

# Campaign Toolkit

## Contacting your local council

Your local council, or local authority, provides important services to people who use anticoagulant services and are long-term warfarin users. Councils are run by elected councillors who make decisions on behalf of their communities.

By lobbying your local council, you have the opportunity to:

- Influence a decision which is about to be made
- Fight for new services
- Change a decision that has already been made, such as the closure of an anticoagulation service

If you disagree with your council decisions and believe they undermine the aims of ACSMA make sure you make your voice and your views known.

### How do I find out about my local council?

In England, there are two types of local council structure:

- Unitary authorities, which are responsible for providing all local services, from bin collection to transport.
- Two-tier system, where responsibilities are divided between district and county councils.

On any issue that is related to the ACSMA campaign, such as social or healthcare, you need to speak to your county council, unitary authority or, if you live in London, borough council.

For further information on your local council, visit:

<http://local.direct.gov.uk/LDGRedirect/Start.do?mode=1>

### What can your councillor do?

Your councillor that has been elected to your ward has a duty to represent your views within the council and make the relevant staff aware of your concerns. They can:

- Contact the relevant department, such as adult social services, about your anticoagulant issue.
- Raise your concern with the relevant cabinet member.
- Refer an important issue to the council's overview and scrutiny committee. This committee can scrutinise the decisions of senior officers and councilors and may have a sub-committee that looks at anticoagulant issue(s).
- Raise your anticoagulant issue(s) at a full council meeting, though these may be held infrequently.

Getting councillors involved in your ACSMA campaign can be an effective way to put pressure on the local authority as well as gain media attention.

### Who is your councillor?

- Visit <https://www.gov.uk/find-your-local-council>

Once you have your councillor's contact details you can write, email or telephone them to raise your concerns and the aims of ACSMA. You could also arrange to meet them in person during a surgery.

# Campaign Toolkit

## Contacting your local council



### What else can you do to influence your local council?

- A mass lobby: If a group of anticoagulant and warfarin patient campaigners want to meet their councilors you could arrange a “mass lobby” of the council where everyone turns up on the same day to meet them. Speak to your local council and councillors to organise this.
- Attend a council meeting: Local people can attend certain council meetings and may have the chance to speak at them.

Types of meetings to watch out for include cabinet meetings, full council meetings, Healthwatch meetings and committee meetings. Contact your council to find out more.