



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

APPG on Blood Cancer launches inquiry into blood cancer care in the NHS

The All-Party Parliamentary Group on Blood Cancer is today (Wednesday 15 March) launching an inquiry into blood cancer care in the NHS. The inquiry, the first undertaken by the APPG, will look at all aspects of blood cancer, including awareness, diagnosis, patient experience, commissioning of services and clinical research.

Blood cancer is a complex and often misunderstood disease area. There are many differences in the patient journey compared to other cancers, and this inquiry will seek to understand more about the care patients are receiving, identify areas of best practice and recommend where improvements are required.

The inquiry will look at the areas of care identified as priorities in the Independent Cancer Taskforce's Cancer Strategy for England 2015 -2020, and will seek to identify which services patients require, where their needs are currently being met, and where services need to be extended or amended to account for the specific needs of blood cancer patients.

The inquiry will gain expert opinion from patients, clinicians, researchers and NHS staff, summarising findings and recommendations in a report to be published later this year.

Though the inquiry will focus on the implementation of the Cancer Strategy for England, the group is keen to learn from examples of good practice in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland and would therefore welcome contributions from the devolved nations.

Henry Smith MP, Chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Blood Cancer said: *"Blood cancer is the third biggest cancer killer in the UK, and the fifth most common cancer overall, yet awareness among the general public and policy audiences is still low. We need to make sure that NHS provision meets the needs of all cancer patients, especially in areas such as blood cancer where the patient journey differs from the majority of solid tumour cancers.*

"We have a deliberately wide remit for this inquiry, the first of the APPG on Blood Cancer – this inquiry and subsequent report will provide a valuable overview of the blood cancer landscape, and I'm sure it will raise several issues that the APPG will want to explore in more detail in future inquiries."

The All-Party Parliamentary Group will hold oral evidence sessions and also invite written evidence via an online form from stakeholders including patients, carers, patient organisations, and others involved in delivering blood cancer care. The online form can be accessed at <http://bloodwise.appg.sgizmo.com/s3/>

The deadline for online and written responses is Thursday 27 April. The APPG Secretariat, provided by the blood cancer charity Bloodwise, will be managing all the responses and can be contacted at appg@bloodwise.org.uk

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For press enquiries and interview requests please contact Henry Smith MP on henry.smith.mp@parliament.uk or 020 7219 7043.

Notes to editors:

Blood cancer is the UK's third biggest cancer killer, claiming more lives each year than breast or prostate cancer. Blood cancer is the fifth most common cancer with almost 38,000 people diagnosed every year and 230,000 people living with blood cancer in the UK. However, the knowledge and awareness of blood cancer among the general public and political audiences is very low.

The All-Party Parliamentary Group on Blood Cancer is a cross-party parliamentary group established to raise awareness and promote the needs of blood cancer patients in parliament, with government, NHS, and charity stakeholders, and ensure policies affecting blood cancer patients, their families and carers are patient-centred and evidence-based. For more information please visit: <https://bloodwise.org.uk/page/all-party-parliamentary-group-blood-cancer>

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