



## NEWSLETTER – volume 6 – January 2009

HAPPY NEW YEAR AND WISHING YOU ALL THE BEST FOR 2009

### APPG becomes official member of Stop TB Partnership

The APPG on Global TB has become an official member of the Stop TB Partnership's Global Partnership to Stop TB. The Stop TB Partnership's aim is to realize the goal of eliminating TB as a public health problem and, ultimately, to obtain a world free of TB. It comprises a network of international organisations, countries, donors from the public and private sectors, governmental and nongovernmental organisations and individuals that have expressed an interest in working together to achieve this goal.

### Peers debate TB in UK schools

An oral question asking the Government to highlight the number of TB outbreaks that occur in London schools has been asked in the House of Lords. Baroness Sharples, an APPG on Global TB member, asked the question which was answered by Lord Darzi of Denham, Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Health. Lord Darzi explained that there were 31 TB incidents in schools (including nurseries) in 2004, 32 in 2005, 17 in 2006, 29 in 2007 and, 39 in 2008. He was not aware of the number of incidents occurring in higher educational institutions. Incidents are defined as occurrences where potential transmission to non-household contacts is identified as a public health risk warranting wider investigation

### Work of APPG discussed at Paris TB Conference

The secretariat of the APPG was invited to speak at Advocates Corner – a platform for discussion and experience sharing organised by the Stop TB Partnership at the Annual Conference of the International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease in October. TB experts from countries including Nigeria, Kenya, Canada and Malawi joined in discussions on the need to involve parliamentarians in the response to global TB.

### APPG members attend Global Fund Forum

APPG co-chair Julie Morgan MP and member Doug Naysmith MP recently joined parliamentarians from Spain, Italy, Germany and USA in attending the Global Fund to Fight AIDS TB and Malaria (GFATM) Partners Forum in Dakar, Senegal.



Julie Morgan MP and Doug Naysmith MP with local Senegalese volunteers

The parliamentarians attended seminars and workshops aimed at identifying ways to further improve the means in which the different public and private partners of the Global Fund on the national, regional and global levels work together. They also visited a Global Fund supported HIV programme aimed at screening marginalised population groups. Visiting parliamentarians also attended a meeting with members of the Parliament of Senegal.

### Parliamentarians informed of efforts to control drug resistant TB

A briefing session was held in Westminster in November to provide Parliamentarians with an update on drug resistant TB both in the UK and globally. Expert speakers Professor Francis Drobniowski and Professor Peter Davies spoke about how, and why, drug resistance occurs and the latest WHO figures on the spread of the disease. The global response to XDR-TB was also discussed. The meeting looked in anticipation to the Ministerial Forum on TB Drug resistance being held in China in April 2009.

## Need for better services for hard-to-reach TB patients

Peer Educators from the Find and Treat TB service shared their experiences of being diagnosed and treated for TB as part of an APPG meeting focused on hard to reach patient groups. Members of Parliament and TB experts discussed activities currently being done to prevent, diagnose and treat TB in these groups (including individuals with drug and alcohol issues, the homeless, prisoners and recent migrants) and what still needs to be done to ensure they receive adequate and focused services to their specific needs.

## APPG session at Health Protection Agency Conference

The APPG on Global TB co-arranged a day-long TB symposium at the recent Health Protection Agency Conference at Warwick University. Doug Naysmith MP, an active member of the APPG, co-chaired a session examining national and international perspectives of TB which included a presentation by Mario Raviglione, Head of the Stop TB Department at the World Health Organisation. Mr Naysmith praised the HPA for focusing on TB and saw it as a sign of the increased importance given to the disease. He also stated that it was essential that TB continued to be considered a priority public health issue if the world is to reduce the 2 million unnecessary TB deaths that occur each year.

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## RCN and APPG launch joint survey

January 1<sup>st</sup> saw the launch of a joint APPG/Royal College of Nursing (RCN) online survey aimed at nurses working in TB in the UK. The overall purpose of the survey is to get feedback and opinions from nursing staff regarding what is happening on the front line in TB Services in their area. It seeks to understand if TB services are adequately funded and managed and what challenges still remain in TB control in the UK.

It is important that all TB nurses take the time to complete the survey and let their opinions be known. The survey will be fed back to the RCN TB nurses Forum and will be launched in Parliament in the summer.

The survey can be found at: [http://www.appg-tb.org.uk/documents/RCNAPPGSurvey\\_002.doc](http://www.appg-tb.org.uk/documents/RCNAPPGSurvey_002.doc)

## APPG joins UK Coalition to Stop TB

The APPG has joined the UK coalition to Stop TB group which aims to "increase the level of awareness, commitment and political will to stop TB through a unified voice and coordinated actions". The Coalition will operate through smaller working groups towards specific outcomes. The initial working groups will look at mobilising resources for TB, TB in the UK, HIV-TB co-infection, drug resistance and new tools.



## Parliamentarians and NGOs discuss need for TB and HIV Service integration

The APPG on Global TB and the AIDS APPG, supported by the UK Coalition to Stop TB, co-hosted a meeting in Parliament in October aimed at Parliamentarians and staff of NGOs. The meeting looked to inform participants of the link between HIV and TB and discuss what action needs to be taken to scale up efforts to tackle the two diseases. Dr Paul Nunn from the World Health Organisation spoke about the work of the WHO - their guidance, policies and resources and the urgent need to integrate TB and HIV services. Ezio Tavora dos Santos - Filho, an activist and researcher from Brazil also spoke about his personal experiences and the need to engage civil society in the fight against TB and HIV.

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## Upcoming APPG on TB events

*Monitoring Progress towards the Millennium Development Goals: The Global Taskforce on TB Impact Measurement.*

Tuesday 24th February 2009, 2-4pm. Committee Room 7, House of Commons, London.

Speakers include: Dr Katherine Floyd - WHO Stop TB Department, Dr Jaap Broekmans - Chair, Global Task Force on TB Impact Measurement and Dr Ibrahim Abubakar - Health Protection Agency Centre for Infections

All-Party Parliamentary Group on Global Tuberculosis

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