

## 27<sup>th</sup> June 2007 - Meeting with the Patient Safety Minister, Lord Hunt of Kings Heath



This meeting was an opportunity for Lord Hunt of Kings Heath, the Patient Safety Minister to set out the Department of Health's long-term approach to ensuring patient safety across the NHS. It also gave stakeholders and leaders from within the healthcare community the chance to actively engage with the Minister in a roundtable discussion on the issue.

Lord Hunt began by praising the work of the APPG on Patient Safety over the past two years and stated that he was now confident that the necessary architecture was in place across the health service to facilitate patient safety more effectively than ever before. Lord Hunt highlighted that implementation of patient safety, within this new architecture, at all levels of healthcare was now vital.

Lord Hunt also stated that more emphasis was required on devolving areas of healthcare away from central government and giving greater responsibility for patient safety to local care providers. He also stressed that the NPSA should not be held solely responsible for the implementation of patient safety, but instead should be relied upon to support the overall reporting structures that are in place.

The Minister also set out the areas where he believed patient safety must now be discussed, debated and ultimately improved within the near future across the NHS. These were:

- **Procurement** – Ensuring that patient safety is at the top of the agenda in the procurement of any new drugs and equipment into the NHS.
- **Capital Expansion** – With the NHS in the middle of the biggest capital expansion that it has ever seen and over 100 new hospitals in the process of being built, it is vital that patient safety is at the forefront of any new development.

- **Counterfeit Drugs** – With the increasing proliferation of counterfeit drugs available not only on the UK market but also worldwide, Lord Hunt was keen to stress that this area required effective legislation to clamp down on this lucrative practice.