

Friday 16th March 2007



APPG AIDS Parliamentary Update

Meeting updates:

6th February 2007

The APPG AIDS hosted the official launch of the Ensuring Positive Future's website:
www.e-pf.org.uk

22nd February 2007

Presentation of the Health Protection Agency's report:
A complex Picture: HIV and other Sexually Transmitted Infections in the UK
Minutes of this meeting have been uploaded to the aidsportal. www.aidsportal.org

8th March 2007

Women and Men Preventing HIV&AIDS – Issues, Inequalities and solutions.
A joint meeting with the APPG on Population, Development and Reproductive Health. The meeting was jointly organised by Action Aid, IPPF and VSO and screened a film produced by PAI called Abstaining from Reality.

13th March 2007

A joint meeting with the Pro Choice APPG and the Naz Project London to present the study *Sexual Health Knowledge, Attitudes and Behaviours among Black and Minority Ethnic Youth in London*.
Minutes of this meeting will be posted on the aidsportal.

Future meetings:

We are currently finalising dates for meetings in May and June and will send out invitations when all details are in place. The details of upcoming meetings will also be published on the aidsportal.

APPG AIDS Website:

To keep the APPG AIDS website updated we have decided to post documents on the aidsportal and to place links to the portal on the APPG website. Our website will also in the coming weeks undergo a thorough clear-out. We will not remove any information that cannot be found in Hansard or on Select Committee websites.

Other News

There's a new kid in town: A new All-Party Parliamentary Group on **Pneumococcal Disease Prevention in the Developing World** has been established. It is chaired by Desmond Turner MP and the secretariat is with health lobbyists Ruder Finn.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmparty/070314/memi389.htm>

An EDM was tabled to highlight the launch of this APPG:

1120

PNEUMOCOCCAL DISEASE PREVENTION IN THE DEVELOPING WORLD

Turner, Desmond

That this House notes with grave concern that according to the World Health Organisation pneumococcal pneumonia and meningitis are responsible for up to 1.6 million child deaths each year; further notes that 90 per cent. of pneumococcal pneumonia deaths occur in the developing world and that children with HIV/AIDS are up to 40 times more likely to contract pneumococcal disease; further notes that many of these deaths could be prevented with the use of a vaccine; welcomes the commitment by HM Treasury and the Department for International Development to support the pilot Advanced Market Commitment (AMC) for pneumococcal vaccines, which could save the lives of up to 5.4 million children by 2030; notes the contribution which this programme will make towards the UK's commitment to meeting the United Nations' Millennium Development Goal 4, 'to reduce by two thirds the mortality rate among children under five by 2015'; further welcomes the formation of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Pneumococcal Disease Prevention in the Developing World in response to the urgent need to improve child survival and as a forum for raising awareness among policymakers nationally, across Europe and around the world about the disease, its prevention through vaccination and international efforts to ensure sustainable financing; and hopes that the pneumococcal vaccine pilot AMC will pave the way for new vaccines against other childhood diseases such as malaria.

Other recent EDMs:

Conservative MP Angela Watkinson called a Ten Minute Rule Bill on Contraception and Abortion: Parental Information. [Link below](#)

Liberal Democrat Evan Harris tabled an amendment to this EDM ([Below](#))

1136

SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES AND UNDERAGE PREGNANCY IN TEENAGERS

Watkinson, Angela

That this House notes that conceptions in England in 2005 in children aged 15 years and under reached 7,462 compared with 7,181 in 2004; further notes that sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) among teenagers have reached epidemic proportions and that genito-urinary medicine clinics in England in 2005 reported 2,221 cases of STDs in patients aged 13 to 15 years; notes with great sadness that 13 under-age girls in the UK were reported to have syphilis in 2005; notes that the numbers exclude cases diagnosed by general practitioners and family planning clinics; further notes that the UK figures for teenage conceptions and STDs far exceed those of any other country in Western Europe; believes that this is due to nearly 40 per cent. of under-age children in the UK being sexually active which according to the UNICEF Report - An Overview of Child Well-Being in Rich Countries - is by far the highest figure in Western Europe; calls attention to warnings from Professor David Paton, Nottingham University Business School and Dr Trevor Stammers of St George's University of London, two international authorities on teenage pregnancy and STDs, that some measures used as part of the Government's Teenage Strategy could induce some adolescents to increase risk-taking sexual behaviour; and, whilst recognising that the legal age of consent is 16 years, calls for greater action from the Government to involve parents and to moderate its policy, requiring schools and others involved in sex education and contraceptive provision to encourage young people to withstand peer pressure and to understand the dangers of early sexual activity.

1136A1

SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES AND UNDERAGE PREGNANCY IN TEENAGERS

Harris, Evan

after 'Europe;' leave out from 'calls' to end and add 'believes that this is due in part to the inadequacy of sex and relationships education in the UK, which is still not part of the National Curriculum, is often incomplete and too late and does little to help give young people the information they need to resist peer pressure and delay the start of sexual activity.'

1055

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 8th MARCH 2007

Burt, Lorely

That this House celebrates 8th March as International Women's Day; welcomes the advances women have made so far in society; recognises that there is still a long way to go; notes that this year's theme for International Women's Day is Ending Impunity for Violence against Women and Girls; is aware that, according to the UN, violence against women is the most common but least punished crime in the world; understands that violence against women, in addition to physical and sexual violence, can include trafficking, honour killings and female genital mutilation; further recognises that domestic violence is the most common form of abuse of women worldwide, irrespective of region, culture, ethnicity, education, class and religion; is aware of the fact that systematic rape is used as a weapon of terror in many of the world's conflicts and that it is estimated that between 250,000 and 500,000 women in Rwanda were raped during the 1994 genocide; and calls upon the Government to continue to work towards ending violence towards women and to support international attempts to do so.

1053

HIV AND PERCEIVED OR ASSOCIATIVE DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION

Moffatt, Laura

That this House notes that legal protection for people living with HIV from the effects of HIV prejudice and discrimination has been greatly improved by the extension of the Disability Discrimination Act to cover conditions such as HIV effectively from the point of diagnosis; notes that people who are not themselves HIV positive can face discrimination because of an association with someone who is HIV positive or because they are perceived to be HIV positive; further notes that this could include partners of people with HIV, family members and carers, or just people who belong to groups amongst whom HIV is of higher prevalence, such as gay men and recent African migrants; further notes that the European Court of Justice has been asked to determine whether the European Framework Directive on Equal Treatment in Employment prohibits discrimination on grounds of association with a disabled person following a reference from the Employment Tribunal and the appeal decision of the EAT in the case of Attridge Law and S Law v. Coleman (UKEAT/0417/06/DM); congratulates Ireland, Sweden, the Netherlands, Germany, Malta, Denmark, Portugal and Spain for introducing legislation to protect people who experience discrimination on the basis of association or perception of disability; and calls on the Government to follow suit and make explicit provisions prohibiting discrimination on the basis of association or perception of disability in future legislation.

1036

MICROFINANCE AND INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

Brooke, Annette

That this House recognises the important link between access to microfinance and women's empowerment; welcomes International Women's Day on 8th March; notes that women represent 86 per cent. of microfinance clients worldwide and that poor women in particular benefit from microfinance services; acknowledges that poor women are proven to be reliable credit risks and, with access to finance, invest in their families, resulting in improved health and education and stronger local economies; further notes that less than five per cent. of women who require a microloan are currently being reached by official microfinance institutions; and calls on the Government to increase its emphasis on microfinance within its international development portfolio and prioritise access to financial services for very disadvantaged groups of women and the poorest sectors of society in working towards the achievement of the millennium development goals.

EDM 753

AFFORDABLE MEDICINES FOR THE DEVELOPING WORLD

Featherstone, Lynne

That this House notes with concern that the European company Novartis, the makers of the anti-leukaemia drug Glivec, has brought a case against the Indian government to prevent manufacturers of generic medicines from producing low-cost copies of that drug; further notes that the generic medicines produced in India are essential treatments for many people in the developing world, especially those living with HIV/AIDS, and that millions of people rely on drugs produced in India for affordable medicines; and therefore urges Novartis to withdraw its action.

EDM 649

CHILDREN AT THE VENERABLE BEDE SCHOOL

Kemp, Fraser

That this House welcomes the efforts of the students at the Venerable Bede Church of England School in Ryhope, Sunderland, who are helping orphan children in the AIDS-affected nation of Lesotho; also welcomes the fact-finding mission by deputy head teachers Marie Lister and Jane Ackroyd, who flew to meet the Reverend Mavis Mochokocho in the capital Maseru at the Salvation Orphanage, which cares for HIV-affected orphans; congratulates the Ryhope pupils for their commitment to install solar panels at the orphanage; and wishes the Ryhope pupils all the best in their efforts to help the HIV and AIDS-affected orphans in Lesotho.

Recent Parliamentary Questions and Debates mentioning HIV/AIDS:

Written Parliamentary Question, 13.03.2007 (date for answer)

Andrew Smith MP

Mr. Andrew: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what progress has been made in making the range of drugs relevant to HIV/AIDS available to people in the poorest countries; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Gareth Thomas:

The international effort to achieve universal access has helped boost the numbers on anti-retroviral drugs (ARV) treatment. In sub-Saharan Africa, the numbers on treatment rose 10-fold from 2003 to 2006 from 100,000 to over 1 million. This is equivalent to 23 per cent. of those needing treatment. Similarly, the number of sites where people can receive treatment has increased significantly, including in Malawi and Zambia where there has been increases of 20 and 30-fold respectively. As of 1 December 2006, Global Fund-supported programmes have put 770,000 people on ARV treatment for HIV. This represents more than one-quarter of the 3 million people on ARV worldwide and is 28 per cent. greater than the Global Fund targets for 2006. The UK has already pledged to spend £1.5 billion on AIDS programmes between 2005 and 2008: this reflects our commitment to Universal Access. Despite this progress, much still needs to be done. In addition to funding AIDS programmes, we are supporting UNITAID, the new international drug purchasing facility, to fund second-line ARV, paediatric ARVs and TB and malaria drugs predominantly to low income countries. It is hoped that this mechanism will contribute to the necessary reductions in the prices of second-line drugs such as lopinavir/ritonavir and tenofovir (Viread and Kaletra). The UK Government are also helping strengthen the World Health Organisation (WHO) medicines pre-qualification process through UNITAID, in order to speed up the availability of new second-line ARV products. WHO's pre-qualification process is a critical block for low income countries using new ARVs, with a long backlog of medicines seeking pre-approval. The additional funding will accelerate the process.

Written Parliamentary Question, 13.03.2007 (date for answer)

Geoffrey Clifton-Brown MP

Mr Clifton-Brown:

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps he is taking to prevent the spread of AIDS in Nepal.

Mr Gareth Thomas:

DFID Nepal has been at the forefront of Nepal's response to HIV/AIDS. In October 2005, DFID commenced a five-year, £15 million programme in support of the national HIV/AIDS programme. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) manages DFID's support in conjunction with their management of grants from the Global Fund for AIDS, TB and Malaria. DFID is currently the second major donor to the national HIV/AIDS programme, contributing 24 per cent. of the programme's resources from mid-2006 to mid-2008. DFID support is aligned to the National HIV/AIDS Strategy and its corresponding Plan. DFID supports 73 projects through 59 NGOs or community based organisations in 27 of Nepal's 75 districts. DFID is the lead donor in support of services to: mobile populations; injecting drug

users; people living with HIV/AIDS; prison populations; men having sex with men and male sex workers. The activities implemented range from information and awareness; peer education; voluntary counselling and HIV testing; harm reduction (including rehabilitation); care and support to people living with HIV/AIDS and safe blood supply. In addition to bilateral assistance, DFID also supports prevention and treatment to Nepali migrants in Nepal and India through the Asia Regional Poverty Fund, a three-year, £2 million project which commenced in February 2006. Over the last three years, DFID has worked closely with the Government of Nepal (GON), the UN agencies and the World Bank to develop the Three Ones: one policy and programme, one national co-ordination body and one monitoring and evaluation framework. DFID plans to increase its policy engagement in HIV/AIDS. This will be focused on supporting the establishment of a national multi-sectoral semi-independent unit which can manage the programme, improve fund-flow to communities and attract more resources.

Written Parliamentary Question, 13.03.2007 (date for answer)
Andrew Smith MP

Mr Smith:

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much his Department spent on AIDS-related work in 2005-06; and how much has been spent in 2006-07.

Mr Gareth Thomas:

DFID spent £385 million in tackling HIV and AIDS in 2005-2006, an increase of almost 30 per cent. on the 2004-05 figure of £298 million. Figures for 2006-07 are not yet available. These figures were released as part of a draft report on an interim evaluation of 'Taking Action - the UK Government's strategy for tackling HIV and AIDS in the developing World' available on DFID's website at www.dfid.gov. As part of this strategy DFID remains committed to spending £1.5 billion on tackling HIV and AIDS over the three years to 2007-08.

Written Parliamentary Question, 13.03.2007 (date for answer)
Geoffrey Clifton-Brown MP

Mr Clifton-Brown MP

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps his Department is taking to improve lives in Latin America.

Mr Gareth Thomas:

DFID's goal is to reduce poverty and inequality in Latin America in line with the international community's commitment to help achieve the millennium development goals (MDGs) by 2015. DFID's main financial contributions to Latin America are through direct contributions to the multilateral institutions: the Inter-American Development Bank, the World Bank, the European Commission and United Nations. DFID also has a bilateral programme for Latin America (£11 million in 2006-07). The purpose of this programme is to enhance the overall impact of the international system in the region. DFID's assistance to Latin America from 2004-07 is set out in the document entitled "Regional Assistance Plan", copies of which are available in the Libraries of the House. DFID is working with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the World Bank, helping them to tackle social exclusion and to

provide access to markets and international trade. Efforts are being made to provide accountable and responsive public sector management and effective political systems. DFID also works to improve donor coordination in support of government led poverty reduction strategies and also to improve regional, analysis and lesson sharing to achieve trade policies that better reflect the impact of trade on poverty and inequality. In the health sector it focuses on improved quality and effectiveness of HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment and care drawing from regional organisations working with the Global Fund for AIDS, TB and Malaria. DFID is also providing a further £7 million a year to British NGOs working in Latin America under Partnership Programme Agreements with DFID, and funding projects through the Civil Society Challenge Fund. DFID's programme in Latin America provides flexible and responsive funding and seeks to pilot innovative new approaches. It works with others, for example the UN and international NGOs, to facilitate cooperation between civil society organisations and the World Bank and IDB. It collaborates closely with the complementary programmes of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), and the British Council. Through the UK Government's Global Conflict Prevention Pool, DFID, alongside the FCO and the Ministry of Defence (MOD), supports security sector reform and small arms and light weapons reduction. The overall aim is to reduce armed violence, establish effective and appropriate rule of law in the region, and provide the security needed to enable development.

Written Parliamentary Question, 12.03.2007 (date for answer)

Andrew Lansley MP

To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many cases of (a) HIV, (b) Chlamydia, (c) gonorrhoea, (d) syphilis, (e) genital warts and (f) genital herpes there have been in England since 1997, (i) in total and (ii) broken down by (A) strategic health authority area and (B) primary care trust area.

Caroline Flint:

The information requested has been placed in the Library.

(If anyone is interested to see the answer contact Andrew Lansley's office.)

Urgent Question, 08.03.2007

Evan Harris MP

I notice that no statement on immigration policy was announced in next week's business, but if there is one in the future, will the Deputy Leader of the House reflect on the sort of language used by the Home Secretary, when he talked about foreigners coming to this country and "stealing" services such as the NHS? Will the hon. Gentleman explain how someone who is unconscious or has HIV can steal treatment from the NHS? Given the Labour party's previously proud history of promoting race relations, is he surprised that Members on the Government Benches, as well as on the Opposition Benches, express concern about language from a Home Secretary that can do nothing to improve race relations?

Mr Nigel Griffiths:

My right hon. Friend the Home Secretary is forthright in his language at all times. Quite frankly, anyone entering this country illegally—and there is no reason why

anyone should—who then uses services to which they have not contributed and to which they have no entitlement, deserves no comfort from the House or from the hon. Gentleman. The advice that he and his party should give is that people should come to Britain only legally; they should not cross other countries to come to Britain, make legally unfounded claims and take resources that should go to other people. If the hon. Gentleman wants to defend pushing his constituents to the end of a queue because treatment is being given to someone who has entered the country illegally, he can do so. I will not; nor will my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary.

Written Parliamentary Question, 08.03.2007 (date for answer)

Sally Keeble MP

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what discussions he has had with his counterparts in the US about the impact of a new definition of orphans and vulnerable children on eligibility for support from the President's Emergency Plan for Aids Relief from March; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Gareth Thomas:

We have regular discussions, at both ministerial and official level, with colleagues in the US Office of the Global AIDS Co-ordinator, who are responsible for the operation of the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). We understand they have no plans to adopt a new definition of orphans and vulnerable children. We believe the most widely adopted international definitions are those agreed by the members of the Joint United Nations Programme for HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) Monitoring and Evaluation Reference Group. They define an orphan as a child below the age of 18 who has lost one or both parents. They further define a child made vulnerable by HIV/AIDS as below the age of 18 and: "Having lost one or both parents, or" "Having a chronically ill parent (regardless of whether the parent lives in the same household as the child), or" "Living in a household where in the past 12 months, at least one adult died and was sick for three of the 12 months before he/she died, or" "Living in a household where at least one adult was seriously ill for at least three months in the past 12 months, or" "Living outside of family care (i.e. living in an institution or on the streets)." DFID supports the UNICEF view, agreed at the 2004 and 2006 Global Partners Forums, that national and international partners should advance action for "children affected by AIDS" rather than "orphans and vulnerable children" to reflect the range of ways that HIV and AIDS can make children vulnerable, including children: living in households that have taken in orphans; living with HIV themselves; who have lost access to school; or whose parents are struggling with a terminal illness.

Written Parliamentary Question, 06.02.2007 (date for answer)

Sally Keeble MP

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of the potential impact on access to HIV treatment of the Government of Thailand's issuance of compulsory licences to produce locally or import generic versions of the drugs efavirenz and lopinavir/ritonavir; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Gareth Thomas:

The Thai Government only recently announced their intention to issue compulsory licences for a number of patented medicines; therefore the impact of this action on

access to HIV treatment is not yet clear. We support the right of developing countries to implement the WTO Agreement on Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) as is appropriate for their circumstances and in order to ensure access to HIV treatment. We also support the right of developing countries to utilise the flexibilities allowed under TRIPS to ensure affordable access to medicines to meet public health needs, this includes the use of compulsory licensing provisions included in the TRIPS agreement.

Written Parliamentary Question, 06.03.2007 (date for answer)
Geoffrey Clifton-Brown MP

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what recent aid has been sent by the UK to Zimbabwe; and what precautions were taken to ensure that this aid was delivered directly to those who needed aid.

Mr Hilary Benn:

We remain confident that the systems are in place to ensure that assistance provided by the UK reaches those members of society who are most in need of assistance. Over the last five years, DFID has allocated approximately £143 million to support the poorest people of Zimbabwe, with almost all this funding being directed to tackling HIV and AIDS, food insecurity and in support of Orphans and Vulnerable Children. DFID channels its support through United Nations agencies and non-governmental organisations, rather than providing direct support to the Government of Zimbabwe. All proposals for DFID funding are subject to rigorous scrutiny, particularly with regard to the target group affected by the intervention in question, transparency of funding mechanisms and the presence of robust monitoring and evaluation systems. DFID Zimbabwe requires regular reporting from partner organisations and carries out its own monitoring and evaluation exercises on a regular, generally quarterly or six-monthly, basis. In cases where partner organisations are funded in instalments, funding is contingent upon evidence that previous contributions from DFID have been disbursed in the manner agreed in our formal agreement with that organisation.

Written Parliamentary Question, 26.02.2007 (date for answer)
David Drew MP

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps his Department is taking to reduce (a) sexual and (b) gender-based violence in sub-Saharan Africa. [122213]

Mr. Hilary Benn: Levels of sexual and gender based violence are unacceptably high in Africa. DFID is working with other development agencies such as UNIFEM, and partners in countries in Africa to reduce these.

In the Democratic Republic of Congo, DFID is contributing £3 million towards a £15 million European Union project to restore justice to eastern Congo (the worst area for conflict and rape) and also to support “one stop shop” centres for rape victims as part of a police reform programme. DFID have supported sexual assault referral centres in Sierra Leone over a three year period. In northern Uganda, DFID gave UNICEF support for their work with women's groups on issues around protection and sexual violence in camps for internally displaced people, home to approximately £1.7 million

people. In Lesotho, the DFID funded Justice Sector Support Programme has helped establish 80 child and gender protection units in police stations across the country to provide victims of sexual violence access to free medical help and justice. In South Africa, a support programme on HIV/Aids is helping the government train social service providers to better deal with sexual violence.

In Ethiopia, DFID supported the Ethiopian Women Lawyers Association to maintain a shelter for its clients, and to provide legal aid and assistance on issues that affect women. Again in Ethiopia, working at the policy level, we have support the Ethiopian Government's development of a National Action Plan for Gender Equality. In Uganda, we have provided a four year grant to the charity Mifumi, working in Tororo, eastern Uganda, to cover Uganda, Tanzania, Kenya and South Africa to advocate against domestic violence and to engage in community work on domestic violence. DFID also provides financial support to the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) which supports the Trust Fund for the Elimination of Violence Against Women and the Women, Peace and Security Programme. Also with other donors and UNIFEM, DFID supports a gender and governance programme which aims to increase the number of women in parliament and leadership positions in Kenya. This helps bring greater priority to reduction in gender violence in the government's work.

Recent Debates

“Women” House of Lords debate 08.03.2007

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld200607/ldhansrd/text/70308-0002.htm>

“Contraception and Abortion” House of Commons debate 14.03.2007

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200607/cmhansrd/cm070314/debtext/70314-0003.htm>

“International Development Oral Questions” House of Commons 28.02.2007

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200607/cmhansrd/cm070228/text/70228w0004.htm>

Future Business:

International Development oral questions 28th March.