**ODOC guide to meeting your MP**

**Be positive.** It's great that you are doing it! Our experience is positive. MSPs have been generally very courteous and interested.  You are a significant voice in this debate as a local GP/nurse/physio.

**Find the right person!** [**TheyWorkForYou**](https://www.theyworkforyou.com/mp/)This website will tell you- contact us at the office if you have any queries. Email them first and ask for a face-to-face appointment. You must include your post code in your email. Your MP may have regular constituency meetings (or surgeries) which you can book an appointment. Remember MP security is important.

**Approach** Be courteous, warm and interested. Ask about their reasons for supporting the bill or concerns. Make it clear that you are acting in a personal capacity and do not represent your employer.

**Make it personal.** Tell them who you are and who you care for eg those who are elderly or frail, those with cancer, heart failure, chronic disability or MS. Tell them about how the care is delivered eg in general practice, hospitals or in hospices. Be positive about how good palliative care can be but that funding is not comprehensive and access patchy, especially at the weekends and overnight.

**Explain** what at the law allows at the moment- stopping treatment, refusal of treatment and allowing natural death. You do not have to be an expert on the bill or assisted dying in other countries- if they ask you a question you don’t know, do say that you can find out and email them some relevant information.

**Explain your concerns**- eg on frail and vulnerable, abuse, widening access, difficulties in assessing capacity and prognosis.

**Autonomy** If the autonomy argument is pre-eminent, talking about choices with responsibility or responsibilities in a community might be helpful. The nature of many laws is that there is a restriction of individual liberty or choice- but the role of society is to find how best to enhance individual freedom but protect others from harm. Smoking in public places is a good example of individual autonomy being restricted in the interests of others.

**3 key phrases.**Have 3 key phrases that you have written down that you can say eg

* pressure on vulnerable,
* devalues those with disabilities,
* current law is the safeguard.

**Written materials**Have something written that you can leave with them or send them. This editorial from the Lancet is one idea.

[Worries grow about medically assisted dying in Canada - The Lancet](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736%2822%2901733-0/abstract)

**Encourage others locally to go too**. We need lots of doctors/hcps/students going to talk each MP.

**See them again!**Can some sort of follow-up meeting arranged? If they have concerns about a particular issue eg MND can we arrange to meet up with a supportive Neurologist/Palliative Care Consultant.

**Feedback**Let us know how you get on! It is so helpful for us to know who is going and who we need to speak to most at info@ourdutyofcare.org.uk