



Guidance / tips

Below are template messages that you can copy and paste into a letter or email and send off straight away.

We do recommend that you personalise your message as this encourages your MP to respond and get involved. You can personalise your email/letter by telling your MP about, for example:

- Your experiences of accessing GP care and any difficulties you have using online services
- What help you need and what difference this help makes
- If you have already noticed a change in the quality of the service, such as reduced appointments or longer waiting times

We have prepared two versions of the email/letter – one for older people and another for their supporters.

Unsure of your local MP? [You can find your MP on the UK Parliament website](#) by providing your postcode. Remember, please only write to your own MP!

Finally, if you have any questions, would like to discuss this further, or you receive a response from your MP, please forward these on to the Policy, Research and Consultancy Team, by emailing us at policy@reengage.org.uk.

Reducing loneliness in later life

7 Bell Yard, London, WC2A 2JR 020 7240 0630
Freephone: 0800 716 543 info@reengage.org.uk www.reengage.org.uk
Registered charity in England and Wales (1146149) and in Scotland (SC039377)



Version 1 – for older people

(insert your address)

(insert date)

Dear (MP name),

I am writing to ask for your help in making sure older people don't lose out as the NHS shifts to digital-first access, leading to an increased risk of people like me being excluded from GP services.

As GP services shift towards digital-first systems, more and more older people who are living with loneliness are reporting frustration at being excluded and disconnected from healthcare. This exclusion and lack of choice has real consequences for our health outcomes and wellbeing, as well as on existing NHS services.

The older person's charity Re-engage which is committed to reducing loneliness in later life has published a 'Care on HOLD' a report which illustrates the current situation and concerns facing older people and their families.

I am worried that the impact of pushing a digital-first approach will not only increase loneliness and isolation but will also leave older people dependent on others and risk them being cut off from vital healthcare. Without reliable alternatives such as telephone or in-person booking, I know that some people, including me, may delay or avoid care altogether.

I would like to ask you to write to the Government, and the Integrated Care Board (ICB) covering your constituency, to ask them to make digital health systems inclusive, accessible, and equitable - particularly for lonely and socially isolated older people – and request that they:

1. Embed in NHS digitalisation strategies the right for people to choose between digital or offline access when using health services, ensuring that digitalisation does not replace the option of non--digital contact.
2. Include in GP contracts a condition that analogue routes remain available by making non--digital access a protected component of health digitalisation policy, so no one is required to go online to receive care.
3. Ensure older people are directly involved in shaping digital health policy and service design, so decisions reflect the needs and experiences of those most affected.
4. Centrally collect and publish data from Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) and health boards on both digital and analogue access, broken down by age, gender, and ethnicity, to make the impact of digitalisation visible and identify any groups disproportionately affected.

Re-engage provided this message template to support me in making my voice heard; I feel very strongly about this issue and believe it must be urgently addressed to help older people access vital healthcare services.

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours,

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Version 2 – for supporters

(insert your address)

(insert date)

Dear (MP name),

I am writing as a concerned constituent to ask for your help in making sure older people don't lose out as the NHS shifts to digital-first access, leading to an increased risk of older people being excluded from GP services.

As GP services shift towards digital-first systems, I am aware that more and more older people who are living with loneliness are frustrated at being excluded and disconnected from healthcare. The lack of choice has real consequences for health outcomes and wellbeing as well as increasing pressure on existing NHS services.

The older person's charity Re-engage which is committed to reducing loneliness in later life has published a 'Care on HOLD' a report which illustrates the current situation and concerns facing older people and their families.

I am worried that the impact of pushing a digital-first approach will not only increase loneliness and isolation, but will also leave older people dependent on others and risk them being cut off from vital healthcare. Without reliable alternatives such as telephone or in-person booking, I know that some people, including me, may delay or avoid care altogether.

Will you please write to the Government and the Integrated Care Board (ICB) covering your constituency to ask them to make digital health systems inclusive, accessible, and equitable - particularly for lonely and socially isolated older people - and request they:

1. Embed in NHS digitalisation strategies the right for people to choose between digital or offline access when using health services, ensuring that digitalisation does not replace the option of non--digital contact.
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3. Ensure older people are directly involved in shaping digital health policy and service design, so decisions reflect the needs and experiences of those most affected.
4. Centrally collect and publish data from Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) and health boards on both digital and analogue access, broken down by age, gender, and ethnicity, to make the impact of digitalisation visible and identify any groups disproportionately affected.

Re-engage provided this message template to support me in making my voice heard; I feel very strongly about this issue and believe it must be urgently addressed to help older people access vital healthcare services.

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours,

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