

FPH member briefing on engaging with your new MP

We believe that the outcome of the next five years will set the preconditions for the health and wellbeing of the next generation. As the new Government sets out its vision for the future, FPH's voice is needed now more than ever to speak up for a health in all policies approach. We're calling on all FPH members to join us in starting this dialogue with your newly elected MP and act as an advocate for our national priorities. Alongside this briefing we include a template letter to help.

Whether your MP is new to Parliament or has just been re-elected, now is the perfect time for you to reach out to them and let them know about the public health issues you encounter every day. In doing so, you will be helping your MP set their agenda and learn more about the constituency they now represent.

Writing a letter to your MP

Although there are many ways to reach out to your MP, writing a personal letter to him or her is one of the surest ways to attract and hold their attention in a meaningful way. When writing to your MP, remember to:

- 1) **Personalise your letter.** Pro-forma letters are useful to show mass support for a particular issue, but they often don't have the same impact as a personalised message. That's why it's important that you personalise your letter as much as possible. Tell your MP a little about yourself, such as where you work and how long you've lived in the constituency. Did you meet your MP during the campaign? Have you corresponded with them previously? If so, be sure to remind them about your last meeting and what you discussed.
- 2) **Keep it clear and purposeful.** Let them know why you're getting in touch early on in the letter. It's a good idea to use the letter to ask to meet with them to discuss your particular concern or to have them respond to you in writing about a specific issue or commitment you would like them to make. You could:
 - **Ask to arrange a meeting:** We can support you with a template letter for setting this up and would be interested in attending a meeting with you. Email policy@fph.org.uk for more information.
 - **Ask them to do something specific:** You can ask them to champion an issue in Parliament, write to a Cabinet member on your behalf, or raise an issue with local decision makers, e.g. your hospital or Council.
 - **Discuss FPH's national priorities:** FPH is currently campaigning on three major policy issues: Brexit, public health funding, and the specialist public health workforce. You should use your letter to let your MP know about FPH, what our national priorities are, and that we're here to support them in taking action on any of these issues in the future. You may even want to include FPH's General Election briefing, [Fit for our Children's Future](#) with your letter, outlining our national priorities in more detail.
- 3) **Do some research before you write:** Make sure you're aware of your MP's stance on the issues. You can look at their website or scan their twitter feed to glean a sense of their priorities. If they're already an ally of the public health community, then you can thank them for their advocacy and let them know how valued they are, and important their role is to you. If they're not an ally or have no stated position, then it is helpful to present your ask in a way that supports and contributes to their own work.

Get in touch with us

The Policy Team at FPH would be happy to support you in reaching out to your MP. We can provide you with resources to get you started and can offer advice and feedback for you. Please contact the team at policy@fph.org.uk or 020 3696 1476 for further information. Remember to also feedback to us about any conversations you've already started with your MP so we can build on your relationship.