**[Pharmacy address]**

**[Pharmacy address]**

**[Pharmacy address]**

**[Pharmacy address]**

**[Date]**

**[MP address]**

**[MP address]**

**[MP address]**

**[MP address]**

**[MP address]**

**Dear Mr [MP’s Surname]**

I am writing to you because I am deeply concerned by the government’s plans to cut funding for community pharmacies in England by 6% in October 2016. This means the overall annual funding for community pharmacists will fall by £170 million – the equivalent of £14,500 per pharmacy. The negotiating body for pharmacists in England believes that the government intends to make even greater cuts in the following years.

In its letter on 17 December 2015 outlining the funding change, the Department of Health suggested that there are more pharmacies than necessary in some parts of the country and that approximately a quarter will close as a result of these cuts. Yet the NHS is repeatedly telling the public to visit community pharmacies, rather than already stretched GPs and/or A&E departments, as a first port of call for anything from advice, to getting treatment if they are suffering from common ailments. These very pharmacies are under serious threat should these proposed funding cuts go ahead without looking at alternative models of care for patients, backed with appropriate funding.

Our pharmacy in **[street, town]**, currently has **[amount of staff and including pharmacist]** team members, all of them living and working locally. However, should the proposed funding cuts go ahead, we may have look at reducing our levels of staff to survive these. Ultimately, we may be one of the unfortunate pharmacies that may have to close altogether.

This will mean fewer pharmacies – with fewer staff – left to provide a number of invaluable services; including supplying accurate medicine, advising patients about their prescribed medicines, giving healthy lifestyle advice, helping people to choose appropriate self-care, delivering flu vaccinations **[insert any other professional services your pharmacy does here]** and free delivery of medicines to our vulnerable patients.

Recently one of our team members **[insert an example of excellent patient care here]**. I am sure that you will agree that these funding cuts could adversely affect these types of excellent patient care (and pharmacy services) we currently offer to your constituents.

Most of our pharmacies are located in the heart of the community and for your constituents, particularly the vulnerable, their local community pharmacy is the most accessible provider of healthcare and advice. It would be devastating and potentially dangerous for many if their local community pharmacy could not provide the services needed due to financial strain, or were forced to close.

At the time of writing this letter, **[insert amount of signatures from petition here]** pharmacy team members and members of the public have already signed a petition to protest against the government’s proposals (see <https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/116943>). Further, the Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee has also recently published a set of service proposals that describe how pharmacy services could develop in the future within the context of Government drives for efficiency. The proposals include the introduction of a care package, which would see repeat dispensing becoming a default option where medicines are needed on a long-term basis, patient registration at pharmacies, and pharmacies offering enhanced medicines optimisation services.

On 26 January 2016 Michael Dugher MP (Barnsley East) called on Government to stop these cuts to community pharmacies saying that “*The budget cut will mean that pharmacies are less able to help patients at a time when the Government is asking them to do more to prevent of ill-health and promote healthy living*.” Many other MP’s are also realising the impact these cuts could have, including Tom Blenkinsop MP (Middlesbrough South and East Cleveland), Paula Sherriff, MP (Dewsbury and Mirfield), Teresa Pearce MP (Erith & Thamesmead) and Kate Hoey MP (Vauxhall) who announced that she will “*work together*” with other MPs who receive “*direct representations*” from pharmacists in their constituencies to draw up a parliamentary motion on the cuts.

Like other MP’s, I urge you to raise this matter in parliament and call for a debate on the impact of this damaging funding cut on patients visiting community pharmacies, the impact it will have on other, already stretched services (GP’s and A&E) and many staff working in their local community pharmacy. It is essential that alternative models of care that consider all of the aforementioned, with appropriate funding, is developed before any changes in the current way of funding to community pharmacies are imposed.

I look forward to hearing your response.

Yours sincerely

**[Sign you letter here]**

**[Name and position]**