



HERTFORDSHIRE LOCAL PHARMACEUTICAL COMMITTEE

Briefing: Community Pharmacy contact with MPs

Hertfordshire LPC requests that each community pharmacy write to their local MP in relation to the significant threats posed to both the community pharmacy network and patient care as part of the proposals first announced on 17 December 2015.

Who is the MP for where the pharmacy is located?

The LPC has provided a list of names and addresses of your local MP along with the wards they cover.

Why will this help?

MPs can help local pharmacies by encouraging the Government to be clearer about its plans. MPs could write to the Secretary of State, or table Parliamentary Questions, asking about the impact in their constituency. Specifically, MPs should ask about the impact of the changes and how the plans will affect community pharmacies in their constituency.

What should I write in my letter?

The LPC will not be providing a template as the letter must be written in your style and must include your own local examples. MPs may not pay attention to generic duplicate letters that they receive. It is important that you emphasise the impact on your local community. You will have a higher chance of response and engagement if the information you share with the MP directly affects their local electorate.

Hertfordshire LPC would encourage you to consider including the following messages:

- People in England make 1.6 million visits to community pharmacies every day and more than 1 billion prescription items are dispensed by community pharmacies every year.
- Pharmacies are easy to access and form part of the fabric of local communities. Pharmacy teams regularly go the extra mile for patients, the public and the NHS. **Use a local example from your pharmacy to highlight what you have done to support a patient.**
- As well as dispensing medicines community pharmacy teams help people to stay well and out of the GP's surgery and A&E, to get the most benefit from their medicines, and to manage their health conditions. **Use a local example from your pharmacy to highlight where you supported a patient that would otherwise had to visit another healthcare setting if you had not provided them with support.**
- Pharmacies can and should do much more. **Outline how you could better support your local community.**
- The government's plans threaten the network of pharmacies in England because a quarter of pharmacies in England could be forced to close and it's proposed measures focus on cost reductions and robots in warehouses or online services rather than making the most of health professionals in the community.
- The implications for patient care have not been properly considered and may be damaging because the government has not conducted an assessment of the impact of its proposals on patient safety or on the quality of care. It could potentially increase pressure on GP surgeries and hospitals as people are no longer able to gain help from community pharmacies

At the end of the letter ask the MP to find out the potential impact the proposal could have in the local community and to request further detail from the Government over its plans.

What next?

Post your letter and await a response. Remember to keep a copy of the letter you have sent so you can refer to it. You could also put it up in the pharmacy to share what you have doing with your patients and to highlight the issues to your patients. If you don't receive a response you may wish to send the same letter again. Alternatively most MPs hold surgeries in their constituency to give people an opportunity to meet them and discuss matters of concern. You can find out the surgery dates for your MP by searching the MPs name online.

Let the LPC know if you receive a letter in response. If you receive a standard response follow it up so that you ensure your letter is read and considered. If the MP would like to visit your pharmacy, let us know and we will support you with key messages and promoting the visit through photos and news stories.

CONTACT

Helen Musson, Executive Officer, Hertfordshire LPC

Tel 01707 390095

Mobile 07738 948220

Email helen.musson@hertslpc.org.uk