appg All Party Parliamentary Group
Endometriosis

All-Party Parliamentary Group on Endometriosis – Endometriosis in the Workplace

5th November 2025, 3:15pm – 4:00pm

Hybrid meeting – Room R, Portcullis House, and Zoom Webinar

MP and Peer Attendees

- Kirsteen Sullivan MP
- Elsie Blundell MP
- Lord Bruce of Bennachie

Other In-person Attendees

- Angus Walker Stewart (Parliamentary Assistant to Kirsteen Sullivan MP)
- Tom Critchley (Parliamentary Assistant to Elsie Blundell MP)
- Carol Rennie (Researcher to Markus Campbell-Savours MP)
- Faye Farthing, Benjamin Jones and Katie Ryan (Endometriosis APPG Secretariat)

Guest Speakers (Online):

- Stevie May, patient representative and Endometriosis UK volunteer
- Rachel Hughes, employer representative and Co-Chair of Bank of Ireland UK's Gender Balance Network
- Emma Cox, Endometriosis UK Chief Executive

Proceedings:

1. Chair's welcome and introduction

- Kirsteen Sullivan MP provided an update on the last agreed actions of the APPG, noting that MP members have submitted written parliamentary questions on improvements to endometriosis care and diagnosis times.
- She noted that she had met with Minister Karin Smyth to discuss endometriosis care, where Kirsteen raised several issues in relation to the APPG's previous discussions.
- Kirsteen noted the recently announced renewal of the Women's Health Strategy for England. She has written to Baroness Merron, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Women's Health and Mental Health, to request a meeting between herself and the Baroness to discuss how individual endometriosis care will feed into this.

2. Panel Discussion: Endometriosis in the Workplace

- Faye Farthing, Head of Communications and Campaigns and Endometriosis UK, introduced the panel. She noted that Gill Furniss MP had sent her apologies and the panel would now include Kirsteen Sullivan MP and Emma Cox, Chief Executive of

Endometriosis UK, as panellists in place of Gill. Faye also introduced patient representative Stevie May and employer representative Rachel Hughes as panellists.

- Stevie spoke to her experience of living with endometriosis in the workplace:
    - She noted that her experiences of severe pain due to endometriosis within her previous workplace were dismissed by her employer.
    - She experienced a lack of understanding of her condition from senior management.
    - After needing to take consecutive sick days due to her endometriosis, she faced being let go by her employer.
- Rachel was asked why she saw it as important for employers to support those with endometriosis:
    - Given that endometriosis affects approximately 1 in 10 women and those assigned female at birth, a significant proportion of employees within an organisation will require understanding and support. Endometriosis is not just a "female issue", impacting upon the lives of men within the workplace.
    - Employers can work to reduce stigma by recognising endometriosis as an all-body condition. Stevie's experience demonstrates the need for further education and open discussion on the effects of endometriosis – employees must feel comfortable to share their symptoms with their manager if necessary.
- Kirsteen was asked what MPs could do to support those with endometriosis in the workplace:
    - MPs can ensure their own offices are equipped to effectively support employees with endometriosis through measures like the Endometriosis Friendly Employer scheme. They can also host roundtables and work with local businesses within their constituencies to raise awareness. She noted that APPG will look to draft a letter to the Chambers of Commerce and trade associations, as well as individual business, to highlight the need to support both current and prospective employees with endometriosis.
    - MPs can write letters and look to hold meetings with senior ministers. She noted that the APPG could write to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care to welcome the review of the Women's Health Strategy for England, and also stress where there needs to be progress and push for clear targets.
    - An inquiry into endometriosis in the workplace and a subsequent report, run by the APPG, could help in advocating for change both within government, and with employers.
- Emma Cox was asked what her hopes were for the outcomes of the Employment Rights Bill, and what this could mean for the endometriosis community:

  - Some employers are demonstrating how they can work to effectively support employees with endometriosis – all employers should be pushed to do this. An inquiry into endometriosis in the workplace could work to achieve this.
  - There are significant improvements within the Employment Rights Bill, but Endometriosis UK will continue to push for legislation to ensure that employers must consider and monitor their supports for employees with menstrual health conditions.
  - This support will require a shift in thinking from many employers around workplace flexibility – not just on shift patterns or hybrid working, but issues like access to bathrooms or being provided with multiple uniforms.
- Rachel described some of the positive changes implemented at the Bank of Ireland to support those with endometriosis, including: a central hub of resources, a series of webinars, well-being champions, and an inclusion passport for employees that notes their health conditions, disabilities, caring responsibilities and other personal circumstances. This inclusion passport provides a vehicle for employees to share their unique needs and working preferences with their colleagues and line managers.
- Kirsteen noted that many have raised the issue of classifying endometriosis as a disability – this is a complex issue given the spectrum of the condition, but a proposal worth exploring.
- Elsie Blundell MP noted that she has heard from several constituents with endometriosis who are not receiving appropriate support at work. She agreed that the APPG should start an inquiry into endometriosis in the workplace and suggested that those from small and medium-sized organisations could share examples of best practice.
- Faye shared a question from attendees on how employers could support those who have not yet received an endometriosis diagnosis. Rachel noted that through encouraging open dialogue and maintaining standard accommodations and flexible conditions, those who are waiting for a diagnosis would also be supported. It is also important to raise awareness of endometriosis among occupational health therapists.

3. **Actions**
   - The APPG will write to the Secretary of State for Health to welcome the renewal of the Women's Health Strategy for England and note where there must be progress to improve care for those with endometriosis.
   - The APPG will draft a template letter to be used by MPs to contact Chambers of Commerce, trade associations and individual businesses within their constituency,

to highlight the need to support both current and prospective employees with endometriosis.

- The APPG will launch an inquiry into endometriosis in the workplace, with details to be explored and finalised by Parliamentary Officers over the coming weeks.