
Meeting Minutes – APPG on Long Covid

Date: 26th February 2025

Time: 3:30 pm – 4:30 pm

Location: Portcullis House (Hybrid)

Chaired by: Lord Strasburger

Apologies: Jo Platt MP, Lord Bethell, Clive Lewis MP, The Earl of Clancarty, Baroness Finlay

Attendees:

- Lord Strasburger
- Claire Lloyd-Fitzgerald – Jo Platt MP, Office
- Sally Mulholland – Jo Platt MP, Office
- Adrian Ramsay MP
- Ruth Jones MP
- Zara Overton – Jodie Gosling MP, Office
- Jessamy Baker – Lloyd Hatton MP, Office
- Natalia Hussein – Catherine Fookes MP, Office
- Isaac Tucker – Roz Savage MP, Office
- Prof. Danny Altmann – Long Covid Support / Imperial College London
- Prof. Helen Ward – Imperial College London
- Oonagh Cousins – Long Covid Support
- Nikki Smith - Long Covid Support
- Jo Dainow – Long Covid Support
- Dr. Margaret O’Hara – online, Long Covid Support
- Yanto Evans – online, Long Covid Support
- Polina Sparks – online, Long Covid Support
- Mike Ormerod - online, Long Covid Support
- Andrea Galley – online, Long Covid Support

1. Overview of Long Covid Status Report – Nikki Smith (see status report)

- Nikki presented the executive summary of the report prepared by Long Covid Support, highlighting the prevalence and ongoing risk of Long Covid, the lack of recovery for many individuals, absence of effective treatments, limited healthcare support, impact on the workforce and economy, and lack of funding for research.
- She also addressed the lack of public awareness and messaging on the risk of developing Long Covid and the impacts of the condition.
- Discussed how Long Covid is exacerbating existing inequalities while creating a new cohort of disabled individuals.
- Lord Strasburger noted that Long Covid is being “swept under the carpet.”

2. Clinics Report – Dr. Margaret O’Hara (see clinics report)

- Margaret presented slides summarising the findings of the soon to be published Clinics Report, identifying a “cycle of invisibilisation” for Long Covid patients.
- Lord Strasburger requested a copy of the report for further review.

3. Public Health Impact – Professor Helen Ward (see status report)

- Helen, Co-PI of the REACT Study, presented evidence on the public health impacts of Long Covid, including its symptoms, the ongoing nature of the condition, its unfair effects on certain populations, its detrimental impact on quality of life, and the challenges with diagnosis and recognition.
- She highlighted the cognitive impact of Covid-19, including in individuals without Long Covid.
- Major challenge for public health and NHS.
- Questions were answered on Long Covid symptoms.

4. Economic Impact – Professor Danny Altmann (see status report)

- Discussed how the economic impact is significant - affecting global GDP.
- Pointed out that some patients with other post viral conditions, such as following illness with SARS, have never recovered, and the number of people with Long Covid is creeping up.
- He emphasised the need for accelerated clinical trials based on pathophysiology “to try and get people their lives back”, noting that there is limited funding and political will to support such research.
- The number of people out of work due to Long Covid was discussed.

5. Asks & Next Steps – Oonagh Cousins (see suggested asks/policy brief)

- Presented immediate follow-up actions and an initial policy brief. She highlighted three of the urgent priorities:
- Protecting Long Covid healthcare services and ensuring the preservation of the accumulated expertise in this network.
- Measuring the full scale of the Long Covid crisis, including prevalence and economic impact, as this will provide vital evidence to aid in policy decisions.
- There is no public health messaging making the public aware of the associated risks of contracting Covid and no mitigations to prevent spread of the virus, especially in high-risk situations.
- Lord Strasburger urged MPs and Peers to raise and submit questions to the government regarding Long Covid and its action plans.

Next Steps:

- The Chair, Jo Platt MP, will write to Health Minister Ashley Dalton MP, to outline the key issues discussed and invite her to attend a future APPG meeting.
- Future meetings will focus on determining what policy steps need to be taken to address Long Covid.

END