



Writing to your MP

If you feel strongly about any of the issues featured on the Medact website we encourage you to write to your MP.

Remember not to be afraid of contacting your local MP: they get many letters and often use them to gauge public opinion on current topics

Please do mention you are a Medact member when writing. We would also be grateful if you could send us both a copy of your letter and any reply received.

Who to write to.

It is almost always better to write to your local MP than a specific ministry.

- ⇒ Your MP is accountable to you and will nearly always take the time to respond in person
- ⇒ Your local MP may well know very little about the topic covered but might be prompted to find out more after reading your letter
- ⇒ If your MP contacts a ministry for a response you will have informed two people of your concerns not one.

Who is your MP?

If you do not know who your local MP is or need to find contact details try some of the web site links on the bottom of this sheet or ask at your local library. All MPs can be contacted by writing to them at the House of Commons, Westminster, London, SW1A 0AA

Writing Letters

Every letter to your local MP represents a voter so they do take notice. However the following points will ensure you achieve the best impact.

- ⇒ Before writing take a look at how your MP votes and at the questions they have previously asked in the House of Commons. This may help you decide how to approach the subject in your letter.
- ⇒ Always make your letter personal, using the correct name and title
- ⇒ Make sure your address and postcode are on the top of the letter, envelopes are thrown away.
- ⇒ Identify yourself as a constituent, a party supporter or a health worker if the topic is health related
- ⇒ Please mention you are a Medact member it helps raise awareness of the organisation

- ⇒ Avoid copying text from other documents or printing out form letters
- ⇒ Be polite: always write as if you expect a positive response
- ⇒ Be concise: a letter should rarely be more than one sheet of A4 paper
- ⇒ Get to the point quickly: state your concerns in the first paragraph
- ⇒ Be well informed ensure that any dates or facts are correct. Contact the relevant Medact staff member if you need to know more
- ⇒ Ask a question or questions and then ask for a response
- ⇒ Letters are best, a fax will get attention but emails are likely to get "lost".
- ⇒ Please do send a copy of your letter and any response to the Medact office
- ⇒ It is likely you will receive a bland response to your first letter but it may help to maintain the correspondence. Don't write too often but do keep the MP informed of any changes or developments in the specific area under discussion.

Meeting your MP

If you would like to discuss the issue with your MP in person make an appointment explaining why you are coming: this will allow him/her to prepare. List of MP surgeries can be found at local libraries or from the local party office.

If you want to meet at the House of Commons YOU MUST make an appointment in advance. The telephone number is 020 7219 3000; ask for your MP by name.

Be well prepared, stick to the topic, listen to what they have to say and be polite but firm, always leave on time.

It also helps if you can go in a small group of two or three. It will prove that this matter is not just the interest of one person.

Useful websites

They work for you - information on how your local MP votes and how often.

<http://www.theyworkforyou.com/>

Public Whip - information on an individual MP's voting record.

<http://www.publicwhip.org.uk/index.php>

Locata - Find out which constituency you are in, who your local MP is and how to contact them.

<http://www.locata.co.uk/commons/>

Alphabetical List of Members of Parliament

<http://www.parliament.uk/directories/hciolists/alms.cfm>

Fax your MP: Fax your MP online, it is fast, easy and free

<http://www.faxyourmp.com/>

Find your MP's website on Epolitix

<http://www.epolitix.com/EN/MPWebsites/>

