

Alan Johnson MP,
Secretary of State for Health
Department of Health
Richmond House
79 Whitehall
London
SW1A 2NS

Re: Government response to e-petition on Lyme disease
Petition at <http://petitions.pm.gov.uk/Lyme-Disease>
Response at <http://www.pm.gov.uk/output/Page15023.asp>

Dear Mr Johnson,

We were disappointed to read the response referred to above, as it repeats almost verbatim the standard position on Lyme disease that has been adopted by the HPA's Lyme Reference Unit (LRU). In previous correspondence with your department we have already demonstrated that much of this information is unsupported or directly contradicted by sound peer-reviewed scientific literature^{1,2} and the experience of patients across the world.

To repeat this poorly-substantiated dogma without question is an embarrassment to the otherwise good name of the HPA, and is a wholly inadequate response to the rising number of sufferers of this potentially disabling illness. We are contacted by a steady stream of people who have a clinical history consistent with Lyme disease, and sometimes even positive blood tests, who are refused a diagnosis and treatment by their ill-informed GPs. It is likely that those who contact us are only a small proportion of the true number.

We continue to call for urgent action to review the position taken by the LRU, to develop UK guidelines rather than adopt the unsound and widely criticised IDSA guidelines, and to undertake more research into this still poorly-understood condition.

Lyme Disease Action is committed to promoting a scientifically sound view of Lyme disease based on the best possible evidence, and would welcome a constructive dialogue with your department.

Yours Faithfully,

Denzil Searle
pp The Trustees

copy to Prime Minister

References

1. Correspondence between LDA and Department of Health during 2007.
2. Statement on information contained in HPA website

Summarised at www.lymediseaseaction.org.uk/lobby/index.html