

8 Steps to Good Advocacy

1. Define Your Goals

- ◆ What needs changing?
- ◆ Long term/short term?
- ◆ What do we want to ask for? Does it require change to:
 - Legislation
 - Policy
 - Regulation
 - Programs
 - Funding

2. Know Your Audience

- ◆ Multi-layered: policy makers, media, key constituencies, public
- ◆ Different strategies for each target – research
- ◆ Provincial and Territorial governments, health authorities and general public

3. Craft Your Message

- ◆ Be clear on what we are asking for
- ◆ Keep it simple and focussed
- ◆ Use positive language
- ◆ Tailor message to audience- research
- ◆ Appeal to audience's self-interest
- ◆ Acknowledge environment/context- be pragmatic
- ◆ Make the case
- ◆ Need to look at the problem, the solution(s) and the benefit(s)
- ◆ Be consistent
- ◆ Distribute clear concise position statements
- ◆ Use evidence - facts carry more weight than anecdotal evidence
- ◆ Economic arguments are important

4. Identify the Messenger

- ◆ The target audience will determine the messenger
 - For example: approach MPs as constituents
- ◆ As we cultivate champions, they will also become messengers
- ◆ Media is best handled by a designated person(s)

5. Identify Delivery Methods

- ◆ Advocacy is relationship building
- ◆ Tactics change by target audience
- ◆ Tactics to reach general public
 - Ads
 - Media stories
 - Editorials
 - Awareness campaigns
 - Local events

- ◆ Tactics to reach media
 - Choose right communication tool:
 - Press releases, Op-Ed, press conferences, letters
 - Use positive language
 - Make sure sources are credible
 - Make sure information is timely
 - Localize the issue
 - Accent human interest angle
 - Demonstrate support

- ◆ Tactics to reach political level of government
 - Meetings with elected officials – follow up
 - Letter writing campaigns then follow up in person
 - Distribute background documentation proving our case
 - Petitions
 - Appear before Caucus
 - Appear before a Parliamentary Committee

- ◆ Tactics to reach departmental level of government
 - Meet with departmental employees responsible for issue
 - Meet with other government employees that may have an interest in the issue
 - Be prepared with discussion information and background info that they can use to make the case within government

6. Identify Resources and Gaps

- ◆ Do a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) analysis
- ◆ Build on existing resources and opportunities
 - Alliances, relationships, information, political intelligence, capacity of staff, opportunities
- ◆ Develop capacities which are lacking
 - Research, media, outreach

7. Plan Next Steps

- ◆ Identify achievable goals that set stage for larger work
- ◆ Include in the advocacy strategy/plan
 - Priority area
 - Action
 - Target
 - Timelines
 - Partners
 - Resources
 - Critical path or Next Steps

- ◆ Set out clear steps – including timelines
- ◆ Be clear on who needs to do what and when
- ◆ Communicate the plan with partners
- ◆ Be flexible
- ◆ Keep focussed on long term goal

8. Evaluate Effectiveness

- ◆ Regularly revisit each of the steps to make sure the strategy is effective
- ◆ Discard any tactics which are not working and build on those that do
- ◆ Re-evaluate as new opportunities and challenges emerge
- ◆ Communicate changes internally

Remember...

- ◆ Communications are key!
- ◆ Build a coalition of voices
- ◆ Planning is crucial
- ◆ Positive messaging is important
- ◆ Advocacy is about relationship building