



*Working to benefit all people  
affected by genetic disorders*

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## **news release**

**For Immediate Release: 1<sup>st</sup>. September 2006**

### **TITLE *Review of Genetics in Relation to Healthcare in Scotland***

#### **INFO**

The Genetic Interest Group (GIG) warmly welcomes the publication of the *Review of Genetics in Relation to Healthcare in Scotland* by the Scottish Executive. We, our member groups and the patients and families that we represent, very much look forward to being part of the implementation of the recommendations contained in the review. GIG believes that the implementation of the recommendations will bring about fundamental improvements in the quality of healthcare in Scotland and the effectiveness of treatments for genetics patients. We urge that the Scottish Executive makes available the additional funding that the implementation of these recommendations will require.

#### **Investment in Genetic Services in Scotland**

GIG applauds the commitment shown by the Scottish Executive with their planned investment in space for genetic services, laboratory service equipment, training and staffing. We look forward to seeing patients benefit from the improved quality of service that this will bring.

#### **Public Awareness and Engagement Network**

GIG in Scotland looks forward to being involved in groups working to ensure that patients and their families are fully involved in all stages of service planning and delivery, and in the future monitoring of service quality. The report's emphasis on enhancing the public's awareness and knowledge of genetics is encouraging. It is GIG's experience that high quality information available to patients and their families in the first instance greatly benefits their healthcare experience.

## **Primary Care & Education in Genetics for Healthcare Professionals**

GIG is delighted to see a commitment from the Scottish Executive to create more posts for genetic counsellors. This measure, combined with the commitment to improve the education of other healthcare professionals in genetic healthcare issues, will be of enormous benefit as the discipline of genetics further integrates with other specialities in the near future.

Alastair Kent, the Director of GIG said today: 'The publication of this review is something that we have been anticipating for a while. It is fantastic news for everyone in Scotland, but particularly those who experience the often devastating effects of having a genetic condition, and for their families.'

Gillian Scott, the Genetic Interest Group's Development Officer in Scotland, added that she is 'delighted that the wishes expressed by charities has been formalised with the announcement of the opportunity to create Genetic Care Coordinator posts. These will promote coordination of social support & medical care for those with long term complex single gene conditions.'

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### **For more information please contact**

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### **Notes to Editors**

- **The Genetic Interest Group (GIG)** is a national alliance of organisations with a membership of over 120 charities that support children, families and individuals affected by genetic disorders.
- Our primary goal is to promote awareness and understanding of genetic disorders so that high quality services for people affected by genetic conditions are developed and made available to all who need them.
- Individually, many genetic conditions are rare and as such it is difficult to raise their profile and the needs of those affected by them. GIG provides a common platform from which effective programmes to raise awareness, inform the media and influence government, industry and the NHS can be launched

- As an organisation focusing on issues of policy and practice GIG keeps an active watch on developments in the UK and Europe that will influence the effective transfer of knowledge and understanding into products and services for families that are supported by our member groups.
- In a potentially controversial field like genetics GIG provides a strong voice advocating the benefits of scientific progress in understanding the contribution being made now and that will be made in the years to come for improving health and combating many currently incurable diseases.
- Gillian Scott is GIG's Development Officer – Scotland. She works out of the MRC Human Genetics Unit at the Western General Hospital, Crewe Road, Edinburgh, EH45 2XU.

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