

Code of Governance APPG

ALL-PARTY PARLIAMENTARY GROUP FOR HEALTH CODE OF GOVERNANCE

Overview

1. The All-Party Parliamentary Health Group Code of Governance is an agreement between the Officers, Advisory Board and Associate Members of the Group on the rules under which the All-Party Parliamentary Health Group operates and is administered. A copy is made publicly available on the website. The intention of the Code is to supplement the statutory information that the Group provides on its entry in the Register of All-Party Groups, in order to ensure full transparency. The All-Party Parliamentary Health Group is committed to ensuring its activities and funding are entirely transparent. The All-Party Parliamentary Health Group is funded through a combination of core funding from an associate membership and ad hoc sponsorship of particular events and research, all of which is declared on the official Parliamentary Register of All-Party Groups <https://www.parliament.uk/mps-lords-and-offices/standards-and-financial-interests/parliamentary-commissioner-for-standards/registers-of-interests/register-of-all-party-parliamentary-groups>.
2. The All-Party Parliamentary Health Group does not endorse, support or campaign on behalf of one organisation. Rather, it campaigns for evidence-based policy developments in health. The Group operates according to a strict Code of Governance, and its work is driven by its Parliamentary Officers.
3. The Secretariat services are provided by Policy Connect, a membership-based cross-party think tank with an extensive network of parliamentary groups, research commissions, forums and campaigns, working to inform and improve UK public policy. Policy Connect is committed to upholding the principle of transparency in UK parliamentary and public affairs and welcomes any questions you may have on its work and activities. Further details on this are provided below.

Parliamentary members

4. The All-Party Parliamentary Health Group is an All-Party Group on the approved list of All-Party Parliamentary Groups. It abides by the rules and guidelines laid down in the official guidance on the operation of All-Party Parliamentary Groups compiled by the Office of the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards.
5. The All-Party Parliamentary Health Group exists in order to help Parliamentarians to fully engage with key health and social care policy issues.
6. The All-Party Parliamentary Health Group is open to members of all parties and both Houses of Parliament.

7. The Group must have a minimum parliamentary membership of at least 4 ‘qualifying’ members at any one time. Each of the Group’s Officers must be an MP or Peer, elected at the AGM. At least two of the Group’s Officers (including the Chair, who must also be the All-Party Parliamentary Health Group’s Registered Contact), must be MPs. At least one Officer must be from the Government party or parties and at least one from the main Opposition party. Peers may be appointed to any position except that of the Chair and Registered Contact. The parliamentary membership does not have an upper limit. No membership subscription fee is charged of parliamentary members of the Group.
8. The agenda of the All-Party Parliamentary Health Group is set by the Group’s Officers, in accordance with Article 18 (d) of the Guide to the Rules on All-Party Parliamentary Groups (March 2015). Associate members can advise the Group and its Officers, but they have no executive decision-making powers over the content of the programme. Officers are elected annually at the AGM, and the role is open to all Parliamentarians. Only Parliamentarians have voting rights at the AGM.
9. The Parliamentary Officers have executive authority over the Group. Officers usually take the following positions:
 - a. Chair – with overall responsibility for Group
 - b. Co-Chairs – with the Chair, making the executive decisions relating to the operation of the Group, and the content of its work programme
 - c. Treasurer – who officially approves the accounts once a year at the AGM
10. The All-Party Parliamentary Health Group is also comprised of one non-parliamentary element: an Advisory Board comprised of leading figures from the world of health, including the NHS, the private sector, the third sector and academic institutions in the health sector, and who have been appointed by the Parliamentary Officers. The Parliamentary Officers also hold the power to vote for the establishment of any affiliated groups, should the Group desire to expand.

Associate membership

11. Associate membership is open to non-parliamentary organisations.
12. Membership subscriptions from these organisations provide a source of funding that allows The All-Party Parliamentary Health Group to maintain a Secretariat to conduct the main business of the Group. The Secretariat facilitates the running of a regular programme of meetings at Westminster and other parliamentary work, as well as providing information resources through its website and other publications.
13. The associate membership also offers the Group a useful insight into present developments in health, and access to the views of the wider health sector.
14. Associate member organisations are invited to send representatives to all group meetings and are registered to receive all official Group correspondence.

15. At meetings, associate members are asked to participate actively in discussions, whilst recognising that the All-Party Parliamentary Health Group is intended as a means of disseminating impartial information and that Parliamentarians have priority in their contributions.
16. Associate members are also invited to sponsor additional resources, research or meetings that fall outside the standard events programme. No editorial influence is conferred by such sponsorship.

Advisory Board

17. The Advisory Board is comprised of relevant organisations from the public, private and third sectors, as appointed by the Officers.
18. The Advisory Board meets at least once annually with the Parliamentary Officers to evaluate the past and approve the future activities and administration of the Group. Individual members of the Board also advise the Group on matters of substance, such as publications etc.

The Secretariat

19. The All-Party Parliamentary Health Group is administered by a full-time Secretariat responsible for executing the programme and activities of the Group as agreed by the Officers.
20. The Secretariat and other administrative services are provided by Policy Connect.
 - a. Policy Connect is a membership-based, not-for-profit cross-party think tank working to inform, influence and improve UK public policy development and delivery. It leads and manages an extensive network of parliamentary groups, research commissions, forums and campaigns working to bring together the public and private sector with parliamentarians and leading experts on important issues. Policy Connect provides support services to a number of parliamentary groups and initiatives.
 - b. Secretarial and other administrative services include the provision of: management staff; project and event management; shared costs of telephone, IT, web and email hosting; financial services; and shared office space.
21. The finances are administered as follows:
 - i. Annual membership subscriptions and any additional sponsorship for the All-Party Parliamentary Health Group are managed by Policy Connect. Policy Connect prepares annual accounts which are externally audited and published at Companies House. The work of Policy Connect is overseen by a separate scrutiny committee to ensure governance of the use of funds, which is chaired by parliamentarians. Please find more information on Policy

Connect's financial governance arrangements here:

<http://www.policyconnect.org.uk/policy-connect-financial-governance>

- ii. The All-Party Parliamentary Health Group shares administrative and accommodation costs with other Policy Connect Groups.

22. The above arrangement acts as a safeguard for the financial liabilities of the Parliamentary Officers.

Other organisations

23. Where possible and appropriate, other relevant organisations are invited to participate in meetings and resources.

- a. Internal to Westminster, meetings and resources are open to other parliamentary bodies such as Committee and Parliamentary Office staff, the House of Commons and Lords Libraries, and Member's own research staff.
- b. External to Westminster, representatives from charity and voluntary sector agencies and other relevant organisations are invited to attend meetings at which their contribution is of relevance to the subject area.
- c. Attendance at meetings must be by the invitation of, and response to, the All-Party Parliamentary Health Group.

Endorsement

24. This Code of Governance is endorsed by the Officers of the Group, representing an agreement on how the group operates and is administered.