Dear X,

As a member of your constituency, I am writing to you to seek your assistance in the fight against pancreatic cancer.  I live at [full address required].

[explain your personal connection to pancreatic cancer here]

Almost 10,000 people are diagnosed with pancreatic cancer each year, and at the moment, only 5% of those will survive beyond five years. In comparison, 86% of breast cancer patients and 98% of testicular cancer patients will still be alive five years after diagnosis. In fact, pancreatic cancer has one of the highest incident-to-mortality rates of almost ANY disease.

The shocking statistics are related to the fact that cancer of the pancreas can be very difficult to diagnose.  Upon diagnosis, most sufferers find they have untreatable terminal cancer with an average life expectancy of between three to six months.  Surgery is currently the only cure for pancreatic cancer, but **only 10 per cent are diagnosed in time** for this to be an option.

Survival rates for many cancers have improved significantly over the past 30-40 years and there is a direct correlation between increased research funding for those cancers and better survival. Sadly, the same is not true for pancreatic cancer, which has not seen any improvement at all.

***Lack of funding…***

Of the £521 million spent by the National Cancer Research Institute partners (NCRI) in 2013, only £5.2 million was spent on pancreatic cancer. In contrast, Breast cancer received £42 million, Bowel cancer £23million, Leukaemia £32 million, and Prostate £17million.

This chronic underfunding is not new – pancreatic cancer has been underfunded relative to its disease burden for decades. Recent research by Cancer Research UK has predicted that pancreatic cancer will become the UK’s 4th cancer killer, overtaking breast cancer (which has an incidence of over 50,000 per year) by 2030 – not because pancreatic cancer mortality rates are getting worse (how can they get any higher?) but because advances in other cancers mean fewer people are dying of these diseases. We need increased investment in pancreatic cancer now to prevent this disease becoming the UK’s No1 cancer killer of the future.

I am a supporter of [Pancreatic Cancer Action](http://www.pancreaticcanceraction.org/) whose mission is to change pancreatic cancer survival rates and focus on improving early detection statistics.  They are very proactive in raising awareness about pancreatic cancer and educating the medical community and have developed a [free eLearning module](https://pancreaticcanceraction.org/what-we-do/how-donations-help/pancreatic-cancer-learning-modules/) for GPs alongside the RCGP entitled “Diagnosing Pancreatic Cancer in General Practice”.

We need your help to change the numbers for pancreatic cancer. We need to know why there are **gross inequalities in funding** for cancer research and to work out what the formula is for deciding how it is spent.  Some cancers with a much lower incidence than pancreatic cancer receive greater funding – in some cases three times more.  We need to understand why.  Is it because the respective charities shout the loudest or is it based on misconceptions about the possibilities of research into pancreatic cancer making a change to outcomes?

Pancreatic cancer charities are doing all they can to raise funds but they are tiny in comparison to charities representing breast, prostate, bowel cancer and other cancers who have incomes in the tens of millions. In 2012 the UK pancreatic cancer charities *collectively* raised only £3 million. Therefore, we need a greater commitment from government to increase the spending on pancreatic cancer research if we are to have any future impact on the disease.

I would like you please to raise the issue in parliament about the fact that there has been no improvement in survival since the early 1970’s, and to highlight the funding inequalities of cancer research especially the pitiful research funding pancreatic cancer receives – despite it being the 5thbiggest cancer killer in the UK, it only receives three per cent of overall research funding.

Please could you also consider getting involved in the [APPG on Pancreatic Cancer](https://pancreaticcanceraction.org/what-we-do/goals/party-parliamentary-group-appg-pc/)where along with your parliamentary colleagues you can help change the numbers for pancreatic cancer?

I would be happy to talk to you about this further either over the phone or in person. I look forward to your response and thank you in advance.

Kindest regards,

[Insert name]