

## **An IPEM Guide to Lobbying your elected representatives**

A key part of IPEM's work to support the MPCE community is our public affairs work ie working with policy makers and partners to influence the shape of public policy.

As part of this work, and with the help of many of our members, IPEM produced a [Manifesto for the Future of Medical Physics and Clinical Engineering](#) ahead of the election. This has been sent to relevant Ministers in the new UK Government as well as selected Parliamentarians.

However, the best results usually come from decision makers hearing about what's happening on the frontline. **So how can you help?**

### The NHS Big Conversation

The UK Government has launched the biggest consultation in the history of the NHS, asking for the views of individuals, NHS staff and experts, and relevant organisations. IPEM is contributing to this on behalf of the professions we represent, but your individual views and experiences are vital to make our case for more support for MPCE.

The Government has issued a [survey for individuals](#) including colleagues working in the health and care sector. The key questions are:

- The best things about the NHS and the biggest challenges
- How to achieve what the Government calls "the three shifts"

Shift 1: moving more care from hospitals to communities

Shift 2: making better use of technology in health and care

Shift 3: focussing on preventing sickness, not just treating it

- Your experiences, as a member of the public, NHS professional, or both
- Your ideas for improving the NHS.

The questions are broad and open ended and you can answer as many or as few as you wish.

**Points you may wish to raise in your response** could include:

- AI and other emerging technologies offer great opportunities, but also challenges. We need enough properly trained science and engineering staff to develop, implement and operate these technologies in the best interests of patients.
- Scientists and engineers are at the forefront of healthcare research and development. Their work will make the NHS more efficient by offering faster and cheaper options for diagnostics and treatments.

- Similarly, the work of scientists and engineers on developing and implementing new technology will enable the shift from hospital to home care, for example through the use of portable monitors.
- Some of this R&D is done through industry and funding streams, for example, for tech start ups are an essential enabler.
- NHS records need to be more consistent and able to be used across care settings, for a multitude of purposes.
- ‘Big data’ can support more effective diagnostics, for example through targeted cancer screening. Again, this needs to be supported by properly trained scientific and engineering staff, who are experts in using this for the benefit of patients.
- Proper and effective regulation is needed for AI and other emerging technologies. The Government should bring all key partners, including the Medical Physics and Clinical Engineering community, around the table to develop this. (IPEM would be happy to represent the MPCE community in this).
- The investment announced by the Government in new equipment such as scanners, is welcome, but a long term view needs to be taken on how it is spent. Again, Medical Physicists and Clinical Engineers are key players in these decisions and should be involved at all stages and levels.
- To recruit, retain and develop the Medical Physics and Clinical Engineering workforce for today and the future, proper opportunities for training, CPD and career development, including protected time, are needed.

**Take Action:** take [the survey](#) as soon as possible. Whilst no deadline is given, organisations are being asked to contribute by December, so it is likely that responses will be collated early in the New Year.

#### Supporting IPEM’s Manifesto for the Future of Medical Physics and Clinical Engineering

IPEM’s Manifesto contains five key actions that the Government can take to support MPCE:

1. Address the MPCE workforce crisis
2. Introduce statutory registration for Clinical Technologists
3. Create the capacity for UK generation of medical radionuclides
4. Ensure AI is deployed in the interests of patients
5. Ensure environmental sustainability for future generations by investing in the long term.

IPEM has been using our Manifesto widely with policy makers, but the best results come from them hearing what’s happening on the frontline.

#### **So how can you help?**

We are asking IPEM to contact their local MP and MSPs in Scotland, MS in Wales and MLA in Northern Ireland with a copy of IPEM’s Manifesto. You might want to make the case for one of more of the specific actions that we are calling for, or more generally about the state of MPCE services. The important thing is to talk about your own experiences, but you can feel free to use the detailed rationale contained in the Manifesto to make the case on each ask.

## Dos and don'ts

### Do

- Only contact the elected representative(s) for the area where you live – not where you work if that's different – and include your home address. They are only allowed to respond to their own constituents. You can find out who your local representative is, and their contact details, at the website of the [UK Parliament](#), [Scottish Parliament](#), [Senedd](#) and [Northern Ireland Assembly](#).
- Keep your letter or email short and to the point – no more than 2 pages at the absolute maximum.
- If sending an email, include the topic in the subject line, as well as the fact that it is from their constituent. They receive a huge volume of correspondence but will focus on constituents.
- Include your own experiences as an MPCE professional – stories sell the argument.
- Keep it as local as possible – representatives are always most interested in their local hospital and health service.
- Back this up with any facts and figures you might have – the more local the better.
- Include a copy of IPEM's Manifesto (and feel free to quote from it). Offer to put them in touch with IPEM if they would like more information. Let the office know if they take this up via [communications@ipem.ac.uk](mailto:communications@ipem.ac.uk)
- Be polite and courteous – try to avoid attacking the representative or their party, however strong your feelings.
- Finish with an ask – this could be requesting for a meeting for you to talk to them some more, asking them to contact the relevant Minister, or even lobbying in their Parliament or Assembly on behalf of MPCE.

### Don't

- Use overly scientific terminology – the majority of representatives don't have a scientific background and we want them to understand what we're talking about!
- Send anything from your work email or on your organisation's letterhead etc. Indeed, ideally use your own computer and always use a personal email address.
- Compose or send anything during work time.
- Give any impression that you are representing the official view of your employer, nor as an official representative of IPEM. Please do say that you are a member of IPEM and share our Manifesto, but an approach in a personal capacity is far more powerful than an official, organisational approach in this situation.

**Take Action:** contact your elected representative(s) with a copy of IPEM's Manifesto and explaining the importance of MPCE to their local health services and why it needs Government support. Ask them to support this and make representations to the Government on your behalf.

**Please let the IPEM office know of any approach you make, and importantly, what response you receive, via [communications@ipem.ac.uk](mailto:communications@ipem.ac.uk)**

Thank you for your help on behalf of the Medical Physics and Clinical Engineering community!