



NEWSLETTER

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The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba



SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT PRAISES GCRA!

On Thursday 29th April, Conservative MSP for North-east Scotland Dr Nanette Milne, tabled the following motion in the Scottish Parliament at Holyrood, Edinburgh

Members Motion SM-6013

Grampian Cardiac Rehabilitation Association -

That the Parliament congratulates Grampian Cardiac Rehabilitation Association (GCRA) for the support that it gives to patients recovering from a heart attack, cardiac surgery or any other cardiac condition in Grampian; notes that GCRA provides cardiac rehab exercise classes led by instructors in 16 communities across Grampian, and understands that GCRA is now the largest provider of cardiac rehab exercise in the voluntary sector in Scotland and has established successful partnership links with NHS Grampian, Aberdeenshire Council, Aberdeen City Council, Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen Petroleum Club, BP Exel Club in Dyce, Meadows Sports Centre in Ellon and Garioch Sports Centre.



Dr Nanette Milne

Dr Milne opened the debate speaking highly of the very valuable work that GCRA carry out within the community in the North-east. She described in detail the progress we had made from small beginnings with just 3 classes in 2002, to 33 classes and near 650 members today. She went on to describe how, *“from a rocky start when NHS Grampian regarded the pioneers of GCRA as a band of old codgers who didn’t know the implications of what they were attempting to do, they are now very much a working partner with NHS Grampian with more than 1,100 patients and GCRA members having being helped to return to a normal life within the community.*

Continuing with her praise Dr Milne stated that *“GCRA is an excellent example of the voluntary sector at its very best, providing a very real service to patients saving a great deal of money and resource to the NHS in Grampian and having heard excellent reports from class participants it is my intention to see for myself and participate in a class as soon as possible after May 6th”*

She finished by warmly congratulating the founders and management board of GCRA for their magnificent achievements to date and wished them well for the future.

Dr Milne was then followed by speakers from all the other main political parties, with the exception of the Liberal Democrats who made no contribution to or comment on the motion tabled.

Next to speak was Mr Brian Adam, SNP Aberdeen North who congratulated Dr Milne for bringing the debate to the chamber and said, *“I also congratulate the self styled old codgers who had enough gumption to get up and do something about it themselves.”* He added that it was to the credit of GCRA that we had managed to raise around £18,000 to train 24 instructors to help deliver the classes and he praised the dedication and commitment of the management team.

He was followed by Mary Scanlon, Conservative Shadow Cabinet Secretary for Health, who particularly commended the partnership between GCRA, the Local Councils, Robert Gordon University sports Campus, B P and Aberdeen Petroleum Club.

She further commented that, *“The success of GCRA is an example of best practice which I would hope would be examined and rolled out where appropriate for the rest of Scotland.”* She continued, *“GCRA are another example of putting the patient in the driving seat. Too often patients are talked at and handed prescriptions. This initiative gives the patient more control over their condition. Cardiac Rehab saves lives but even more significantly impacts on NHS resources by cutting re-admissions by 30%”*. She also hoped that the Scottish Government would allocate funds to support cardiac rehab given the financial difficulties facing the country in the next two years and she cited GCRA as being a great example of health being everybody’s business and not just the domain of the NHS.



Debating Chamber



MSP's

Labour MSP and Shadow Cabinet Secretary for Health and Wellbeing, Jackie Baillie, also began by congratulating Nanette Milne for bringing the debate and joined with her in congratulating GCRA for all the very valuable work that we do. She also paid tribute to our founder members who took the time and trouble to become involved in establishing GCRA and she went on to say, *“Every year 10,000 people in Scotland survive a heart attack and 13,000 angina patients require admission to hospital and I agree with Mary Scanlon about the cost that is to the NHS, never mind the individual, and all of these people plus another 6,000 patients with chronic heart failure could undoubtedly benefit from cardiac rehabilitation. So there is a clear need for this type of provision in our local communities.”* She also echoed Mary Scanlon’s words when she said, *Cardiac rehab cuts re-admissions. Cardiac*

rehab clearly works. It saves lives and can help, so anything that we can do to encourage that network would be a positive thing to do”.

The final speaker was Shona Robison SNP Public Health Minister for the government who opened saying, *“Let me say right at the outset that we don’t need any convincing of the value of cardiac rehab, it is an intervention that is very effective, it saves lives and it transforms peoples lives and is a bonus in the current climate as it doesn’t cost very much compared to other interventions.”*

The Public Health Minister also noted that NHS Grampian has a C H D Managed Clinical Network Project Board that has a Cardiac Rehab Sub Group which in turn is chaired by our very own GCRA Chairman Robert Paton, which is a good example of the NHS working in partnership with the voluntary sector.

No questions were tabled and the motion being uncontested was adopted and is now a matter of parliamentary record. This parliamentary accolade is a tremendous achievement for your association and is a credit to you the members. We are a charity and a membership organisation and your support and continued attendance are the the keystone of our success.

Well done everyone, be proud of what we have achieved together.

Our Director of PR and Marketing, Stonehaven member Douglas Pacitti, was invited to attend the debate as a representative of GCRA. He reported that it was apparent from the outset that all of the speakers had researched our organisation very thoroughly as they spoke with a great deal of detail and appeared to have good knowledge of our humble origins and progress to date. Douglas told us that he sat through the whole debate with a smile on his face listening to the speakers one after another saying nice things about us and he said, *“It was a wonderful occasion and I felt so good for all the members as I sat there listening to the politicians singing our praises.”*

All debates in the Scottish Parliament are filmed by the parliament media department and passed to BBC and SKY who broadcast them on their respective Parliamentary Channels. We have however been given a copy of the original film recorded by the media dept and this will be posted on our website very shortly. So go online and watch the whole debate exactly as it happened. You will enjoy hearing these MSP singing our praises and saying really nice things about what we have achieved. Go to www.gcra.org.uk and enjoy !!