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Access to Medicines and Medical Devices

All-Party Parliamentary Group

Date: Tuesday, 20 May 2025, 11:00 AM

Venue: Portcullis House, Room Q

Parliamentarians present:

- Freddie van Mierlo MP (Liberal Democrat)
- Iqbal Mohamed MP (Independent)
- Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick (Labour)
- Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle (Green Party)
- Baroness Golding (Labour)
- Josh Babarinde MP (Liberal Democrat)

Others Present:

- Hannah Wiles (Parliamentary Assistant to Freddie van Mierlo MP)
- Celia Miray Yesil (RPP Group)
- Charles Waller (RPP Group)
- Benjamin Phan (RPP Group)

Apologies:

- Lord Lansley (Conservative)
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Minutes

1. Welcome from the proposed APPG Chair, Freddie Van Mierlo MP

a. Freddie Van Mierlo MP opened the meeting and thanked attendees for their engagement in forming the APPG on Access to Medicines and Medical Devices. He emphasised the importance of this cross-party platform in addressing the pressing challenges of access, affordability, and innovation in the NHS. He confirmed that the APPG met all formal establishment criteria, including the quorum requirement of at least five Parliamentarians present and a minimum of 20 Parliamentarians listed as members.

b. The Chair highlighted the strategic need for parliamentary oversight and dialogue on appraisal systems, regulatory pathways, and the adoption of innovative health technologies. He welcomed the Secretariat team from RPP Group and confirmed that formal group business would follow.

2. Formal business procedures

a. Election of Officers

i. It was moved that Freddie van Mierlo MP would serve as Chair of the APPG. All voted in favour.

ii. The following Parliamentarians were nominated and confirmed as officers of the APPG:

Name	Role	Party	Chamber
Freddie Van Mierlo	Chair	Liberal Democrat	Commons
Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick	Officer	Labour	Lords
Iqbal Mohamed	Officer	Independent	Commons
Lord Lansley	Officer	Conservative	Lords

All appointments were agreed by consensus.

b. Name for APPG:

It was agreed that the name of the group would be the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Access to Medicines and Medical Devices.

c. Secretariat:

It was confirmed that RPP Group would act as the Secretariat for the APPG.

3. APPG purpose statement and workplan discussion

a. Statement of Purpose

The group agreed the following amended purpose statement:

“To examine and develop the appraisal, funding, adoption, provision, and equality of access to medicines and medical devices in the NHS in England.”

This amendment was made to explicitly include “equality of access” following discussion among Members.

b. Programme of Work

Freddie van Mierlo MP outlined the APPG’s initial workplan, structured around three core themes:

- **System Preparedness and Readiness** – assessing how well the NHS is equipped to adopt and deliver new medicines and medical technologies.
- **System Fairness and Equity** – tackling variations in access and addressing postcode lotteries across regions and patient groups.
- **Awareness of the UK’s medicines and medical devices landscape** – supporting MPs to navigate the UK’s access and regulatory landscape, using real-world casework to inform policy dialogue.

Building on this framework, members and stakeholders identified several additional priorities to shape the APPG's agenda:

Members discussed the need for a data-driven baseline of medicine and device availability across the UK to identify regional disparities and monitor post-Brexit changes. Suggested data sources included community pharmacies, NHS Trusts and marketing authorisation holders. Concerns were also raised about the inconsistent delivery of Early Access Programmes (EAPs), with many NHS trusts lacking the capacity to implement them despite manufacturer support. Members identified this as a driver of postcode variation and urged exploration of a national coordination mechanism, citing Scotland's approach as a potential model.

Discussion also covered the UK's position in global launch timelines. While the MHRA has demonstrated agility, members noted that downstream barriers, including NICE timelines, pricing pressures and commissioning delays, continue to affect access. There were concerns that the UK is being deprioritised by some pharmaceutical companies as a launch market due to the impact of UK pricing on international reference systems. In the context of system resilience, members also stressed the need to address supply chain fragility, particularly for essential medicines.

In closing, members agreed that the APPG should focus on practical, case-led interventions that highlight real-world access issues and support targeted, evidence-based policy improvements. The Group will also seek to complement and not replicate the work of other relevant APPGs.

4. Next Steps and Close

- The APPG Secretariat will submit the official registration documents including the amended purpose and confirmed officers.
- A draft schedule of future meetings (minimum of 3–4 per year) will be circulated.

It was agreed that the Secretariat would take forward work on all of the above.

The Chair concluded by thanking attendees for their contributions. No other business took place, the meeting concluded at 11:30 PM.