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22 October 2007

Mr Preben Rudiengaard
Folketinget, Christiansborg
1240 Copenhagen
Denmark

Dear Mr Rudiengaard

A European Political Network to STOP Cervical Cancer

As the Chairs of the European Cervical Cancer Interest Group (ECCIG), we are writing to invite you to join a European political network working towards the elimination of cervical cancer in Europe (please see attached document). The important point to remember about cervical cancer is that we already know how to prevent almost every case of this disease through effective prevention programmes, and the elimination of this disease in Europe is therefore a matter of politics, not research. However, the powers of the European institutions over national health matters are limited and it is essential to involve national leaders such as you to champion the cause of cervical cancer prevention in each country.

Clearly, Denmark has a good reputation in cervical cancer screening and your participation will help to ensure the Danish experience can be an example to others. In addition, we are all now dealing with the complex issues surrounding HPV vaccination and your involvement in a European debate will support both the exchange of information between countries as well as the development of appropriate policies that are implemented equitably across Europe.

As a start, we would like to invite you to the inaugural meeting, the European Cervical Cancer Summit Meeting, to be held in Brussels on 22 January 2008, during the European Cervical Cancer Prevention Week (your economy travel and accommodation will be paid). This meeting will review the policies, actions and plans of the European Institutions in the area of cervical cancer prevention and then allow the delegates to ask questions or comment upon the applicability of these programmes to their respective countries.

We sincerely hope that you will join us for these exciting events and look forward to your participation.

Mrs Glenis Willmott, MEP Dr Jolanta Dickute, MEP Mrs Françoise Grossetette, MEP

Please reply to: secretariat@eccig.eu

ECCIG

European Cervical Cancer Interest Group

Establishing a European Political Network to STOP Cervical Cancer

Every year in Europe, 50,000 women develop and 25,000 women die from a disease that is almost completely preventable – cervical cancer

Cervical cancer is different from other cancers in that we already know how to prevent almost every case. Effective organised cervical screening programmes can prevent 80% of cervical cancers, and new technologies such as liquid-based cytology, HPV testing and HPV vaccination can now reduce these rates even further

For the first time in history, we have the opportunity to virtually eliminate a human cancer from Europe through the establishment of comprehensive organised cervical cancer prevention programmes and yet this disease remains a significant source of disease and death. The research has been done and the solution to cervical cancer is now political in that governments across Europe must be convinced to prioritise the implementation of these essential prevention programmes.

The European Parliament Cervical Cancer Interest Group was established to raise the importance of cervical cancer prevention within the European Council, Parliament and Commission. The CCIG has been very successful in this task and we have seen a number of measures introduced that will support national efforts to prevent this disease. However, the European Institutions have limited powers in health matters and tackling cervical cancer therefore now essential to establish an effective Europe-wide network of national politicians who can work together to establish the programmes that are required to conquer this disease.

The objectives of this expanded network are to:

- 1) to ensure that all relevant government officials are fully aware of the burden this disease places on their countries and the means by which it can be prevented,
- 2) to marshal the resources that are available in some of European countries, and those available through the European institutions to facilitate the implementation of comprehensive cervical cancer prevention programmes in those countries where they do not currently exist.

Your participation will be essential to the success of this project and it is sincerely hoped that you will be able to participate.

Please reply to: secretariat@eccig.eu

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