



All Party Parliamentary Group for Radiotherapy

APPGR Manifesto Launch – Academy of Medical Sciences, Portland Place, London

Tim Farron MP – Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group for Radiotherapy.

It is my privilege to welcome you to the launch of the All Party Parliamentary Group for Radiotherapy's Manifesto. Thank you so much for taking the time out of your busy schedules to come. And a special thank you for those that have travelled from around the country at such short notice. It is so encouraging to see clinicians of every kind, those from our great campaigning charities and representatives from cutting edge industry, all working together. I am really looking forward to working with you all as we develop our case and win our call for a greater investment in radiotherapy.

I also want to say colossal thank you to Pat Price, Chair of Action Radiotherapy and the secretariat of the APPG for Radiotherapy, for all the hard work she has done in organising this event as well as the pivotal part she played in developing the Manifesto that we are launching today.

The All Party Parliamentary Group on Radiotherapy was established just before summer. I am the chair of the group but I am no expert, but you knew that already...

Like most of us, I know people who have lived with cancer and some like my Mum died from cancer. We aren't all experts in cancer treatment but most of sadly have deep and real experience of cancer and all that it brings with it. When you have been through it you want to help those who come after you.

I am the MP for the hugely rural Westmorland and Lonsdale – we have the largest part of the Lake District, the western part of the Yorkshire Dales, the great town of Kendal and much else besides. I have seen my constituents having to make 3 or 4 hour round trips to receive radiotherapy. courses of treatment that they often don't complete because of the rigours of traveling daily or else they weren't referred for radiotherapy in the first place because clinicians predicted that they would not make it through those many arduous weeks on the road. But as I have fought for a satellite radiotherapy unit at Westmorland General Hospital in Kendal, I have had the privilege to meet clinicians, managers, campaigners, engineers, manufacturers, technicians and patients from across the country who have led me to see that while access to radiotherapy from the south Lakes is important and should be tackled.... there is much more in addition that needs to be done to make sure that Britain's cancer patients get the best treatment possible, with up to date equipment, the right staffing profile, the right IT systems and support, and the right funding.

In November 2017 we held a parliamentary reception which many of those who are here came to, and looking around the room I was struck by the fact – as I looked around that relatively small room - that this was the radiotherapy lobby.



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Parliament is often referred to as the Westminster Village and in there is a watering hole where all the MPs gather. If you walked through around a Wednesday lunch the place is crawling with lobbyists. If there was a green arrow pointing to all those representing a pharmaceutical lobby there would be dozens of arrows. If there was a red arrow to those speaking for Radiotherapy, there would be none.

Radiotherapy is underfunded, underprioritised, underappreciated by too many decision makers.... but formally it has no voice. The APPG or Radiotherapy was formed to be that voice. To be a humble about the fact that you are the experts and we are the enthusiastic amateurs. But like you the APPG aspires to see all patients receiving a world class service, the best radiotherapy for their cancer whoever they are and wherever they live.

Although this event marks the formal launch of our vision for the national radiotherapy service this isn't the beginning of the campaign. As I previously mentioned, we held a parliamentary reception back in November and since then has had a Westminster Hall Debate and held Round table discussions with professionals, industry and stakeholders. We have also begun a parliamentary petition to which already has over 3,000 signatures. Most recently I met with Dr Sarah Wollaston, Chair of the Health and Social Care select committee and have been encouraged by her response to the campaign and advice moving forward.

The message of the manifesto is simple. The need for radiotherapy is a case that makes itself. 1 in 2 people in the UK now develop cancer at some point in their lives. By 2025, the percentage of cancer patients needing radiotherapy as part of their treatment is predicted to rise from the current 50% to 60%. So 1 in 4 of us will need radiotherapy at some time in our lives. Only 5% of the NHS cancer budget is spent on radiotherapy. More investment in access to advanced modern radiotherapy will increase cancer survival. Something we desperately need with our cancer survival rates lagging behind the rest of Europe.

The manifesto for Radiotherapy also sets out our vision for the service. We want:

- the best high-quality radiotherapy for every cancer patient
- To develop a world class high tech radiotherapy service with sufficient highly trained staff
- To make full use of the best and most modern radiotherapy equipment, facilitated by a system of funding that incentivises effective modern treatment.
- An investment in IT connectivity to allow every cancer patient will have access to a radiotherapy centre as close to home as possible with the most common kinds of cancer within the recommended 45-minute travel time
- To act as the voice of radiotherapy to work with the government and NHS to realise the vision.

As we begin this campaign I am excited about how we might work together to achieve this vision.



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Moving forward we are hoping to work with you to develop what is needed for UK radiotherapy and Promote and help develop the high tech highly experienced UK radiotherapy workforce.