

Template MP letter

This is a sample letter that you can use to write to your own MP. You may want to adapt the letter to suit you, to delete some details and/or to include more information about your personal experiences. If you live in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland, you can easily adapt the letter for your Member of the Scottish Parliament, Assembly Member, or Member of the Legislative Assembly. Text highlighted in bold need to be completed or deleted as applicable. Copy and paste the final text onto your own plain paper or personalised letterhead.

(Mr/Mrs/Dr) (First Name) (Last Name) MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 1AA

(Insert Date)

Dear **(Mr/Mrs/Dr) (insert MP's surname)**

As a constituent of yours in **(insert your constituency here and hometown)**, I am writing to ask if you will support greater access to self-monitoring technology for people on long-term warfarin.

The AntiCoagulation Self Monitoring Alliance (ACSMA) is campaigning on behalf of people who **(like me/my spouse/my partner/my child)**, have to take warfarin for the rest of their lives, for greater choice about how our medical condition is managed and greater access to INR¹ self-monitoring technology via prescription, so that we can test our blood clotting levels at home or abroad, at a place and time convenient to the patient.

There are more than 1.2 million people in the UK on warfarin therapy, of which less than two per cent currently benefit from self-monitoring their INR levels, rather than attending clinic, despite evidence that it can cut the risk of death by nearly two-fifths and more than halve the number of strokes. As a **(patient/parent/carer for someone on long-term warfarin)**, I strongly believe that if everyone on long-term warfarin had the opportunity to self-monitor their blood clotting level, it would improve health outcomes, patient choice and convenience, as well as save time and money for patients and the NHS.

The benefits of INR self-monitoring have recently been recognised in guidance issued by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE). NICE diagnostics guidance DG14² recommends two different coagulometers for use by people taking long-term anti-blood clotting therapy who have atrial fibrillation (AF) or heart valve disease, if they prefer and are able to effectively use this type of monitoring. NICE concluded that self-monitoring is both clinically-effective and a cost-effective use of NHS resources.

¹ The international normalised ratio or INR is a laboratory measurement of how long it takes blood to form a clot. It is used to determine the effects of oral anticoagulants, such as warfarin, on the clotting system.

² NICE diagnostics guidance DG14. Atrial fibrillation and heart valve disease: self-monitoring coagulation status using point-of-care coagulometers (the CoaguChek XS system and the INRatio2 PT/INR monitor). <http://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/dg14>. Published September 2014.

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The NICE Quality Standard 93 for AF treatment and management³ includes a developmental standard, which says that adult patients with AF who are taking warfarin on a long-term basis to help reduce their risk of a stroke are supported to self-manage their blood levels with a coagulometer.

As my MP, I want to bring to your attention the problems I am facing managing my long-term condition here in **(insert name of your constituency here)** in spite of the NICE guidance described above. Being able to self-monitor my INR levels would have a huge beneficial impact on my life, but I am currently unable to do so because **(insert/delete options as applicable)**:

- a) My healthcare professional will not allow me to
- b) I've been told that self-monitoring is not allowed for legal reasons
- c) I've been told that self-monitoring is not safe/not accurate
- d) I've been told that my local Clinical Commissioning Group will not allow it or support it
- e) My GP has told me that he is not allowed to prescribe the test strips anymore
- f) I cannot afford to purchase the self-monitoring equipment myself

The difficulties I am facing in relation to my long-term medical condition are concerning me greatly, as I know that practice differs from one locality to the next, and that other patients across the United Kingdom are not faced with the same restrictions as I am. ACSMA has conducted research that shows considerable variation in treatment opportunities across the country.

I would be very grateful if you could: **(insert or delete options where applicable)**

- a) meet with me to discuss my concerns in further detail
- b) write to the local Clinical Commissioning Group asking it to explain its policy with regard to anticoagulation patient self-monitoring
- c) table questions in Parliament about this topic
- d) write to the Health Secretary the Rt. Hon. Jeremy Hunt MP about these issues
- e) contact ACSMA to pledge your support for its aims and objectives on behalf of people like **(me/my spouse/my partners/my child)**.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

(Insert your name and full address here)

³ <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/qs93>. Published July 2015.