



Advocacy Toolkit:

Writing a letter to a decision maker

Why write to a decision maker?

Contacting a decision maker like your MP or local Councillor is a great way to raise an issue with them and they can often provide you with help or support if you're experiencing a problem. There are lots of different ways to get in touch with them but most people tend to send a letter or an email. Getting in touch with your MP or local Councillor can sometimes feel intimidating, especially if you've never done it before, but don't worry. They are elected to represent their constituents and are usually happy to help if they can.

Who might you want to write a letter to?

Who you are writing to will depend on what your letter is about and who it is that can help address your issue. For example, you may consider writing to your local council, hospital or even your local MP. Whoever it is you are writing to, there are key things that should always be included.

Planning makes perfect

When writing a letter to a decision maker, it is important to think first about what you are trying to achieve. Taking the time to plan the letter will help you to put your message across in the best way possible.

What should you include?

There are three key things that should be in any letter to a decision maker:

1. Tell them what you are writing about
2. Explain how this affects you personally (or somebody that you know)
3. State clearly how you would like them to help

You can use the template on the next page to help you set out and write your letter to make sure that all of these are included.

Top tips - Making your letter more persuasive

1. Plan in advance - make sure to leave enough time for them to consider and act on your request
2. Use your own words - this will make the letter more personal, which is likely to increase the chances of receiving a reply
3. Include any evidence you have to back up your points - facts, figures and personal stories often put an issue into perspective
4. Keep your message to one side of paper (approximately 350-400 words)
5. If you are writing about a problem, is there a solution you can offer?
6. If writing to a local decision maker - such as an MP - include your address, as most MPs will only act on behalf of people who live in their constituency
7. Follow up - if you haven't received a response within two weeks, think whether there are other ways you can get in touch with them

Did you know...?

You can contact your MP to let them know about a problem affecting people in your local area, or to ask them to support a campaign you feel strongly about.

Find out how at: www.parliament.uk/get-involved/contact-your-mp

Example letter

Your Name
Your Address
Your Postcode

Recipient Name
Recipient's Address
Recipient's Postcode

Date

Dear [Name of Recipient],

Paragraph One: What are you writing about?

You should start by giving some information about the reason for your letter, keep it short and to the point. It may also be helpful to explain how you have been affected. For example, if you were writing in support of a Leukaemia CARE campaign, you could explain what the campaign is and how the issue affects you (or somebody you know).

Paragraph Two: Explaining the Problem

Here you should explain what the problem is, how people are being affected and the solution you would like to see. It is helpful if you can tailor this information to your target audience. If you are writing to your MP, then you should try to provide local information wherever possible.

Paragraph Three: Call to Action

The final paragraph of the letter should ask the decision maker to help. This might be asking them to reconsider a decision they have made, explain the reasons for the decision or simply asking them to meet with you to discuss the issue.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours Sincerely,
Your Name
Your Phone Number
Your Email address

Further Questions

If you would like some advice on writing your letter, please contact our Campaigns and Advocacy team.

They are available Monday to Friday from 9:00am – 5:30pm. If you would like to speak to them, you can:



Call our office line on 01905 755977



Send them an email at advocacy@leukaemiacare.org.uk

You can also call the 24-hour CARE Line, free of charge on 08088 010 444. The team will pass your enquiry onto the Campaigns and Advocacy team.

Please note that our Campaigns and Advocacy team are unable to provide:

- Detailed medical advice or recommendations
- Legal advice
- Advocacy for a course of action which is contrary to the aims and objectives of Leukaemia CARE