Making Your Voice Heard: How to Be an Effective Healthcare Advocate

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Objectives:
• Explain 3 techniques for communicating a public health agenda to policymakers
• List the key steps to organizing people in a grassroots effort
• Describe potential roles for physicians in affecting local, state, or national health related policies

Overview
This session will summarize building an effective advocacy strategy from the ground up with an overview of specific techniques that can be employed and the basics of grassroots organizing.

• Defining your agenda
• Power mapping
• Building your coalition
• Grassroots organizing
• Tactics
• Campaign basics
• Next steps

Defining Your Agenda
• What inspires you, what upsets you?
• What can you do about it?
  • In your institution?
  • At the local level?
  • At the state level?
  • At the national level?

Example: Drug Pricing
• Institutional technology transfer policy
• Press attention to influence corporate activity
• State-based bill support
• National legislative action

Power Mapping
• Who has the power to make things happen?
• What incentives do those in power respond to?
• The Bank Shot: Lobby a person who has influence over those with power
Building Your Coalition
- Who has interests aligned with your agenda?
- Think outside the box
- Grassroots vs. grasstops
- Unique voice of physicians and health providers

Grassroots Organizing
- Informational interviews
- House meetings
- Organizational success only takes 1 or 2 dedicated people

Make the Ask!
- A 1-on-1 ask in person or a phone call or a text is worth 100 emails or social media postings that make general offer to participate to a group
- It is uncomfortable but it is the core building block of successful grassroots advocacy

Tactics
- Social media - Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc
- LTEs & Op eds
- Earned media
- Direct contact: phone calls, lobbying visits

Campaign Basics
- Ladder of engagement
- Institutional champions
- Going viral
- Press over participation

Become An Advocate Tomorrow (Today!)
- Join a physician organization
  - Professional orgs (AMA, ACP, AAFP, ACOG, AAP, ACEP, etc)
  - Advocacy orgs (Doctors for America, National Physicians Alliance, California Physicians Alliance, Physicians for a National Health Program, Physicians for Social Responsibility, Physicians for Reproductive Health, etc)
  - Participate in a training!
- Go to a lobby day
- Engage students
- Start your own campaign
- Make the Ask!

Questions and Guidance
- Email me at kyleragins@gmail.com if you have any questions about this presentation, comments, or you want more help in figuring out how to get involved
- If you are planning an advocacy campaign I am happy to be your sounding board and offer advice, feedback, and help connect you with national resources, press, and like-minded groups