

Convener
Michael McMahon MSP

Vice Conveners
Jamie McGrigor MSP
Dennis Robertson

Secretary/Treasurer
Mark Hazelwood

**APPROVED Minute of the meeting of the Cross-Party Group
in the Scottish Parliament on Palliative Care**

**Wednesday 16 November 2011 at 5.45 pm
Queensberry House, Scottish Parliament Headquarters**

Attending:

Michael McMahon MSP (Convener)
Siobhan McMahon MSP

Phil Atkinson
Alison Blezard, Scottish Kidney Federation
David Borrowman, Caesar & Howie
Aileen Bryson, Royal Pharmaceutical Society
Dr Pat Carragher, CHAS
Rev Stuart Coates, Association of Palliative Care Chaplains
Margaret Colquhoun, St Columba's Hospice
Malcolm Clubb, Community Pharmacy Scotland
Dr Rosalie Dunn, NHS Lanarkshire
Joy Elliott, ACCORD
Ellen Finlayson, CLIC Sargent
Peter Hastie, Macmillan Cancer Support
Mark Hazelwood, Scottish Partnership for Palliative Care
Evelyn Howie, St Columba's Hospice
Dr Rachel Kemp, P&PW Hospice
Dr Kirsty Leiper
Dr Martin Leiper, NHS Tayside
Kate Lennon, St Vincent's Hospice
Maria McGill, CHAS
Jake McLeod, Scottish Parliament
Clare Murphy, St Margaret of Scotland Hospice
Marie O'Keefe, Leuchie House Short Break Care
Liz Oliver, SMOSH/ ABSCo
Euan Paterson, RCGP (Scotland)
Rebecca Patterson, Scottish Partnership for Palliative Care
Sally Paul, University of Edinburgh
Mark Sheridan, Sheridan Music Consultancy
Edward Small, University of Dundee
Jim Swift, Health Inequalities Alliance
Elizabeth Thomas, St Margaret of Scotland Hospice

Apologies:

Jackie Baillie MSP
Siobhan McMahon MSP
Duncan McNeil MSP

Alison Blezard, Scottish Kidney Federation
Elaine Burt, NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde

Andy Carver, British Heart Foundation Scotland and NI
Jaqqi Carney, NHS Highland
Helen Dryden, NHS Tayside
Sandra McConnell, Ardgowan Hospice
Irene McKie, Strathcarron Hospice
Professor Scott Murray, University of Edinburgh
Anne Robb, NHS Tayside
Ros Scott, CHAS
Ken Stevenson, Ardgowan Hospice
Craig Stockton, MND Scotland
Janet Trundle, NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde

1. Welcome, introductions and apologies

Michael McMahon welcomed attendees to the meeting, and explained that since IT glitches had led to a late start, the meeting would begin with agenda item 4.

4. Presentation: Introducing *Good Life, Good Death, Good Grief*: Scotland's new alliance to promote more openness about death, dying and bereavement

Kate Lennon, Chair of *Good Life, Good Death, Good Grief* gave a presentation outlining the background, rationale and vision behind the establishment of GLGDGG, the new alliance working to make Scotland a place where there is more openness about death, dying and bereavement.

More information about GLGDGG is available at: www.goodlifedeathgrief.org.uk

Kate's presentation slides can be accessed at:

<http://www.palliativecarescotland.org.uk/about-us/scottish-parliament/cross-party-group/16-november-2011>

5. Presentation: Historical perspectives on death, dying and bereavement in Scottish society

Eddie Small gave a presentation reflecting on Scottish attitudes and practices relating to death, dying and bereavement from 1560 to the present day. Eddie is a member of the stakeholder group which worked to establish GLGDGG, and is currently undertaking a PhD in the history of death and dying in Scotland at the University of Dundee. The slides from his presentation can be accessed at: <http://www.palliativecarescotland.org.uk/about-us/scottish-parliament/cross-party-group/16-november-2011>

6. Questions and discussion

There was an opportunity for those present to pose questions, and discussion included the following issues:

- The cultural reality of a health service focused on 'cure' rather than 'care', and the impact this has had on attitudes to death and dying.
- Grand architecture as a response to grief and a one-time absence of religious support at funerals.
- The importance of GLGDGG in promoting palliative care as a public health issue, and the need for a higher profile and greater funding for this work given that demographic changes will mean fewer medical staff and require the increased involvement of non-professionals in caring roles.
- Many communities are very used to death, due to factors such as socio-economic deprivation and substance abuse.

- The loss of much of the ritual and tradition associated with bereavement, including signs such as black armbands to show that a person is likely to be experiencing grief.
- Inequalities relating to the social and economic resources needed to deal with death, dying and bereavement, including the cost of funerals.
- The suggestion that society has attempted to sanitise and then ignore death.

2. Minute of previous meeting of 29 June 2011

The minutes of the cross party group meeting of 29 June 2011 were approved. (Proposed: Stuart Coates; Seconded: Maria McGill)

3. Matters arising from the meeting of 29 June 2011

Michael McMahon updated the group that Margo Macdonald intends to bring an Assisted Suicide Bill before Parliament, but the timescale for this is currently unclear.

7. Any other competent business

No further business was raised.

9 Date of next meeting

The next meeting of the Cross Party Group is scheduled to take place on Wednesday 21st March 2012 at 5.45pm.