

HOW TO BUILD GOOD GOVERNMENT RELATIONSHIPS

MEMBERSHIP MEETING

OCTOBER 17, 2018

HOME CARE, HOSPICE & PALLIATIVE CARE ALLIANCE OF NH



TODAY'S DISCUSSION

- Advocacy defined
- 8 Basic Steps
- Caveats
- Real Life Examples



THE ESSENCE OF ADVOCACY

- From the Latin **ad** and **vocare**, meaning “to call”
- **Advocatus**: one who summons or pleads; one who defends or maintains a cause or proposal
- You can advocate for a specific cause, or for your organization or mission
- It's not all about lobbying!



ADVOCACY IS TARGETED PR

- **Public Relations**: the management function that identifies, establishes and maintains mutually beneficial relationships between an organization and the various entities on whom its success or failure depends*
- **Government Relations**: mutually beneficial relationships with government entities on whom our success or failure depends

• **Effective Public Relations*, 6th edition, Cutlip, Center & Broom, 1985



WHO IS THE TARGETED AUDIENCE?

- **All businesses -- especially health care organizations -- depend upon government entities at many levels**
- **Local** – municipal officials, planning boards, community organizations, public/private partnerships
- **State** – elected officials and regulators
- **Federal** – Congressional delegation and federal agencies



8 EASY WAYS TO BUILD GOVERNMENT RELATIONSHIPS

Know your government officials

Ask your legislators for their vote

Say “thank you”

Introduce yourself

Take a lobbyist to lunch

Grow your own champions

Invite them in

Make gov't relationships a priority



1. KNOW YOUR GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS

- Create a database of elected officials and important people
- **www.gencourt.state.nh.us**
- Determine their affinities
- Identify existing relationships
- Take note of leadership and committee roles
- Prioritize them



2. INTRODUCE YOURSELF

- Send a letter or email congratulating them on their election
- If you know them already, call them to congratulate
- Offer to be a resource on any issue
- Ask to be added to their constituent email list



3. INVITE THEM IN

- Set up on-one-meetings
- Host a Legislative Event at your agency
- Invite them to special events
- Include them on a home visit
- Add them to your external email list, twitter account, etc.
- Inquire about their areas of interest or concerns
- Goal: Have a relationships before your ever need to ask for their vote!



4. MAKE GOVERNMENT RELATIONS A PRIORITY



**BUILD GOV'T
RELATIONS INTO
YOUR
OPERATING
PLAN**



**APPOINT AN
ACCOUNTABLE
MANAGER –
CEO, VP, OTHER**



**DO AT LEAST
STEPS 1, 2 & 3!**



**CONSULT THE
ALLIANCE FOR
TALKING POINTS
AND TIMELINES**



**CONSIDER
HAVING AN
“EXPERT” OR
SPOKESPERSON
FOR SPECIFIC
ISSUES**



5. TAKE A LOBBYIST TO LUNCH



- Take advantage of Association resources – the Alliance, NAHC, NHPCO, Chambers of Commerce
- Join the Alliance's Legislative Committee
 - First meeting is Nov. 12, 2pm
- Learn about key players
- Observe the political process
- Get a deeper understanding of the issues
- Refer to the resources provided today.



6. ASK YOUR LEGISLATORS FOR THEIR VOTE

- Know your issue and the opposing side
- Assume your legislator knows nothing about the issue
- Have your key messages ready
- Target your communications
- Be specific: “Please vote ‘yes’ on SB 43.”
- If local or state, call or write a letter. Emails are less effective
- If federal, communicate with the key policy staffer via email
- Always be polite!



7. SAY “THANK YOU”

- If they vote your way, be sure to follow-up with a note, call or twitter post thanking them.
- If they don't vote your way, thank them anyway for listening to your concerns
- Remember: You may need their vote on another issue in the future



8. GROW YOUR OWN CHAMPIONS

- Having a champion at the State House is priceless!
- Enhance your legislators connections to your organization
- Non-profits – consider adding a legislator to your Board
- Encourage an internal champion to run for office



CAVEATS

- *You* don't have a vote, so you can't guarantee an outcome
- Grassroots efforts need concise, simple messages
- Disagree without being disagreeable
- Give employees clear guidance on what they can do and not do
- IRS has strict rules for lobbying by non-profits
 - No electioneering
 - No contributions to candidates
 - Lobbying must be reported on the IRS 990



POLITICAL ACTIVITY POLICY

- Consider an organizational “Political Activity Policy”
- Employees can only represent themselves, using personal email or letterhead on their own time.
- Employees should not speak for the organization unless they have been appointed as a spokesperson by the organization
- Employees may represent an organization on a board or commission only if they have been authorized by the employee.



DON'T BE DAUNTED

- *Advocacy is all about developing and maintaining good relationships*
- The political process can be complex, but it's open to all.
- You can get help from the Alliance every step of the way.
- Home health & hospice agencies develop relationships every day.



**Start developing your
government
relationships NOW!**

The Alliance is here to help.

