

Hello, and welcome to the Winter 2014 APPG Newsletter. From January 2015 The Policy Advisor to the APPG Susie Pelly is going on maternity leave, Matt Grady will be covering her leave. Happy New Year from all of us at the APPG.

# ALL-PARTY PARLIAMENTARY GROUP ON HIV AND AIDS



## APPG launches Report “Access Denied”

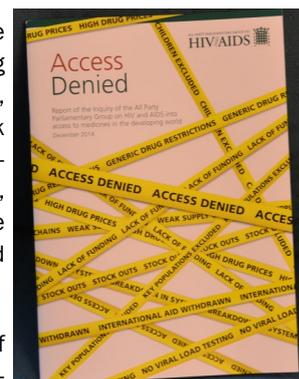


Baroness Northover addresses the audience at the launch of “Access Denied”. Vovo (an HIV activist from South Africa) and Pamela Nash MP listen to the Minister’s response)

an for World AIDS Day in [this article](#) . The report covers a range of issues; continuing high prices of second and third-line drugs, lack of access to viral load testing and lack of R&D in paediatric drugs, weak and inefficient health and drug procurement systems, the particular challenges for middle income countries and the exclusion of marginalised populations from treatment.

Pamela Nash MP states in the foreword of the report: “Access Denied may be the culmination of the APPG’s research, but it is only the start of what we hope will be a successful campaign to hold governments, multilateral donors and the private sector to account in the quest to improve access to medicines in the developing world.”

We have already seen the report’s recommendations are being championed by a number of Parliamentarians through questions and debates on the floors of both Houses and we will strive to keep the momentum going in the New Year. Thankyou to all those who attended the launch event in Parliament. Around 80 people crowded into the IPU room to hear speeches from the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for DFID, Baroness Northover, Vovo Gonyela, and HIV activist from South Africa, Mary Creagh, Shadow Secretary of State for DFID, Dr Scott Purdon from ViiV Healthcare, Rohit Malpani from MSF and Greg Perry, Executive Director of the Medicines Patent Pool.



On World AIDS Day the APPG launched our new report “Access Denied” which looks at access to medicines in the developing world. The report comes after nearly a year of evidence gathering, two research trips, three oral evidence sessions and numerous written submissions from organisations throughout the world. The launch was covered in an exclusive by the Guardi-

## Politicians of all parties pledge to tackle HIV

On 26th November politicians of all parties met with members of the HIV community at the House of Commons to discuss their plans to keep HIV as a priority under the next government. Conservative Party Vice Chairman Mike Freer, Liberal Democrat Health team member Baroness Liz Barker and Shadow Public Health Minister Luciana Berger each spoke on key issues for voters in the HIV community, and outlined how the different parties would address them.

At the ‘Defining Leadership to tackle HIV’ World AIDS

Day event hosted by the Halve It Coalition and the All-Party Parliamentary Group on HIV & AIDS, political leaders agreed that successfully combatting the public health challenge posed by HIV required a cross-party approach to keep it high on the political agenda, and that full implementation of NICE public health guidance on HIV testing was vitally important. 25 MPs, Peers and Councillors pledged to support the Halve It coalition in its goals to halve late diagnosed and undiagnosed HIV through national and local action. The event was attended by people living with HIV, advocates, clinicians, community organisations and policymakers, all of whom came together to unite in the fight against HIV, show their support for those living with HIV and to commemorate those who have died.



Contact us: APPG on HIV and AIDS, Room 413, 1 Parliament Street, House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA Tel: +44 207 219 5670

APPG Chair: Pamela Nash MP, Vice Chairs: Lord Fowler, Simon Kirby MP, Baroness Masham, Stuart Andrew MP, Caroline Lucas MP, Russell Brown MP, Policy Advisor Matt Grady [policy.advisor@appghiv aids.org.uk](mailto:policy.advisor@appghiv aids.org.uk)

Dr David Asboe, Chair of the British HIV Association, a founder member of the Halve It campaign, described the event as ‘a wake-up call for politicians to take urgent steps and ensure that the policies they have developed to tackle HIV are fully implemented and lives saved across the country.’

Jane Ellison, Public Health Minister, said: ‘I fully support the aims of the Halve It campaign, the Government is committed to reducing late diagnosis and the number of people who are unaware that they have HIV. People living with HIV can expect to live a long and healthy life if they are diagnosed early which is why our sexual health strategy focusses on prevention and testing. We are testing more people than ever, with fewer diagnoses, which shows we are moving in the right direction.’

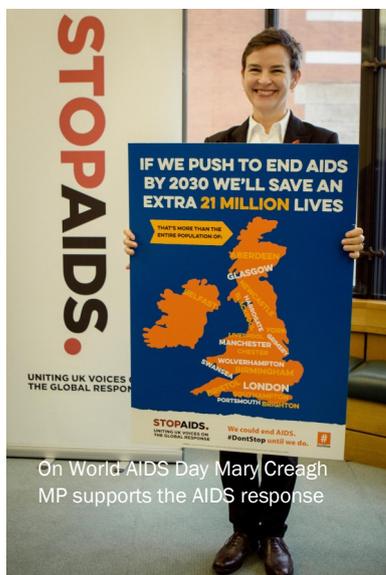
Andy Burnham, Shadow Secretary of State for Health, said ‘Much more needs to be done to tackle HIV in this country. Everything from awareness around prevention, to early diagnosis, treatment and care. A key part of the solution lies in collaboration across stakeholder groups, nationally and locally. The Halve It campaign is



Baroness Gould chairs the panel discussion on “Defining Leadership” with speakers, Luciana Berger MP, Mike Freer MP and Baroness Barker

an excellent example of local and national organisations and individuals, uniting around an important issue and driving change.’

## Record numbers of MPs pledge support to end AIDS, Malaria and TB



On World AIDS Day Mary Creagh MP supports the AIDS response

On Wednesday 26th November STOPAIDS and the APPG on HIV and AIDS hosted their annual event for MPs to drop in, talk to members of the STOPAIDS coalition and pledge their support to tackling HIV. This year the STOPAIDS campaign is calling on all three of the main political parties to pledge their support to end AIDS, Malaria and TB in the run up to the General Election.

Every year more and more MPs show their support for people living with HIV in the develop-

ing world through awareness raising on World AIDS Day. This year a record 52 MPs came to show their support including the recently appointed Shadow Secretary of State Mary Creagh MP. HIV and AIDS continues to affect people living in the UK with over 100,000 people estimated to have the virus, however in the poorest countries, most epidemics register prevalence rates in their millions with South Africa at the top of the list with a total of 6.3 million people living with HIV.

Ben Simms of STOPAIDS said “We were delighted to have the support of so many MPs in this effort. Their support has helped to ensure the UK is saving a life every three minutes through the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. This World AIDS Day we remembered the 35 million people who have lost their lives to AIDS and call all leaders to honour that loss by seizing the opportunity we now have to end the epidemic.”

## What’s been happening in the House of Commons and House of Lords?

As you’ll see in the picture below, this year the Prime Minister showed his support for World AIDS Day wearing the symbolic red ribbon during PMQs. It was also noted in the Commons that MPs from all sides, including the Chancellor George Osborne and Labour leader Ed Miliband, were wearing red ribbons. David Cameron answered



Snapshot of David Cameron from Pink News

questions from Pamela Nash MP and Simon Kirby MP. In answer to Simon Kirby’s question about national testing week, the Prime Minister said: “I think my Honourable Friend is absolutely right, obviously this government is pioneering the offer of free tests, it’s very important and we need to tackle HIV and AIDS not just here in our country but around the

world and that’s also why we put so much money into anti-retroviral drugs.” Pamela Nash MP, Chair of APPG on HIV and AIDS asked the Prime Minister what he is going to do about investing in R&D for neglected areas of research such as paediatric HIV. You can see the Prime Minister’s answer in [this Pink News article](#). Members of Parliament in the House of Lords have also been very active, raising awareness of HIV and AIDS through a number of questions and debates. Baroness Gould, a member of the APPG questioned the Department for Health on what the government is doing to tackle stigma. Other members highlighted the need for compulsory sex education. To see the full exchange click [here](#). On the same day Lord Collins questioned DFID on a number of the recommendations in the APPG report “Access Denied”. To see that exchange [click here](#). Since then Lord Collins [lead a debate](#) in the House of Lords into lack of investment in R&D for neglected areas of disease. On December 11th Lord Fowler, Vice Chair of the APPG lead a debate on the Global Fund, you can see the debate [here](#).

**What’s coming up? To find out more about what the APPG will be doing over the coming months, get in contact with the APPG’s Policy Advisor Matt Grady via [policy.advisor@appghivaid.org.uk](mailto:policy.advisor@appghivaid.org.uk)**