**Template letter to MPs: Pharmacy debate on Thursday 11 March**

Dear xxx,

I am writing to you as a constituent and (pharmacy owner/pharmacist/other) to ask that you support you support your local pharmacies in Parliament next week by contributing to a debate on pharmacy and the impact of COVID-19. This is taking place on Thursday 11 March at 1.30pm.

Example text – but try to also include local examples or stories from your own pharmacy.

COVID-19 has put a lot of pharmacies under great strain. A huge amount of work has been required in dealing with the pandemic and costs to businesses have included increased staffing costs, PPE, cleaning, and social distancing measures. These have been significant and, coupled with a reduction in income from over-the-counter sales and services, this has left many pharmacies facing serious financial challenges.

Pharmacies did receive £370m in emergency funding loans to help them to stay open during the pandemic in 2020, but that money has been spent on covering more than £400m of NHS costs, allowing pharmacies to continue offering vital patient services while keeping patients and staff safe. The loans will be impossible for many pharmacies to pay back and without further funding support, pharmacies could close, risking patient access to vital services.

 I would be grateful if you could support your community pharmacies by:

* Contributing to the debate on Thursday 11 March at 1.30pm to represent pharmacies in your constituency; and
* Including an ask to convert the £370m emergency cashflow loans - which were provided to pharmacies during the pandemic to help cover COVID-19 costs - into grants recognising that this money has been spent on providing NHS services to patients in a COVID-secure way and will be impossible for many pharmacies to pay back.

Without proper financial support from Government, pharmacies could close and the huge potential of the sector to contribute to important health agendas and help recovery from COVID-19 could be lost. I hope you are able to take part in the debate next week to highlight this.

For any briefing material or if you have any questions about the debate, please email contact@pharmacyappg.co.uk.

Best wishes,

xxx