To: {inset your local MP’s name and address here}

Dear {insert name}

As your constituent, I am writing to ask if you will pledge your support to phase

out prescription charges for people with long term conditions.

The last Labour government pledged to end prescription charges for people with long-term conditions. However, this promise was not fulfilled before the general election, since when the Coalition Government has maintained the current system.

The Prescription Charges Coalition has just published a report called ‘Paying the Price’, which makes the case for reform to the current system. It uncovers the shocking decisions people with conditions like asthma, heart disease, arthritis, HIV, Crohn's Disease, Ulcerative Colitis, Parkinson's, mental health conditions, cystic fibrosis, auto-immune disease and many others are being forced to make because of the added financial burdens associated with prescription charges. It is wrong that people are forced to choose between food, clothing, bills or their prescriptions.

The prescription charge has again been increased to £7.85 from this April. The current regime of charges seems to actively undermine good health and costs the NHS more. As people are rationing their prescriptions or foregoing them altogether, this is resulting in poorer health or, in extreme cases, hospitalisation. This is clearly unacceptable.

A high proportion of people are already exempt from prescription charges because of their financial circumstances, their age, or the fact that they have certain other medical conditions. It is inconsistent and unfair to deny people with long-term conditions the same assistance.

People develop a long-term condition down to a complex combination of hereditary, environmental or other lifestyle factors. Once diagnosed, many will have their condition for the rest of their lives and if we want them to stay in work and continue to be productive members of society, then the Government needs to address this problem. The present approach to charging is little more than an additional health tax on the sick.

I would be grateful if you would write to the Shadow Secretary of State for Health, Andy Burnham MP, and the Shadow Health Team to ask them to pledge to phase out prescription charges for people with long-term conditions if Labour are re-elected.

Yours sincerely

{Insert your name and address here}