minutes of the First Meeting (Parliamentary session 2016 -2021)

Thursday 25th October 2016

The Scottish Parliament

Present:

MSPs: Donald Cameron MSP, Murdo Fraser MSP, Monica Lennon MSP, Richard Lyle MSP, Anas Sarwar MSP

Others:

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<tr>
<th>First name</th>
<th>Surname</th>
<th>Organisation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lauren</td>
<td>Blair</td>
<td>Voluntary Health Scotland</td>
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<td>Tracey</td>
<td>Bowden</td>
<td>Pfizer</td>
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<td>Jennifer</td>
<td>Fingland</td>
<td>Scottish Health Action on Alcohol Problems</td>
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<td>Lisa</td>
<td>Glass</td>
<td>Shelter Scotland</td>
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<td>Lorna</td>
<td>Greene</td>
<td>RCN Scotland</td>
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<td>Nick</td>
<td>Hay</td>
<td>NHS Health Scotland</td>
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<td>Dan</td>
<td>McCroskie</td>
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<td>Rob</td>
<td>Murray</td>
<td>Changing Faces</td>
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<td>Claire</td>
<td>Stevens</td>
<td>Voluntary Health Scotland</td>
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<td>John</td>
<td>Watson</td>
<td>ASH Scotland</td>
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Apologies: Clare Haughey MSP, Alex Cole-Hamilton MSP, Brian Whittle MSP, Alison Johnstone MSP

1. Welcome and introductions

Donald Cameron MSP (chairing) welcomed everyone and invited short introductions.

2. Purpose of the Group

It was noted that the Group’s agreed purpose, as registered in the previous Parliamentary Session is: “The group aims to raise awareness of the causes of health inequalities amongst parliamentarians to influence legislation and amongst policy makers to promote evidence based actions which reduce health inequalities and to avoid legislation and policies which will make health inequalities in Scotland worse.”

Donald Cameron invited Nick Hay of NHS Health Scotland to make a short statement on the importance of health inequalities being a subject for cross-party consideration. The gaps between those with the best and worst health in Scotland are persistent, some are widening, and too many Scots still die.
prematurely. Deprivation is the key determinant, although age, gender and ethnicity are also factors. Health inequalities are avoidable because they are rooted in political and social decisions and they are costly to society and to the NHS and other public services. The CPG will bring together politicians, public and professional bodies, third sector and academia to raise awareness, educate, inform policy making, and foster collaboration.

3. Election of office bearers

Donald Cameron MSP, Clare Haughey MSP and Anas Sarwar MSP were proposed as Co-Convenors by Richard Lyle MSP. The proposal was seconded by Murdo Fraser MSP. The three Co-Convenors were duly elected. It was agreed that a Depute Convenor was not necessary. It was agreed that Voluntary Health Scotland (VHS) should be re-appointed as Secretary to the Group.

4. Topics for future discussion

The Group discussed topics it wished to explore and discuss during the Parliamentary Session. It was agreed that speakers would be identified and invited to present at future meetings. Topics proposed were:

- How can stretched primary care/GPs/acute care meet patient needs in deprived areas (e.g. Deep End GPs, community link workers)
- Impact/role of closing the attainment gap
- Impact/role of employability/fair work measures
- Impact/role of housing and of fuel poverty
- Mental health – e.g. the draft 10 year strategy and the commitment to giving parity to mental and physical health (possible joint meeting with MH CPG)
- People who are disconnected from services, find services hard to access or engage with, and the important role of third sector in advocacy and support
- Issues concerning tobacco, alcohol, obesity and diet (possible joint meeting with the Improving Scotland’s Health CPG)
- Issues concerning the built environment - planning, transport, Place Standard, community empowerment, use of green space/A Natural Health Service for Scotland
- Impact of health and social care integration, the wider role of local government finance in deprived communities, ‘Once for Scotland’ versus localisation
• Issues of gender, age and geography

• Scottish Prison Service: health outcomes five years on from NHS taking responsibility for prisoners’ health

5. Membership of the Group

It was noted that eleven MSPs have stated their intention to join the Group, including those present. There are thirty three non-MSP members of the Group currently.

6. Future meetings

VHS proposed that three substantive meetings be held between January and June 2017. The first will take as its topic the relationship between health inequalities and the built environment, at Monica Lennon MSP’s suggestion.

Subsequent to the meeting, the following dates and times have been arranged:

• Thursday 19th January, 1pm to 2.15 pm, Committee Room 6
• Thursday 30th March, 1pm to 2.15 pm, Committee Room 6
• Thursday 15th June, 1pm to 2.15 pm, Committee Room 6

7. Any other competent business

It was noted that VHS would liaise with Donald Cameron’s office to ensure the completed registration form for re-establishing the Group would be submitted to the Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee by the deadline of 31st October.

Donald Cameron thanked everyone for attending.