Advocacy & Asthma
Tools and Tips to get you started
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Allergy & Asthma Network
Learning Objectives

• Attendees will learn current federal advocacy issues relevant to asthma and allergy patients and providers
• Attendees will learn current state advocacy issues relevant to asthma and allergy patients and providers
• Attendees will learn how to engage and elevate the patient voice in public policy initiatives
What We Believe

Our mission and our core belief:

Together, we can work to end the needless death and suffering due to asthma, allergies and related conditions through outreach, education, advocacy and research.

We work to fulfill this mission by engaging with leading experts and building patient-centered collaborative care teams to achieve optimal health outcomes for patients.
What is advocacy?

• **Definition:** “the act or process of supporting a cause or proposal: the act or process of advocating something.” *(Merriam-Webster Dictionary)*

• **Public policy advocacy:** Influencing public policy by using facts, data, relationships, media, testimonials, and messaging to educate government officials and the public on changes they want to bring to the forefront.

• **Advocacy is not lobbying.** Lobbying is a specific type of advocacy activity that involves direct support of specific legislation with political candidates or ballot initiatives.
Why should you advocate?

• You can make a difference by raising awareness of important issues.

• Laws can be changed or improved.

• Establish trust and credibility among public, policymakers and media.

• You have a story to share.
# Patient Engagement in Advocacy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Safe, effective and affordable medicines</th>
<th>Affordable and high-quality healthcare and insurance coverage</th>
<th>Nurses in all K-12 public schools</th>
<th>Appropriate funding for asthma health and research programs</th>
<th>Access to innovative therapies and technologies to advance medical treatment</th>
<th>Mitigate environmental health hazards and address climate change</th>
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Getting Started

• What are the Priorities/Objectives?
• Who are the Targets?
• What is the Message?
• Who will deliver message?
• What resources are needed?
• Monitor and measure impact
• Adjust strategy as needed
How a Bill becomes Law
Who are my elected officials?

Go to https://www.govtrack.us/congress/members

Enter your home address to find your members of Congress and get links to their websites for contacting them.
Communicating with Elected Officials

- Letters
- Emails
- Phone calls
- In person meetings
Writing a Letter

Helpful suggestions for an effective letter:

- State your purpose in the first paragraph.
- Identify legislation, if any, your letter pertains to (e.g., House bill: H. R. # or Senate bill: S. #).
- Be courteous.
- Be concise.
- Include key information and personal examples to support your position.
- Keep issues to a minimum.
- Keep the letter to one page.
Delivering your Letter

Send postal mail to district/local offices as security measures at the U.S. Capitol may cause delays in delivery. If you would like your message delivered quickly, send an email!

ADDRESSING CORRESPONDENCE

To a Senator:
The Honorable (full name)  
(Rm.#) (name of) Senate Office Building  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator (last name):

To a Representative:
The Honorable (full name)  
(Rm.#) (name of) House Office Building  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative (last name):

Special Circumstances:
• Address Chair of a Committee: Dear Chairman (last name) or Chairwoman (last name)
• Address Speaker and Leadership: Dear Speaker (last name) or Dear Majority/Minority Leader (last name):
Advocating in person

• Introduce yourself.
• Describe the issue(s).
• Use personal anecdotes.
• Stay focused and keep the conversation simple and polite.
• Show openness to counterarguments.
• Ask the legislator to take some specific actions.
• Offer to get the answer to a question you do not know.
• Summarize any commitments made by the Member/staff.
• Ask when and with whom you should follow up.
• Say “Thank You!”
Other ways to advocate

• Social Media
• Blog
• Public Testimony
• Television/Radio/Print
Social media channels such as **Twitter** and **Facebook** are important ways to communicate with your elected officials.

Members of Congress use social media to:

- Spread awareness about issues they care about
- Update constituents on events happening in their districts;
- Discuss public policy; and
- Highlight organizations or constituent groups they meet with.
TWITTER

Twitter is where users post and interact with messages, "tweets," restricted to 140 characters.

• Follow our profile at: twitter.com/AllergyAsthmaHQ

• Send messages to us: @AllergyAsthmaHQ

• If an elected official has a Twitter profile, you can tweet advocacy messages to them. Include the @ symbol at the beginning of their username (no spaces).

• You can find tweets from yourself and others by searching for topic keywords or hashtags (#).
Sending a *tweet*…

- The House Energy and Commerce Committee’s Twitter username is [@HouseCommerce](https://twitter.com/HouseCommerce) and the Committee Chairman Greg Walden’s Twitter username is [@RepGregWalden](https://twitter.com/RepGregWalden).

- If you include the username anywhere in the body of a *tweet*, then congressional staff or Representative Walden is likely to view your message and may respond.

**Sample tweet**

Just met with @RepGregWalden who is Chairman of @HouseCommerce to discuss access to healthcare for #asthma and #allergy patients.
FACEBOOK

Facebook makes it easy for you to connect and share information with individuals online.

• Network page: facebook.com/AllergyAsthmaNetwork

• Tag the Network in your posts by typing the @ symbol followed by our name: @AllergyAsthmaNetwork.

• You can also include a Twitter hashtag # in your post which will be categorized by your keyword or phrase on Twitter.
Sample Facebook post...

Working to raise awareness and educating legislators on important issues facing #asthma and #allergy patients @AllergyAsthmaNetwork
Current Federal Issues

- HR 2285---School-Based Asthma Management Program
- HR 2077---Restoring the Patients Voice
- HR 4---FAA Reauthorization

- Appropriations for CDC NACP, NIH Research, EPA
Current State Issues

• Step Therapy
• Prior Authorization
• Telemedicine
• Nonmedical Switching
ADVOCACY SURVEY

Join us!
Tell us about your priority interests at
www.AllergyAsthmaNetwork.org/Advocacy
Be an Advocate

Your voice matters!
Contact Information

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