



NEWSLETTER – volume 1 – April 2007

APPG members return from India

Six members of the APPG on Global TB participated in a fact-finding visit to India last month to learn about the impact of TB and TB/HIV across the sub-continent.

During their week in India, the delegation visited a number of TB programmes, clinics and research centres in Delhi, Chennai and Bangalore. The delegates also had the opportunity to talk to health workers, practitioners, patients and policymakers about the major challenges that must be addressed in order to win the battle against this disease of poverty.

The group learned that despite considerable progress made by the Revised National TB Control Programme (RNTCP) to expand its DOTS programme, 1000 people continue to die from TB each day in India. There is great disparity in the quality of TB services provided by the private sector (where the majority of Indians access health care) resulting in unsuccessful treatment and growing rates of multi-drug resistant strains of TB.

Discussion with a range of stakeholders highlighted the urgent need to increase awareness about TB amongst the general population in order to reduce stigma and to encourage more people to come forward for testing and treatment. The need for new tools to more effectively diagnose, treat and prevent TB was also reiterated throughout the visit.

In a meeting with six members of the Indian Medical Parliamentarians Forum (IMPF), Indian and British Parliamentarians signed the Call to Stop TB and called upon their respective nations to unite in the fight against TB. Nick Herbert MP, Co-Chair of the APPG on Global TB, reaffirmed that UK Parliamentarians are *“keen to work with our colleagues from other countries to help persuade our governments to step up the fight against TB. This is a global disease that does not respect borders.”* The meeting resulted in the creation of a Parliamentary Caucus on TB in the Indian Parliament.

Members of the delegation were Tom Clarke MP; Ann Cryer MP; Nick Herbert MP; Jeremy Hunt MP; Ashok Kumar MP and Baroness Lindsay Northover. The trip was organised and funded by advocacy organisation RESULTS UK. A full report of the trip will be made available on the APPG website.

EDM 1250: Rising incidence of TB in the UK

Provisional figures released by the Health Protection Agency for 2006 show that cases of TB in England, Wales and Northern Ireland are continuing to rise with an estimated 8,171 cases reported last year.

An Early Day Motion (EDM) has been tabled to demonstrate concern for this rise in cases and to call upon the Government to make addressing TB in the UK a priority. Members of Parliament are being encouraged to lend their support to this motion by signing EDM 1250.

For list of signatories visit <http://edmi.parliament.uk/edmi/>

APPG launches ‘Agenda for Action’

In a meeting in the House of Commons on 22nd March, the APPG on Global TB launched its first publication outlining steps that the UK Government and wider international community should take to ensure that the fight to stop TB is won.

Scaling up the UK’s response to the Global TB epidemic: an Agenda for Action calls on the UK Government and Department for International Development in particular, to set the trend for concerted action against the epidemic in order to realise the aims of the *Global Plan to Stop TB, 2006-2015* which the UK has fully endorsed.

The *Agenda for Action* was released alongside the World Health Organization’s annual Tuberculosis Control Report which was presented by Dr. Katherine Floyd from WHO’s Stop TB Department. Dr. Stewart Tyson from the Department for International Development also spoke about DFID’s current role in fighting TB in the developing world.



Nick Herbert MP, Dr. Katherine Floyd and Dr. Stewart Tyson

A copy of the *Agenda for Action* and minutes of the meeting on March 22nd are available on the APPG website.

“Collective Responsibility and Collaboration”

In the Lancet’s World TB Day editorial, the UK APPG on Global TB – and specifically its recently released *Agenda for Action* – was highlighted as an example of the “collective responsibility and collaboration needed to combat” tuberculosis.

For the full article visit www.lancet.com (volume 369, page 965)

INTERTB seminar at St. George’s

The APPG’s Coordinator attended a seminar organised by the International Consortium for Trials of Chemotherapeutic Agents in Tuberculosis (INTERTB) at St. George’s, University of London.

The seminar was organised to discuss strategies for improving the current treatment for TB, for example by shortening the current six-month regimen, in order to meet MDG targets on TB.

For more information contact INTERTB’s International Coordinator: Dr. Amina Jindani ajindani@sgul.ac.uk

All-Party Parliamentary Group on Global Tuberculosis

For more information visit: www.appg-tb.org.uk

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