



## Minutes

### APPGBC Bi-Monthly Officers' Meeting

Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2016, 10.00am to 11.00am, Room M, Portcullis House

#### Attendees:

Sam Aldridge (Breast Cancer Care) (SA); Melanie Sturtevant (APPG on Breast Cancer) (MS); Francesca de Munnich (APPG on Breast Cancer) (FDM); Sarah Osborn (APPG on Breast Cancer); Craig Tracey MP (CT); Sharon Hodgson MP (SH).

#### Apologies:

Jo Churchill MP; Philippa Whitford MP.

#### 1. Inquiry

- MS provided an introduction to the APPG's upcoming inquiry – *A Mixed Picture: an inquiry into geographical inequalities and breast cancer*. She recapped that the inquiry will investigate the extent of geographical variations in breast cancer diagnosis and outcomes and their impact on patients, and will make recommendations to improve the situation.
- MS outlined the three key themes of the inquiry that have been decided – early diagnosis, outcomes, and NHS structures and plans. She suggested a fourth theme, treatment and care, to bridge the gap between diagnosis and outcomes. The National Cancer Patient Experience Survey data could be used to look at aspects of treatment and support that are most valued by patients, and the inquiry could investigate the variations in these services.
- There was general agreement on including this fourth theme of the inquiry. MS asked to be informed if anybody felt other areas should be investigated.
- MS stated that she is currently developing the Terms of Reference and call for written evidence for the inquiry, which will go into greater detail about what will be investigated in each of these four themes. SH asked who would receive the call for written evidence, and MS said the call will be sent out widely to patients, clinicians and health bodies.
- MS described the plan to undertake patient focus groups after the call for written evidence. SH asked how to find these patients and MS said they could be reached through the networks held by the APPG, its secretariat and Breast Cancer Care. The APPG would need to ensure that a wide variety of patients were included.
- MS went on to discuss the practical aspects of the oral evidence sessions. She suggested each session should last up to 90 minutes and a maximum of four people should give evidence at each session. If four sessions are too many, the theme of outcomes could be linked into another session so there would only be three in total. SH and CT agreed that one APPGBC officer could chair each oral evidence session. CT requested that dates be set for the sessions as soon as possible.
- SH inquired whether there would be a media launch when the call for written evidence is launched. MS said she would speak to the Breast Cancer Now Communications team about the best approach to take. This should involve using the organisation's key contacts, including patients and clinicians. SH and CT would both like to do a press release.



- MS explained the current timeline for the inquiry. It is hoped that oral evidence sessions will start the week of 20<sup>th</sup> March. The next session may have to be the week of 24<sup>th</sup> April so Easter recess can be allowed for. The report should be finalised by the start of summer recess. The report could be published in September, or October for Breast Cancer Awareness Month (BCAM).
- SA said that Breast Cancer Care could help provide information on treatment and care if we are to do this fourth theme.

#### **Actions**

- FDM: Send inquiry slides to the other officers
- MS: Finalise Terms of Reference and call for written evidence
- MS: Set dates for oral evidence sessions

### **2. Breast Density**

- CT recently met with a representative from Breast Density Matters, who highlighted issues experienced by women with dense breasts. Around 40% of women have dense breast tissue, which can make it more difficult for cancer to be seen through a mammogram. Around 3,500 cases of breast cancer are missed by mammograms each year. CT suggested we look into the possibility of following Australia and France in making women with dense breast tissue aware of these issues, and potentially referring them to ultrasounds for breast screening. The primary focus should be on awareness, which would not be costly for the NHS.
- SH asked whether other people present had been aware of this issue. SA responded that this had been highlighted to Breast Cancer Care, and said she would discuss the matter further with Clinical Nurse Specialists.

#### **Actions**

- SA: Ask CNSs about breast density in order to find out how best to work on the issue.

### **3. Other**

- CT suggested monthly meetings during the duration of the inquiry to check its progress.
- SA said that a colleague from Breast Cancer Care had spoken to Steve Brine at the BCAM Reception about arranging a meeting with Theresa May. SH said that the APPG had met with David Cameron in a previous year, and actions had been taken forward by Samantha Cameron afterwards.
- FDM notified the APPG that SO is updating the website and requested that officers who have not already done so send photos and short biographies about themselves and why they are involved with the APPG to be posted on the website.

#### **Actions**

- FDM: Set dates for next meetings.
- SA: Find out more about arranging a meeting between the APPGBC and the Prime Minister
- CT: Send FDM a biography and photo to add to the website
- FDM: Request biographies and photos for the website from Philippa Whitford and Baroness Massey



Secretariat  
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