

The All Party Parliamentary Group on Skin



The APPGS was established in 1994 and aims to increase understanding about skin care issues in Parliament and to achieve improvements in the treatment and management of patients with skin disease. It also provides an unbiased means of responding to threats to dermatology services and acts as a forum for partners in skin care to engage with politicians with an interest in the issue.

The APPGS has a large and active membership that includes MPs from all political parties, members of the House of Lords, health professionals, patient groups and commercial interests.

The APPGS benefits from input from its Advisory Group, which holds three to four meetings a year. The activities of the Advisory Group are subject to the approval of the Group's parliamentary officers and its Chair, Sir Paul Beresford MP.

The day-to-day activities of the Group are administered by the secretariat Decideum Ltd. As with all other APPGs, the work of the Group does not constitute official business of either the House of Commons or Lords but is instead an informal grouping of parliamentarians wishing to pursue a shared interest.

For further information visit: www.appgs.co.uk

Key Achievements 2010-15

- Supported the referral of several skin conditions to NICE
- Ensured consideration was given to dermatology patients and specific amendments during the passage of the Health and Social Care Act 2012
- Called Parliament's attention to the psychological burden of skin disease (2013 Report)
- Prompted a Westminster Hall debate on the status of dermatology services (Dec 2013)
- Successfully lobbied for the creation of a new accreditation model for GPs in dermatology
- 2014 Sunbeds Inquiry prompted the Government into setting up a review of current regulations



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- 24% of the population consults a GP each year because of a skin complaint
- 4,000 deaths are attributed to skin disease each year
- 800,000 patients per year are referred to a specialist in England and Wales
- GPs receive on average just 6 days training in Dermatology as a medical student
- There is a chronic shortage of consultant dermatologists in the UK

"I have throughout my life lost huge amounts of time due to my eczema... even now I lose something like two hours a day to putting creams on and waiting for them to go in".

"I feel like I am disgusting. I feel unattractive and I have such little confidence in myself as a result of how I look. People stare at my face and it makes me feel completely worthless"

"I feel that in applying for jobs over the last few years, since my Vitiligo has become more extensive, I've possibly been passed over in favour of other, un-disfigured candidates."

-Evidence submitted by patients to the APPGS' 2013 Inquiry

The reformation of the APPGS in 2015

The APPGS will need to be re-formed following the 2015 general election as all such Groups are required to formally dissolve a few weeks prior to polling day.

The Advisory Group to the APPGS has recently conducted a scoping day and come up with a recommended programme of activity to put to the newly elected parliamentary officers of the Group in June for their consideration.

Stakeholders with an interest in dermatology can help facilitate this reformation process by encouraging local electoral candidates to take an interest in the subject and the work of the APPGS. A variety of supportive resources are available both on the APPGS and British Association of Dermatologists' websites.

Members of the public can help raise awareness of skin disease in Parliament by contacting their local MP and encouraging them to join the APPGS. The APPGS's secretariat can be contacted should any assistance be required.

The public can also help to share the results of APPGS enquiries and news stories on social media and again with their local MP or electoral candidates.

The sooner the APPGS is re-formed, the sooner it can continue to lobby for beneficial changes to NHS practice.

