



All Party Parliamentary Group on Primary Care and Public Health

Embargoed until: 3.30pm, 1st December 2010

Patient engagement needs to intensify for the NHS to improve efficiency and productivity

The All Party Parliamentary Group on Primary Care and Public Health supports the NHS White Paper's aim of putting patients first and improving health outcomes and believes the key to this is to intensify the level of patient, public and health professional engagement to help improve NHS productivity and empower patients into taking responsibility for their health. This is the conclusion of the APPG's inquiry into 'the NHS White Paper & Patient, the Public and Health Professional Engagement', the report of which is being launched today at the Group's Annual Parliamentary Reception.

Lord Hunt, co-chair of the APPG, comments on the report's findings: "If implemented correctly health engagement can help towards efficiency savings whilst at the same time making the public and patients more empowered in their health decisions."

"The public trust health professionals working in the NHS and these experts are pivotal in instilling people with the confidence to realise their full potential in looking after their own health. To further develop this, training for NHS staff could include elements of how to engage patients and encourage greater positive health behaviours which would result in a more fulfilling two-way consultation, empowered patients and lead to better health outcomes."

Kevin Barron MP, co-chair remarks on the need for national public health campaigns: "We welcome Government's intention to provide information to support people in their health choices, however, we don't believe this is enough and recommend public health information programmes be implemented nationally and locally; incorporating social marketing would ensure the right messages are targeted to people at the right time in their lives."

Commenting on the report, Earl Howe, Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Health said: "The Government is committed to strong patient and public involvement and engagement because it is essential in creating positive health behaviours and outcomes. Health professionals have an important role in working with and supporting patients to enable them to look after their own health and make the right decisions about their care"

Earl Howe continued: "Enabling and inspiring people to take greater responsibility for their health is a major theme of the Public Health White Paper, 'Healthy Lives, Healthy People', which was published yesterday. Our cross-government strategy will also promote public health and strengthen the role of the Director of Public Health within local authorities, providing a real focus for tackling the wider determinants of health."

-ENDS-

Notes to editors:

The APPG Annual Parliamentary Reception is taking place on Wed 1st December, 3.30pm – 5pm in the Cholmondeley Room, House of Lords, London SW1. We are expecting Earl Howe to be at the meeting from 3.30pm-4.30pm and taking questions from the audience.

The full inquiry report containing the 9 recommendations of the APPG to Government, a summary of the evidence from the 31 organisations that submitted evidence and Government's written and oral evidence can be downloaded at:

<http://www.pagb.co.uk/appg/inquiries/NHSWhitePaperEngagement.pdf>

The All Party Parliamentary Group on Primary Care and Public Health was established in 1998 by Stephen Hesford MP, Dr Howard Stoate MP and Lord Philip Hunt. [Mr Hesford and Dr Stoate stood down as members of parliament in the May 2010 elections].

The function of the Group is to raise the profile of primary care and public health within Parliament; to speak within Parliament on behalf of both users and those working in the NHS; to place primary care and public health high on the Government's agenda and to inform debate by parliamentarians with outside bodies.

For further information please visit the group's web page at

<http://www.pagb.co.uk/appg/intro.html> or contact the APPG secretariat:

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