

GET POLITICIANS TALKING ABOUT ARTHRITIS THIS ELECTION

The run up to an election is an important time to put arthritis on the agenda of your future MP. If you get a chance to speak to a candidate, here are some tips on what to say. The most important part is to secure their pledge at the end of the conversation.

Top tip: Keep it neutral. Versus Arthritis works with politicians from all parties. We have a legal responsibility to make sure that we do not support or oppose any politician or party. You are sharing your experiences as a local constituent, not as a representative of Versus Arthritis.

For more information, visit:
www.versusarthritis.org/generalelection2019

**VERSUS
ARTHRITIS**

STEP 1:

EXPLAIN WHY THEY NEED TO TAKE ARTHRITIS SERIOUSLY

Arthritis matters

There are 487,000 people with arthritis and related musculoskeletal conditions in Northern Ireland and 18.8 million across the UK.

It can affect anyone of any age

There are many forms of arthritis that can develop at any stage of your life, from childhood, adolescence or as an adult.

Arthritis steals life's fundamentals

It can stop you doing things that people take for granted – like getting out of bed, going to work, or having relationships with the ones you love.

UK Parliament can help change this by:

- Recognising the impact of arthritis
- Making arthritis a health and social care priority
- Supporting people with arthritis to be in work
- Investing more in arthritis research

Let's break the silence

People with arthritis hold back from talking about their experience because they feel like a burden. Millions of people are suffering in silence because they fear their pain will be dismissed or trivialised. This is unacceptable. Versus Arthritis is calling on MPs to raise arthritis up the agenda locally and in Parliament.



STEP 2:

SHARE YOUR STORY

MPs are elected to represent the issues that matter to their constituents.

Sharing your story is a powerful way to make them take action.



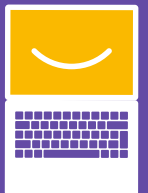
Tell candidates about:

- Your symptoms and what it's like to live with the pain of arthritis
- The impact that arthritis has had on your life, work, independence and mental wellbeing
- The support you receive and what else would help to make life easier

STEP 3:

SECURE THEIR SUPPORT

Secure the following commitment from your candidate: **If elected, I pledge to meet constituents with arthritis and speak up for them in Parliament**



Ask them to share their pledge on social media: @versusarthritis #PainNoFilter

Tell us about your conversation with your candidate at campaigns@versusarthritis.org and keep in touch by signing up to the Campaigns Network at www.versusarthritis.org/campaignsnetwork