

## **Terms of Reference for the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Diagnostics**

The All-Party Parliamentary Group for Diagnostics (hereafter 'the APPG' or 'the Group') was established in February 2023 by a cross-party group of parliamentarians.

### **Chair**

Maggie Throup MP (Erewash)

### **Vice Chairs**

Grahame Morris MP (Easington)

Tim Farron MP (Westmorland & Lonsdale)

Elliot Colburn MP (Carshalton & Wallington)

Mary Robinson MP (Cheadle)

The Rt. Hon. Sir Oliver Heald KC MP (North East Hertfordshire)

Jim Shannon MP (Strangford)

The Rt. Hon. The Lord Bethell

## **1. Objectives**

This APPG provides a parliamentary platform to highlight the value of diagnostics, promote the diagnostic workforce, and improve diagnostic services by raising awareness of the barriers and solutions to optimising the early and swift diagnosis of disease, illness and injury.

Specifically, the APPG aims to:

- Raise awareness of and champion the importance of diagnostics and the diagnostic workforce in Parliament, for example through debates.
- Inform parliamentarians of the challenges faced by the diagnostic workforce, innovation, and patients and the barriers to delivering effective and innovate diagnostic services.
- Influence the policy debate on healthcare to raise the prominence of diagnostics, convening parliamentarians, decision-makers, health organisations, charities and industry experts to investigate and advocate evidence-led solutions.

## **2. Background**

The success of efforts in elective recovery, reaching ambitions for earlier diagnosis of disease, and levelling up all depend on diagnostics. Diagnostic activity forms part of over 85% of patient pathways, making it central to a functioning health system. An early and quick diagnosis means better outcomes and better experience for patients, and cost-savings for the NHS as extensive treatment can be avoided.

There are many innovations in diagnostics to harness – from AI to Community Diagnostic Centres – yet the sector is also facing increasing challenges, which hamper our ability to implement innovation and deliver safe and effective care for patients. These challenges include significant shortfalls in the diagnostic workforce, out of date equipment, and lack of connected IT systems.

Given the size of the diagnostic backlog, there has never been a more important time to establish an APPG to discuss and provide solutions to optimising diagnostic services.

### **3. Secretariat**

The Secretariat is to be **jointly provided** by the Royal College of Radiologists (RCR) and Royal College of Pathologists (RCPath). The RCR is the lead secretariat, committing around 10 hours a week to the secretariat, with the RCPath providing support by committing around 4 hours a week.

As lead secretariat, the responsibilities for the RCR include leading on the development of activity plans, communications, plus other key resources, and delivering activities. The RCR will also undertake the daily admin such as managing stakeholder relations, responding to queries to the APPG inbox, and updating the website.

Responsibilities for the RCPath include contributing to activity plans, communications etc., supporting with admin tasks such as inbox monitoring, and delivering APPG activities.

The Colleges have agreed to drive one output (e.g. report, roundtable) each and collaborate on a third.

The RCR is the professional membership body for the medical specialties of clinical radiology and clinical oncology, with over 14,000 Fellows and members worldwide. We educate doctors in our specialties, set standards of professional practice, and support our Fellows and members throughout their careers.

The RCPath is the professional membership body for the pathologists and scientists working in 17 different specialties, which include cellular pathology, haematology, clinical biochemistry and medical microbiology. The College has over 11,500 members worldwide. Like the RCR, the RCPath oversees the training of pathologists and scientists.

The role of the secretariat is to agree upon and deliver the APPG's activities, provide administrative support, uphold the rules of an APPG, act as a key contact and coordinator for meetings and members, and manage any events and sponsorship monies.

### **4. Public Enquiry Point**

Hannah Drew, Public Affairs Officer, The Royal College of Radiologists

Janine Aldridge, Public Affairs Officer, The Royal College of Pathologists

Email: [appgfordiagnostics@rcr.ac.uk](mailto:appgfordiagnostics@rcr.ac.uk)

### **5. Secretariat Advisory Group**

A wider stakeholder group, the Secretariat Advisory Group, are kept up to date with the APPG's activities and may provide support to the secretariat with regards to shaping outputs (e.g. through giving evidence, presenting at meetings) and additional resource if necessary.

Current members include the Society of Radiographers, Association of Healthcare Technology Providers for Imaging, Radiotherapy and Care, Institute of Biomedical Science, Institute of Physics and Engineering in Medicine, British Nuclear Medicine Society and British Medical Ultrasound Society.

### **6. Chair**

Responsibilities of the Chair include recommending activities for the APPG to undertake, promoting the APPG, and securing MP and Peer interest in the APPG's activity. During the events, the Chair will either lead or delegate chairing to one of the Vice Chairs if necessary.

## **7. Members**

MPs and members of the House of Lords from all parties are invited to join the APPG.

Officers of the Group include:

- Maggie Throup MP (Chair, Cons)
- Grahame Morris MP (Vice Chair, Lab)
- Tim Farron MP (Vice Chair, Lib Dem)
- Elliot Colburn MP (Vice Chair, Cons)
- Mary Robinson MP (Vice Chair, Cons)
- The Rt. Hon. Sir Oliver Heald KC MP (Vice Chair, Cons)
- Jim Shannon MP (Vice Chair, DUP)
- The Rt. Hon. The Lord Bethell (Vice Chair, Cons)

The following MPs and Peers have expressed an interest in being involved as members:

- Alex Cunningham (Lab)
- Taiwo Owatemi (Lab)
- Baroness Finlay of Llandaff (Crossbench)

## **8. Programme of Work**

The Chair, factoring in input from fellow APPG officers, will suggest activities for the APPG to undertake. With these suggestions in mind, the joint secretariat will then draft an activity plan which takes into account the secretariat's resource and expertise, for the members of the APPG to then agree upon and drive forwards.

As part of its programme, the APPG may wish to regularly review new and emerging evidence; government and national policy; ensure involvement of doctors, scientists, patients, and sector leaders from all backgrounds in the work of the APPG; and the APPG may look to produce reports/documents following its own inquiries into specific areas.

## **9. Sign off**

Since both Colleges have very limited resource, the APPG's activities must be approved by the Presidents of each College before being publicly committed to. Once activities are agreed upon by all partners a public announcement can be made about them.

Communication plans for APPG activities (e.g. events and reports) are to be discussed and agreed upon by the Chair and joint secretariat. To ensure messaging is consistent, public-facing communications (e.g. press releases) are to be collaboratively drafted by the Chair and joint secretariat before publication.

Content published by the APPG, such as reports, are to be approved by one representative from each major party (Cons, Lab, Lib Dem; to secure cross-party promotion) who is an APPG Vice Chair, the Chair, and the joint secretariat before being shared publicly.

## **10. Meetings and Events**

The joint secretariat will meet every fortnight to mark progress and delegate actions to ensure the programme of work is on track to be delivered. The joint secretariat will meet with the Chair at least once a month to reflect on progress and plan next steps.

The APPG will meet quarterly, most likely in Spring, before the July recess, in Autumn and after party conference recess – exact dates TBC. The APPG's AGM must take place in February 2024.

The APPG will also host a series of events throughout the year, which will include roundtables and parliamentary drop-ins.

## **11. Financials**

APPGs receive no taxpayer funding. Funding is required, however, to run a professional and effective Group. There are costs associated with administration, event management, and more. Both the RCR and RCPATH are donating time and money to the running of the APPG.

At the time of writing, the joint secretariats plan to commit the following -

- RCR: £5,000 for costs associated with administration, event hosting, etc and £11,424 in staff time based on staff donating 10h per week annually.
- RCPATH: £5,000 for costs associated with administration of the secretariat. Additional funds will be made available for event hosting etc and £4,914.00 in staff time.

Any monies received relating to the APPG will be declared on the Parliament website within 28 days of receipt. All funds received are declared in the Register of All-Party Groups, which is compiled and published by the Office of the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards.

It is the role of the Officers of the APPG to ensure transparency and independence within the Group. Full year accounts will be prepared by the joint secretariat and submitted by the Chair's office. The accounts will be made available upon request.