



The ROYAL COLLEGE of  
OPHTHALMOLOGISTS

# Put eyecare on the map: A guide to influencing your prospective parliamentary candidate





With the release of the main parties' manifestos there has been one clear omission, none have mentioned ophthalmology or eyecare. As the busiest outpatient specialty, with a predicted 40% increase in demand over the next 20 years, ophthalmology is facing a crisis of capacity that is going unnoticed, we need your help to change this.

The upcoming General Election is crucial for the future of ophthalmology and its workforce, we are calling on you to spread the messages from [our manifesto](#) and influence prospective parliamentary candidates (PPCs), so they can:

- Help to address workforce shortages
- Advocate for a more innovative approach in providing clinic space to alleviate demand
- Support ophthalmologists in leading multidisciplinary workforce teams
- Raise awareness for invaluable projects such as the National Ophthalmology Database

## How can I reach my prospective parliamentary candidate?

1. Use the following website: [whocanivotefor](#)
2. Type in your home postcode. This also applies for Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.
3. The list of prospective parliamentary candidates will now be available for you to view:

<p><b>Jo Humphreys</b> Liberal Democrats 🐦 ✉️ <a href="#">Learn more</a></p>		<p><b>Boris Johnson</b> Conservative and Unionist Party 🐦 📘 ✉️ <a href="#">Learn more</a></p>	
<p><b>Mark Keir</b> Green Party Statement 🐦 📘 ✉️ <a href="#">Learn more</a></p>		<p><b>Ali Milani</b> Labour Party 🐦 📘 🗣️ ✉️ <a href="#">Learn more</a></p>	

4. You can obtain their email address from clicking on the PPC you want to influence, see the below example:

### Contact information

Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/Ali-Milani-for-Uxbridge-South-Ruislip-481028382380661/>

Home page

<https://www.alimilani.com/>

The party's candidate page for this person

<https://vote.labour.org.uk/ali-milani>

Email

[Ali@AliMilani.com](mailto:Ali@AliMilani.com)

### Now that you have obtained your PPCs contact details, what can you do to grab their attention?

Any prospective parliamentary candidate, MP, or their staff, will quickly identify template letters and ignore them. An individually written letter or email will need to use the following to have an impact:

- Personal experience
- Case studies
- A clear point of action
- Ask for a clear commitment

Each of these methods are far more effective and valued than mass produced templates.

For the best results, target PPCs **in your home** constituency if you work or practice in another area. For ideal tone of voice, your correspondence should introduce yourself as a concerned constituent who is also a doctor, rather than the other way round.

You can also encourage your patients to contact their PPCs with stories and experiences, this will further compound an already powerful message.

If you wish to receive help with your letter or email to your PPC, you can contact the RCOphth communications department at: [communications@rcophth.ac.uk](mailto:communications@rcophth.ac.uk)

You can also contact us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) for further guidance.

Questions you can pose to your PPC:

- What do you know about ophthalmology and the challenges facing it?
- How will you/your party support local healthcare services to meet the needs of eye patients in the area?
- Will you and your party commit to giving ophthalmology adequate funding it needs to succeed as the busiest outpatient specialty?
- How will you secure greater funding for ophthalmology?
- If your party forms a new government, will you write to the new Health Secretary outlining the pressures that ophthalmologists face?

For further points and material to use, you can access our general election manifesto [here](#)

## **Writing is not the only way to influence your PPC:**

You can:

- Email/write to your PPC to arrange a meeting
- Attend a general election hustings in your area

If you have any further questions or would like assistance with any of the content raised, please contact [jake.mckey@rcophth.ac.uk](mailto:jake.mckey@rcophth.ac.uk)