

Hello and welcome to APPG on HIV/AIDS Spring Newsletter. We've had a busy start to the year so please read on to find out what we've been up to. You can contact the Policy Advisor Susie Pelly Please on pellys@parliament.uk. Have a lovely Easter break!



APPG Meets with Former President of Botswana His Excellency Mr Festus Moghae



Right to left Mike Freer MP, Mr Festus Moghae, Baroness Barker, Viendra Sharma MP, Makhamokha Mohale Executive Secretary of the Champions for an AIDS free generation.

On 22nd March members of the APPG met with the former President of Botswana, His Excellency Mr Festus Moghae to discuss the future of the AIDS response, how we can create sustainability for HIV in the current ODA environment and the role of the UK in ending AIDS by 2030.

Access to medicines guru Jamie Love meets the APPG

Well known access to medicines expert Jamie Love, Director of Knowledge Ecology International (KEI), met with Parliamentarians at the beginning of March to discuss innovative ideas for tackling the high prices of drugs. Love advises UN agencies, national governments, international and regional intergovernmental organizations and public health NGOs, and is the author of a number of articles and monographs on innovation and intellectual property rights. Jamie played a critical role in the battle for access to antiretroviral treatment in [Africa](#) and other parts of the global south and is seen as one of the world's leading experts on access to medicines issues.

Youth STOPAIDS and APPG host the annual Speaker Tour

On Tuesday 1st March Brian Ssensalire, a 32-year old HIV positive man from Uganda and Robert Lawler, a 25-year old HIV positive young man from Ireland came to Parliament as part of the annual Youth STOPAIDS Speaker Tour. The advocates told their powerful stories of learning to live with their diagnosis and how they turned what could have been a negative life event into a positive life-changing moment. Parliamentarians were both impressed and moved by the

testimonies.

APPG Members challenge the Government on their disappointing decision not to fund PREP

A last minute decision from NHS England not to fund PREP (the newest and most innovative drug to prevent the spread of HIV) has shocked and angered the UK HIV sector. Chair of the APPG Mike Freer and APPG member Catherine West MP were first to challenge the Government on this during Department of Health questions. *"Yesterday NHS England scrapped plans to fund PrEP. Is there anything that the Minister can do to end this erratic and inconsistent decision making? Does she agree that yesterday's decision to abandon the roll-out of a game-changing drug totally failed those who are at risk of contracting HIV?"* Catherine West MP

APPG questions the Government on R&D and the Global Fund

In January Baroness Barker [lead a debate](#) on the Government's progress towards achieving some of the APPG's report recommendations in "Access Denied". Members of the group also raised the importance of the Global Fund and will be pushing the Government to increase its contribution in the replenishment later this year.

Vice Chair of the APPG Stephen Doughty MP [challenged the Government](#) to announce its priorities at the upcoming World Health Assembly and highlighted the importance of finding solutions to R&D barriers for neglected areas of disease. Mike Freer MP questioned the Minister on the UK's commitment to tackling HIV through its work on woman and girls. He will be following this up in a Westminster Hall debate in April.

What's coming up next?

There are **2 debates** which will be lead by our members coming up in April. The first on 12th April: **HIV and Women and Girls (Mike Freer MP)** and the second on 13th April: **Implementing the Sustainable Development Goals (Ben Howlett MP)**. The APPG will be briefing members prior to this debate so do please send through any briefings to pellys@parliament.uk. **Inquiry into the Health and Social Care Act** – the extended call for written evidence has concluded. Oral evidence sessions will be announced after Easter. **For events please keep an eye on your emails!**