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## **UPDATE**

### *HISTORY*

The NHS Trusts Association (NHSTA) (formerly the Association of Primary Care Groups & Trusts, APCGT) held its inaugural meeting in Westminster on 27<sup>th</sup> April 2000, attended by representatives of, what was at that time, 480 primary care groups and trusts and the press. The meeting was addressed by a senior member of the Department of Health.

The meeting unanimously approved the Constitution and appointed Dr David Tod OBE FRCGP Chief Executive and Mr David Selwyn, MRSM, MBPS, Honorary Secretary. It is an "insight" member of the NHS Confederation, a member of the Federation of Primary Care Societies and the International Hospital Federation based in Geneva.

Its status is that of an NHS "stake holding" organisation, similar to that of organisations such as the NHS Confederation, the NHS Primary care alliance, the Royal colleges the BMA etc. Its policy of free membership for NHS Trusts is a claim no other organisation can make. It is estimated that this policy saves taxpayers up to £3,000,000 a year.

The NHSTA`s constitution is committed not to use public money in carrying out it`s work. It receives no money from the pharmaceutical industry or from any of the companies which advertise in its publications. All its officers are unsalaried and give their time on a voluntary basis. During the past seven years it has printed and distributed thousands of publications throughout the NHS in support of Department of Health initiatives, such as the national service framework for coronary heart disease, free of charge

### *THE HOUSE OF LORDS*

In January 2006 the NHSTA hosted a Reception at the House of Lords; those attending included the Deputy Chief Medical Officer, members of Parliament and the House of Lords. The reception was sponsored by The Earl Howe.

This well attended event heralded the launch of the NHSTA's "Saving Lives" Campaign in support of the Department of Health's major initiative of the same name dedicated to eradicating Health Care Acquired Infections (HCAIs). Guest Speaker, actress Leslie Ash, spoke poignantly about her personal experience of suffering the results of an HCAI. Dr David Tod OBE the Chief Executive of the NHSTA also addressed the reception setting out in detail the initiatives being taken by the Association in support of the fight against HCAIs.

The NHSTA held its 7<sup>th</sup> birthday party reception at the House of Lords on the 27<sup>th</sup> of April 2007. The guest speaker was the well known actress and president of the National Autistic society Jane Asher. At the reception Miss Asher was presented with a research donation of £1,000 by the chief executive Dr. David Tod.

The NHSTA will be holding a 60<sup>th</sup> Birthday reception for the NHS at the House of Lords on Thursday the 13<sup>th</sup> of November 2008.

### *ACTIVITIES*

The NHSTA consults with the Department of Health on a number of issues and helps provide information to advance the cause of primary and secondary care.

It publishes a range of publications, which are distributed throughout the NHS free of charge. Such publications include "Coronary Care in the UK", the official support publication of the National Service framework for coronary heart disease, produced in collaboration with Dr Roger Boyle's heart team at the

Department of Health, "NHS Healthcare", "The NHS Directory of Complementary and Alternative Practitioners" and "The NHS Guide to Healthy Living".

The NHSTA is a member of the Department of Health's Clinical Reference Group for the "capacity, plurality and choice" initiative establishing the protocol for using European healthcare providers. The Association participated in drawing up, with the Department of Health, the Code of Practice for PCTs contracting with European healthcare providers and has commissioned a model contract for use by NHS PCTs for that purpose.

The Association discusses NHS issues with members of the Shadow Cabinet and the Liberal Democrats, and is the founding sponsor of The London Youth Orchestra (LYO).

The Association is in regular contact with the Royal College of General Practitioners, the Royal Society of Medicine and members of the other Royal Societies including the RCN, and consults with several of the leading Complementary and Alternative Medicine organisations.

#### *THE NHS DIRECTORY OF COMPLEMENTARY AND ALTERNATIVE PRACTITIONERS*

Produced in response to the findings of the House of Lords report on Complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) over the last five years the NHSTA has written to over 50,000 Cam practitioners (admitting 5,000 into membership) This process includes providing detailed information of the practitioner's qualifications, training, experience, and documentary evidence of insurance. These details are independently verified by the NHSTA and members could be subject to disciplinary action in the event of proof of misconduct.

The Directory Covers a broad range of complementary and alternative therapies including herbal medicine, chiropractic, homeopathy, osteopathy, aromatherapy, Chinese medicine, reflexology and acupuncture.

The Directory is recognised by the Royal Society of Medicine in their publication *Health Information on the Internet* as a leading medical website and is fast becoming a major resource for NHS healthcare professionals.

The NHSTA took part in the consultation exercise with the Joint Department of Health and Prince of Wales Foundation for Integrated Medicine Working Party on the statutory regulation of Herbal Medicine and Acupuncture.

#### *PERSONNEL*

The Chairman is Dr. Bashir Qureshi FRCGP, FRCPC. Dr. Qureshi is a medical journalist and broadcaster, with over 40 years experience as a doctor. He was the first ethnic minority GP to be elected to the national council of the Royal college of GPs and pioneered the new discipline of Transcultural Medicine, dealing with patients from different cultures and religions.

He is a former Chairman of the Royal society of health and Honorary vice president of the institute of Health promotion.

The Chief Executive is Dr David Tod, OBE, and FRCGP. Dr Tod was a practising NHS GP in South West London for over 30 years, and has been an advisor to several Health Ministers and Secretaries of State. He is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Medicine and the Royal College of General Practitioners. Following the Shipman enquiry, he advised the Department of Health Working Group looking into mental illness in medical practitioners.

The Honorary Secretary is Mr David Selwyn. Mr Selwyn is a Member of Wandsworth Primary Care Trust's Clinical Effectiveness Committee, a member of the Royal Society of Medicine, the British Psychological Society and the Medical Journalist Association. He sat on the "Capacity, Plurality and Choice" Working Party at the Department of Health and is a published medical researcher, having worked in medical publishing and research for over twenty years

The Association carries out regular membership surveys and has campaigned on a broad range of issues from the use of specialists GPs in the field of coronary care and cancer care to the provision of free travel on London transport for NHS employees.

Further information about the NHS Directory can be found at [www.nhsdirectory.org](http://www.nhsdirectory.org).

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