

Review of choice at the end of life Letter Writing Guide

April 2014

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MACMILLAN.
CANCER SUPPORT**

Background to the review

Overwhelmingly people with cancer tell us that they want to die in their home surrounded by their loved ones. However, the reality is that too many simply do not receive the right support at the right time to allow this to happen. Often this is because vital services, such as 24/7 nursing support or social care, are not available to support who are approaching the end of their life and want to be at home. As a result, Macmillan estimates that over 36,000 cancer patients die in hospital every year when they would have preferred to have been at home.

Macmillan welcomed the UK Government's commitment to carrying out a review in England to better understand what needs to be done to make choice at the end of life a reality. This review was due to happen in 2013 but was delayed and in early 2014 the Minister responsible for the review – Norman Lamb MP – expressed his commitment to making sure that it happens this year.

We now need your help to make sure the Minister sticks to his commitment.

Please help us to encourage the Government to conduct a meaningful and thorough review that leads to real change by writing to your MP and asking them to raise this with Norman Lamb.

You can find your MP's contact details [here](#). The best way to contact them will usually be to write to them at MP Name, House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA.

Specific points you might want to include

To make the changes that are necessary we believe the review needs to:

- Identify the reasons that people approaching the end of life find themselves in hospital when they would prefer to die elsewhere
- Identify the key services that enable people to receive care where they want it and how they can work better together
- Recognise the vital role of carers and consider what support they need to be able to care for their loved ones at home
- Establish clear recommendations for delivering the necessary improvements and identify who is responsible for ensuring these changes happen.

You may also wish to include a sentence or two outlining your own personal experience and highlighting why this issue is important to you. However, we recognise that this can be a difficult issue to talk about so only include your own experiences if you feel comfortable doing so.

General tips

- Introduce yourself briefly and say why you are writing.
- Outline the issue and what you would like you MP to do. Try to keep this short – ideally one paragraph but at the most two.
- Ask your MP to act in response to your letter. Specifically, you could ask them to write to the Care Services Minister, Norman Lamb MP, raising the importance of the review of what needs to be done to improve choice at the end of life and asking him to publicly outline the timeline and process for this.
- Finish your letter in a way that encourages a reply, such as 'I look forward to hearing from you'.
- Include your address, even if you are writing by email. This is particularly important when writing to your MP as they will need to know that you live in their area.

Please send us a copy of any reply you receive from your MP – this will help us understand how our campaign is going. You can do this by scanning and sending the response to campaigns@macmillan.org.uk or sending a photocopy to our freepost address: Freepost RSTZ-TZBB-GLKS, Macmillan Cancer Support, Campaigns Team, 89 Albert Embankment, London SE1 7UQ.