

## Press release



Wednesday 22 September 2021

## Keeping intensive care at the top of the UK's healthcare agenda has never been so important!

Today, the Intensive Care Society is launching an All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG), Chaired by Sir Gary Streeter MP, to establish a link between the intensive care community and the Parliament.

The Society was created over 50 years ago by intensive care professionals to support the future of our specialty. We are proud to be the home of intensive care and represent the whole multi-professional team working within it.

The Society's President, Dr Stephen Webb, says "The establishment of a stronger link between intensive care and Government cannot have come at a more appropriate time. The pandemic thrust intensive care into the spotlight and really showcased the importance of the care we provide. It has also highlighted the issues, we as healthcare professionals, face on a day-to-day basis. The APPG for intensive care allows us to raise the profile of our specialty, lay our issues out on the table, and work with the Parliament to support the continued improvement of UK intensive care."

In 2019, we listened to our intensive community and devised our five-year road map, [Your voice our Strategy](#). This started our journey to establishing clear links between the Society and the Parliament to ensure the voice of intensive care is heard by 2023. We couldn't be more delighted that we have achieved this goal early, and to be able to launch our APPG today.

The Society's Chief Executive, Dr Sandy Mather, says "Our strategy was built from the very voices we represent. The past 19 months have pushed the intensive care community to breaking point, yet they continue to relentlessly care for the nation despite being understaffed, exhausted, and still trying to recover from the emotional trauma as a result of the pandemic. We are dedicated to making sure that this doesn't continue and the establishment of our APPG edges us one step closer to a better tomorrow.

Since its inception, intensive care has continued to provide a pivotal role across the NHS, caring for the sickest of patients who need around the clock care. There are no other options to escalate care after ICU, we are the last viable option for patients and families.

Our Specialty has always played a leading part in all major public health crises since the Polio epidemic, which was highlighted even further as COVID swept the globe. Yet despite all of this, intensive care is still not seen as a core specialty and has not received wider attention from the public and prominence it deserves.

We are at a crossroads and are facing an existential crisis with major issues such as staff shortages in ICU (primarily in our nursing population), burnout and psychological trauma, lack of core funding, bed and capacity issues, and an inability to deliver the rehab services our patients need to get them back to some form of a normal life.

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The Society has established this APPG to provide a platform to voice the concerns of the intensive care community, ICU patients and their loved ones, and the wider public to help inform and influence the Parliament in their understanding and decision making about intensive care.

Sir Gary Streeter MP says “I am delighted to take on the post of Chair of this APPG to address the broad spectrum of issues across the intensive care landscape. It should certainly come as no surprise that the pandemic has had a major impact on units across the UK. The APPG provides a unified approach to start tackling some of these issues and pave the way to a better future for the intensive care community and the patients they care for.

The primary focus of this group in the first instance is to raise major concerns about workforce and rehabilitation services and highlight the necessity to establish plans to counter the severity of these issues. Without immediate support, our community and patients are seriously jeopardised.

The APPG provides a stage in which we can showcase both the Society’s current and pipeline work streams in front of a vast range of stakeholders to help further inform policy makers on the essential work we do to advance intensive care.

This group also allows us to influence the future agenda of intensive care and champion appropriate levels of funding for both provision of our service across the country and for research that will literally help to save lives. As well as promoting the importance of appropriate investment into infrastructure to enable the delivery of better patient care pathways.

For almost two years, the intensive care community has valiantly battled through the worst healthcare crisis in a century, even when this has come at great cost. This fight is far from over with winter fast approaching. The time is now to ensure that we sustain the future of our specialty and drive home the importance of what we do, how we do it, and what we need moving forward!

~ Ends ~

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### Notes to Editors

1. The [Intensive Care Society](#) was founded in 1970 and is the oldest and largest intensive care organisation in the UK, responsible for supporting all those that work in intensive care.
2. For the over 50 years the Intensive Care Society has been the proud home of intensive care and provides support, lifesaving research, education, guidelines, and standards to ensure ICU professionals have all the latest knowledge and tools they need to provide first class care to patients
3. The Intensive Care Society has over 3000 multi-professional members from across the world, made up of consultants, trainees, specialist doctors, nurses, allied health professionals (AHPs) and students
4. The Society is a registered charity and uses donations to award grants, enabling new research to be undertaken in order to improve critical care. The society coordinates 70% of UK critical care research
5. The Intensive Care Society's annual Congress, [State of the Art](#), is the largest annual intensive care multi-professional meeting in Europe.
6. Twitter: [@ICS\\_updates](#)