

# LOBBYING YOUR MP

Everybody has the right to contact their Member of Parliament (MP) to raise their concerns. MPs can then raise these issues on behalf of their constituents.

MPs hold a great deal of power and influence. They make decisions on every part of our lives both outside and inside the workplace. Their support can assist in getting media coverage and helping to exert pressure on the relevant bodies.

With lengthy ambulance delays, continuous below inflation pay offers and further strikes planned we need to make sure our voice is heard in parliament.

## A guide to lobbying parliament

A Lobby works best when UNISON members lobby the MP for the constituency they live in.

This may include non-Labour MPs and it is an opportunity to put your case to MPs on the government benches, if they are Conservative.

Please make sure you read the section of this guide called 'talking to your MP' before you get to the meeting.

## Before the day

Try to arrange a meeting with your MP before the day.

You can write to them by using our template letter, available here: [Template Letter for MPs](#)

You can also phone via the House of Commons switchboard on 020 7219 3000 to speak to your MPs office.

If you do not hear back from your MP about the meeting you can still queue up and try to arrange an appointment (there is further information on how to do this below).

If you hear back and your MP is not able to meet you, please try to meet them in your constituency.

Please bear in mind that no banners, posters, or t-shirts with slogans on are allowed in the Houses of Parliament.

## On the day

The branch will advise of the transport arrangements for getting to London. We will aim to arrive an hour before the first appointment with MPs.

Once we're inside we will need to go through airport style security to gain access to Parliament, on busy days this can take around half an hour.

If your MP has agreed to meet with you then you will be able to go straight to Committee Room 17 (CR17) to meet them.

## Green Card system

If you do not have an appointment, you will need to head to the desk in the Central Lobby and ask for a 'green card'.

Enter your name and address and the purpose of your visit (to highlight concerns about the ongoing pay dispute for ambulance staff). You should say that if it's not possible to meet on the day that you'd like to meet them back in the constituency.

This is important because if you do not meet with your MP, the card is then sent on to the MP's office.

If your MP is found and has arrived then your name will be called out. If MPs do not appear within half an hour or so it is unlikely they will come at all. Sometimes they will send their staff if they are tied up in other meetings.

## Talking to your MP

It is best to be as brief and as clear as possible. Most importantly thinking about what you want your MP to do.

Some key lines:

- An extra 72p an hour is simply not enough to stop staff leaving the service for better paid work elsewhere.
- The NHS cannot expect to keep patients safe without improving staffing.
- Ambulance wait times consistently exceed targets and the South West has the longest wait times in the country.

What do you want your MP to do?

- Write to the health secretary, Steve Barclay, urging him to enter into talks with the unions on pay.