

TERMS OF REFERENCE

All Party-Parliamentary Group on Spinal Cord Injury Inquiry into the Need for a National Strategy on Spinal Cord Injury

Background

There are over 4000 new spinal cord injuries (SCI) every year in the UK, and tens of thousands of people living with the long-term effects of SCI. Despite the complexity and lifelong nature of this condition, there is currently no national strategy to ensure joined-up care, consistent rehabilitation, and adequate support for reintegration into the community.

This lack of coordination leads to significant regional variation, unmet needs, avoidable complications, and barriers to independence and quality of life. The Spinal Injuries Association (SIA), supported by partners and voices across the SCI community, has called for the development of a national strategy.

Purpose of the Inquiry

The APPG on Spinal Cord Injury is launching this inquiry to explore the case for a national strategy on SCI and to gather evidence on what it should include. The inquiry will consider systemic gaps, opportunities for integration, and models of good practice both nationally and internationally. It will amplify the voices of individuals with lived experience and make clear, actionable recommendations to Government and NHS England.

Objectives

- To understand the current challenges in SCI care, rehabilitation and community reintegration.
- To define the essential components of a national SCI strategy.
- To examine workforce, training and standards across the SCI pathway.
- To explore the wider determinants of independent living – including housing, employment, and mental health.
- To assess the need for a national research agenda and patient voice infrastructure.
- To hear directly from people living with SCI about their experiences and priorities.

Scope

The inquiry will gather evidence across the following themes:

1. Rationale for a national strategy
2. Scope and structure of a national SCI pathway
3. Rehabilitation
4. Agreed standards and workforce training
5. Reintegration into the community (including housing, employment, equipment, and mental health)
6. Research and patient representation infrastructure
7. (Optional) Lived experience testimony session

Methodology

- Oral evidence sessions held between May–July 2025
- Written call for evidence open to people with lived experience and stakeholders from health, care, voluntary, research and lived experience sectors
- Publication of a final report with recommendations in Autumn 2025

Written Evidence Deadline: 11.59pm on Tuesday 8th July 2025

(07/07/2025) Written Evidence Extended Deadline: 11.59pm on Friday 18th July 2025