

The National Council for Child Health and Well-Being

These briefing notes provide information on the origins of the NCCHW, what it is, what it does and why.

- The NCCHW was originally called the Child Health Group. Sir Roger Sims, former MP and Member of the House of Commons Health Select Committee, was the Honorary Chairman. The Group was formed in 1998 to monitor the implementation by Government of the recommendations by the House of Commons Health Select Committee (of which Mrs Marion Roe, MP was the Chairman), following an Enquiry into "Children's Health". This was the first time that this topic had been addressed by any Parliamentary Select Committee.
- The Honorary Secretary of this small Group was the Registrar of the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health.
- Sir Roger Sims retired as Honorary Chairman in 2001 and Mrs Marion Roe MP was invited to take his place. At this time the Royal College of Nursing became the NCCHW Honorary Secretary and the meetings were held at the headquarters of the Royal College of Nursing in Cavendish Square. Dame Marion Roe, DBE retired from the House of Commons in 2005.
- Over a period of time, Dame Marion Roe changed the format of the group and expanded the membership to include many charitable and voluntary organisations, together with Medical Royal Colleges. The group was re-named the National Council for Child Health and Well-being in 2009 and there are now over 50 members of the Council, including representatives from Local Government, and the numbers are still growing.
- The purpose of the NCCHW is not just to monitor Government policies but also to come forward with ideas, together with briefings for Government and Parliament about current Child Health and Well-being issues, etc.
- The hope of the NCCHW is that it is able to ensure, in a responsible and non-confrontational manner, that Child Health and well-being does not slip off the Government's radar screen and continually remains in focus.
- The NCCHW holds 4 meetings a year with 2 or 3 presentations on each occasion from many different organisations connected with Children's Health. They also receive briefing from Civil Servants from the Department of Health, including the National Clinical Director for Children, Young People and Maternity Services, who has addressed the National Council on a number of occasions, as well as Civil Servants from the Department for Education. These presenters provide the NCCHW with an update on activities around children and young people and give National Council members an opportunity to participate in useful exchanges.

- The Royal College of Nursing is the NCCHW Honorary Secretary and the NCCHW has met at their Headquarters since 2001. However, due to refurbishment of the RCN conference rooms during 2012, the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health kindly offered their premises for meetings for a year.
- The NCCHW facilitates networking among the National Council Members with the circulation of details of their Organisation's current activities, which is extremely useful. These papers are also forwarded to the Secretary of State for Health and the Secretary of State for Education, as well as MPs on an All- Party basis. One of the results of this briefing between NCCHW members is that there has been co-operation in producing joint reports on specific subjects.
- If the professional representatives of National Council Members consider that a particular problem needs to be addressed by Government, Dame Marion Roe, as Chairman, writes to the Secretary of State for Health or the Secretary of State for Education, or the relevant Minister, raising the difficulties that are being faced and exploring solutions. Briefing meetings with Secretaries of State, Ministers and Civil Servants have also been arranged.
- The NCCHW is totally non-political. The papers are circulated to all those involved in Child Health and well-being across the political spectrum both in the House of Commons and the House of Lords - as well as Civil Servants.
- The NCCHW receives no funding whatsoever, - everything is achieved on an Honorary basis through the goodwill of National Council Members, the Royal College of Nursing and the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health.
- All members of the NCCHW have enormous expertise and experience which has been instrumental in achieving success in highlighting issues relating to Children's Health and well-being at the highest level of Government.
- The constant aim of the NCCHW is to ensure that the health of Children and Young People always maintains a high profile in Government's and in Parliament's policy-making, where vital decisions are being made that affect the well-being of future generations.

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