

## A guide to meeting your political representative

### Who is this guide for?

This guide is for anyone who is interested in meeting their local political representative to raise awareness about secondary breast cancer.

In England this will be your Member of Parliament (MP). In Scotland and Wales health is devolved. This means it is the responsibility of the Scottish and Welsh parliaments. Therefore it would be best to contact your Member of Scottish Parliament (MSP) or Welsh Assembly Member (AM) if you live in Scotland or Wales.



This guide includes all the information you will need to make the meeting a success.

### What impact can meeting my local politician have?

Arranging a meeting with your local MP, MSP or AM to talk about your experiences of secondary breast cancer is one of the most effective ways to raise the issue of the disease. It will help encourage them to champion improved care and support for people living with secondary breast cancer in Parliament or the Assembly.

### How do I contact them?

Arranging a meeting with your MP, MSP or AM is simple. We have set up these quick and easy forms for people who live in [England](#), [Scotland](#) or [Wales](#). All you need do is enter your postcode (or constituency if you live in Wales) and it will automatically create an email to them.

**This email will be much more effective and you will be much more likely to secure a meeting if you personalise it to reflect you and your story.**

### Where and when is a meeting likely to take place?

The time and date of the meeting will depend on when you are both available, although it will most likely take place on a Friday in England and Wales or Monday or Friday in Scotland as this is when MPs, AMs and MSPs are in their constituencies.

### What should I talk about?

#### Tell your story and share your experiences

Your MP, MSP or AM will be interested in hearing your story and increasing their understanding of secondary breast cancer. This could be your personal experience of secondary breast cancer, that of someone close to you or simply your understanding of the issues surrounding secondary breast cancer.

#### Issues in your local area

Local politicians are really interested in issues that relate specifically to their local area or constituency, so it is a good idea to keep this in mind when thinking about what you want to say.

Please contact [Hannah.blackburn@breastcancercare.org.uk](mailto:Hannah.blackburn@breastcancercare.org.uk) if you would like information about your local area. This could include whether your local NHS Trust is recording the number of patients with secondary breast cancer or if the NHS Trust or Health Board has trained specialist nurses for people with secondary breast cancer.

### **Breast Cancer Care's Secondary. Not Second Rate Campaign.**

Breast Cancer Care recent [Secondary. Not Second Rate](#) campaign found that the care and support for people living with secondary breast cancer isn't good enough.

- Over half of people with incurable breast cancer across the UK didn't know how to spot the signs and symptoms of the disease.
- Two thirds of Hospital Trusts in England don't know how many of their patients have secondary breast cancer. This information is not collected in Wales. In Scotland the collection of this information is not mandatory but in 2013 the Scottish Cancer Registry provided an estimate of the number of people with secondary breast cancer in Scotland.
- Three quarters of NHS Trusts and Health Boards across the UK say there is not enough specialist nursing care for people with incurable secondary breast cancer. In Scotland and Wales 33% and 60% of Health Boards respectively reporting that there is not enough specialist nursing care for people with secondary breast cancer.

See here for a [summary of the campaign](#) and a full list of recommendations to share with you MP, MSP or AM.

### **Making the most of your meeting**

Once you've had confirmation of a meeting date and time, it's a good idea to make sure you know what you want to say and what you're hoping for. You may want to:

- Get in touch with us, we will be able to help you think about what you want to say and provide local information.
- Write down your key points, stats and facts to make sure you cover everything.
- Consider printing a short summary of your main points to leave behind.

### **Is there anything else to consider?**

You may like to consider publicising secondary breast cancer further by sending a press release detailing the meeting to your local newspaper – if you do want to do this, it is something we can help you with.

If you have a meeting with your local MP, MSP or AM we would love to hear about it and how it went! If you would like further advice or information don't hesitate to get in touch with us at [campaigns@breastcancercare.org.uk](mailto:campaigns@breastcancercare.org.uk).