



#PrescribingNow: MP toolkit February 2023

What you can do with your MPs

YOU CAN use our e-action to contact your MPs asking them to support independent prescribing responsibilities being extended to us

YOU CAN ask MPs to support the campaign on social media, using the hashtag #PrescribingNow

YOU CAN ask them to contact the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care for a call for action to extend independent prescribing responsibilities to us using the template letter we have produced

YOU CAN ask them to table written and oral questions asking the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care what plans he has to extend independent prescribing responsibilities to dietitians, occupational therapists, orthoptists, prosthetists and orthotists, diagnostic radiographers, and speech and language therapists

YOU CAN ask them to support your work and the work of your professional bodies in Parliament and their constituencies

Before you begin:

- Before contacting your local MPs, check if your employer has guidance on engaging with MPs. This may affect what you can do in work time, including, for example, whether you can contact them using your work email address.
- Monitor the Twitter feeds of your professional bodies for more #PrescribingNow updates.
- Check out the 'Maximising the impact of your approach' section below on how you might tailor your approach to your MP.

If you have a spare 5 minutes:

- Use our e-action to directly email your MP asking for their support for the #PrescribingNow campaign. The e-action can be accessed via our dedicated webpage: <https://www.rcslt.org/policy/england/campaigns>
- Ask your MP to support the campaign via Twitter or other social media using the hashtag #PrescribingNow and the downloadable infographic. You could say something like:
Hello @MPTwitterHandle, I'm a XXX living and/or working in your constituency. Please would you support the #PrescribingNow campaign so I can better support your constituents?
<https://www.rcslt.org/policy/england/campaigns>

If you have 10-15 minutes

- If you prefer writing to or emailing your MP, rather than via the e-action, use our template letter accessible on our dedicated webpage: <https://www.rcslt.org/policy/england/campaigns>
- MPs' contact details are accessible: <https://members.parliament.uk/members/Commons>
- Ask your MP to write to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care using the template letter we have prepared for them: <https://www.rcslt.org/policy/england/campaigns>
- Ask your MP to champion your work – and the work of your professional bodies – in Parliament.

If you have half an hour or more:

- Seek a meeting with your MP to discuss the benefits of extending independent prescribing responsibilities.

Maximising the impact of your approach

MPs will be more likely to respond if you include something about why it would support you as a specific allied healthcare professional and their constituents.

Therefore:

- **THINK:** think about why you having independent prescribing responsibilities would help you better support your patients; and
- **INCLUDE:** if you wish, include something in your e-action, email or letter to your MP highlighting how you having independent prescribing responsibilities would help you better support your MP's constituents.

An example speech and language therapists might include in their communication to MPs is:

In my own professional area, speech and language therapy, if I had independent prescribing responsibilities, I would be able to better support a range of patients with communication and/or swallowing difficulties, including those with cancer, particularly head and neck cancer, voice, those with Ear, Nose and Throat issues, learning disability, brain injury, recovering from a stroke, as well as people living with progressive neurological conditions (such as dementia, motor neurone disease, multiple sclerosis and Parkinson's disease).

Currently, without independent prescribing rights, speech and language therapists have to 'hand-off' a prescription to a different prescriber, for example a GP. A conservative estimate if the speech and language therapist is on-site with the clinician suggests that this action adds 10 minutes to the prescribing process. If this happens daily to one speech and language therapist, this equates to 50 minutes per week per therapist, as well as the time to the prescriber with the patient taking longer to receive treatment. If the other clinician is off-site, for example a GP, it can sometimes take days. In addition, for those patients with eating and drinking difficulties (dysphagia), the current situation increases risks to their safety, including adverse effects such as aspiration pneumonia or reflux and the risk of increased hospital admissions.

Help or advice

For help or advice with the #PrescribingNow campaign, contact:

elissa.cregan@rcslt.org