



## Newsletter

### National HIV Testing Week 23rd– 30th November

The APPG is pleased to be supporting **National HIV testing week**, which is running from the **23rd-30th November**. The aim of National HIV testing week is to promote HIV testing amongst groups most at risk of contracting HIV in the UK: Men who have sex with men and African communities.

The APPG will be encouraging Parliamentarians to support National HIV testing week by visiting their local HIV testing facilities or taking a HIV test, and encouraging their local councillors to do the same. For more information please contact:

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### APPG members champion evidence based approach to tackling HIV and AIDS at Washington 2012



*Pamela Nash MP and Cathy Jamieson MP with Dr Horton, and speakers at the International AIDS conference*

The APPG on HIV and AIDS took three members to the International AIDS conference in Washington, in conjunction with The International HIV/AIDS Alliance, Results, the IPU and APPG for TB.

Lord Fowler focussed on the need to adapt evidence based approach to combat the HIV epidemic at the official pre-conference on drug policy. Writing the Hill magazine, he urged members of Congress to reverse the recent ban on Federal funding for needle exchange programmes, which impacts upon USAID funded programmes around the world. He highlighted the policy in Britain “was not introduced by some left wing socialist administration but by the cabinet of Margaret Thatcher, leader of the most radical right-of-centre govern-

ment that Britain has seen since the Second World War.” Lord Fowler also co-hosted a reception on human rights and HIV with the British Ambassador and DFID Minister Alan Duncan.

Pamela Nash MP spoke about the need for all Governments to take a human rights approach to tackling the HIV epidemic, at meeting organised by the IPU for Parliamentarians from over 15 countries, urging members to take a pragmatic, public health oriented approach to policy making.

At a workshop at the main conference chaired by the Lancet’s editor Dr Richard Horton, Cathy Jamieson MP explained how she had become involved in the APPG for TB following a meeting with her constituent and urged researchers and academics to contact their MPs.

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*APPG Chair: Pamela Nash MP, Vice Chairs: Lord Fowler, Simon Kirby MP, Pauline Latham OBE MP, Baroness Masham, Stuart Andrew MP, Caroline Lucas MP*

## Peers debate LBBT rights and impact on HIV

Members of the House of Lords led by speech, proclaiming that Lord Lexden held a 90 minute debate on “discriminatory interference in the private sexual conduct of consenting adults is an affront to fundamental Christian values” and that there was “no place for homophobia in the Church.”

Members from both sides providing moving testimony of the abuses of sexual minorities in developing countries. Several members spoke about the links between criminalisation of sexual minorities and HIV infections, with Lord Rea citing evidence from the **UNDP’s Global Commission of HIV and the Law** that Men who have sex who live in countries where homosexuality is criminalised are much more likely to be infected with HIV. The Bishop of Leicester gave a powerful

Lord Smith praised the courage of Kenyan David Kuria Mbote, the first openly gay political candidate in Africa. Responding to the debate, Baroness Northover reaffirmed the commitment of the UK Government to working with the Commonwealth and around the world to help to “uphold the values of human rights.”

*“The clear evidence that punitive discriminatory laws encourage the spread of HIV infection should act as a stimulus to repeal them”*

*Lord Rea*

## APPG Chair works with Kenyan Parliamentarians to ensure HIV is an election priority

During the September conference recess, APPG Chair Pamela Nash travelled to Kenya with VSO to work with the National Empowerment Network of People Living with HIV and AIDS and Kenyan APPG on HIV and AIDS to help to build the capacity of the APPG in the Kenyan Parliament.

Though great progress has been made in tackling HIV and AIDS in Kenya, it still claims more than **80,000** lives each year, and there are **110,000** new infections. Stigma and discrimination remain significant

barriers to people accessing treatment, care and support, particularly in rural areas. Punitive laws exist which prevent those groups most at risk of contracting HIV from accessing prevention, care and support services.

Pamela Nash shadowed the Kenyan Assistant Minister Honourable Lima Killimo MP, accompanying her to her rural constituency, where they addressed a Catholic women’s association to discuss the importance of knowing one’s HIV status.

The APPG’s adviser Heather worked with activists and members from civil society to encourage them to engage with their politicians to ensure that HIV remains a political priority as Kenya adapts to its new Constitution and prepares for the 2013 elections. Over the course of the week Pamela met with Government Ministers, Presidential Candidates, donors, activists and People living with HIV and Kenyan MPs to support NEPHAK with their advocacy goals and help to develop the APPG in the Kenyan Parliament.



Meeting with Hon Esther Murungi, Minister for Special Programmes with Nelson Otwoma from NEPHAK and Makena Mwobobia from VSO

Since the New Parliamentary session began, there has been a lot of discussion on International Development, with Mark Lazarowicz MP leading a Westminster Hall debate on the **post MDG framework**, and APPG Vice Chair **Pauline Latham MP** holding a debate on the violence and situation of women in the DRC.

The International Development Select Committee is conducting an inquiry in the **post MDG framework**, and the Home Affairs Select Committee is conducting a review of the **EU drugs strategy**.

The Government response to the IDC report on the **Global Fund to fight AIDS, TB and**

**Malaria was** published. The response **disagreed** with the IDC's recommendations that the UK should release additional funding to the Global Fund prior to its planned multi-lateral aid review in 2013.

Lord Black asked what plans the UK Government has to reduce **stigma**, to which the Department of Health replied that it will be funding a new HIV Prevention in England programme provided by the Terrence Higgins Trust.

The Government also stated that their long awaited **sexual health policy document** will "consider how work can be undertaken at all levels to reduce and challenge HIV stigma".

The issue of treatment for HIV positive Asylum seekers in **detention centres** was raised by Lord Hylton. The DH confirmed that they are "working with UKBA on a phased programme to transfer commissioning and funding responsibility for healthcare provision within IRCs fully to the NHS from April 2014".

Chuka Umunna asked the department of Education about its support for **Young carers affected by HIV**.

You can find details of **all Parliamentary debates** and **oral questions** relating to HIV in both Houses on the APPG website at: <http://www.appghiv aids.org.uk/parliament/debate.html>

## **HIV and AIDS in the UK– the facts**

The APPG was delighted to see that late HIV diagnosis has been included amongst the list of Public Health Outcome indicators in the Department's Public Health Outcomes framework. This provides a strong incentive for local authorities to priorities local HIV testing.

NICE recommends **routine HIV testing** in any area which has a HIV prevalence of more than 2 per 1,000. **37 local authorities** in the UK fit this description, with 9 of them being based in London. The top 10 areas of highest HIV prevalence are listed in the table opposite. MPs in areas of high HIV prevalence are encouraged to ask their Directors of Public Health what plans they have to facilitate HIV testing in their localities and talk to local councillors about the importance of sexual health.

<b>Area</b>	<b>HIV prevalence per 1,000</b>	<b>Numbers of patients accessing HIV care</b>
Lambeth	13.28	2712
Southwark	10.39	2103
Islington	9.07	1244
Kensington and Chelsea	8.33	946
City and Hackney	8.25	1265
Hammersmith and Fulham	967	8.15
Newham	8.12	1290
Brighton and Hove	7.57	1273
Camden	7.50	1235
Lewisham	7.03	1262

### **Sexual Health is going local from April 2013!**

From April 2013, Local Authorities will be taking on responsibility for sexual health in the UK. This includes responsibility for HIV testing. Local councillors and Health and Well Being boards will have a critical role to play in ensuring that HIV prevention programmes will be prioritised.

Writing in the Conservative Party Councillor's magazine, which is distributed to all 8,000 Conservative Party Councillors in the UK, Lord Fowler said that "It is not always easy to talk openly about sexual health. But it is essential, and we can't afford to ignore it."

### The need for a Global Consensus on R + D

Intellectual property is not always something which grabs the headlines, but as the APPG has highlighted through its work on Access to Medicines, it has significant impacts on the prices of anti-retroviral drugs. At the end of November, the **World Health Organisation** will be convening a meeting of member states to discuss the recommendations of the Consultative Expert working group on Research and Development. The group proposed that WHO members should adopt a **binding convention on health research and development**. Such a convention would ensure a sustainable system of medical innovation with adequate and predictable financing to deliver medicines and products which are focused on health needs of developing countries.

### MPs moved by stories of stigma faced by young carers affected by HIV and AIDS

Following an APPG meeting held with the Children's Society's Include project, Shadow Business Secretary and MP for Streatham Chuka Umunna said that he was "very moved" by the experiences of young carers affected by HIV and AIDS in his constituency. He was particularly surprised to learn that many of the young carers had received no or very inadequate sex and relationships education. In a response to a Parliamentary Question after the event, Children's Minister Edward Timpson confirmed that all children should receive sex education on HIV in Secondary school.

Chuka Umunna MP spoke about his experience of meeting with the young carers during a special edition of Radio 4's Any Questions, which was broadcast from the Young Carers festival.

### APPG teams up with Coronation

#### Street to raise awareness about HIV

The APPG teamed up with SAFE Kenya to host an event with Shadow International Development Minister Sir Tony Cunningham MP at the Labour Party Conference in Manchester. The event focussed on the challenges of Stigma, and the efforts of charities such as SAFE to promote behaviour change and HIV prevention activities. Actor Ben Price from Coronation Street reflected on his recent trip to Kenya, where he worked with SAFE to produce a Kenyan soap opera. THT's medical director Dr Michael Brady reflected on the medical progress made in combating the epidemic, whilst Tony Cunningham highlighted the importance of the Global Fund and the need for continued UK Government leadership on HIV. Angelina Namiba from Positively UK spoke of her personal experience of being diagnosed HIV positive.



### Forthcoming Events

The APPG hosts regular public events for its members and supporters in Parliament, as well as smaller private meetings for our Parliamentary members. We are pleased to announce the following public events this Autumn:

**21st November, 5-6.30pm, Committee Room 9, House of Commons**

**Health in the Post MDG Framework: What next for the MDGs?** This joint meeting will reflect on the future role of HIV and Health after 2015 rsvp: [appg.gh@gmail.com](mailto:appg.gh@gmail.com)

**4th December: 3-4pm, Committee Room 6, House of Commons, Self HIV Testing:**

This meeting will focus on the current ban on self testing for HIV, and discuss whether, and how it can be lifted.

**Who we've been meeting:** Over the past 3 months, the APPG has been delighted to meet with the **George House Trust**, **NAZ project**, the **Mortimer Market Centre**, the **Children's HIV Association**, and the **Children's Society**, to learn about issues affected people living with HIV in the UK. APPG Chair Pamela Nash also spoke at a meeting organised by **Impact Aids** for HIV charities in Scotland. We also continue to work closely with the **UK Consortium on AIDS and International Development**.