

Helpful tips and tools for effectively reaching out to elected officials.

Caveat: unless explicitly approved by your institution's Government Relations, you should advocate and write as private citizen and resident, not as representatives of your healthcare organization.

Who to Contact and What to Say:

- *Contact Your Representatives:* emails can be found online for state/province and federal levels. Your voice carries the most weight with officials who represent you. Elected officials have a vested interest in the opinions of their constituents.

[Contact your Member of Parliament](#)

[Find your Federal Representative](#)

[Find your Federal Senator](#)

- *Know Your Facts*

Ensure you have accurate data to support your case, and always cite your sources. Data-driven arguments are compelling to lawmakers.

- *Be Concise*

Officials have limited time. Summarize your main points clearly and offer to provide additional details if needed.

- *Maintain Respect and Professionalism*

Respect and civility are key to gaining lawmakers' attention and fostering constructive dialogue.

- *Use Anecdotes*

Personal stories can be powerful and persuasive tools when discussing policy issues. Anecdotes should be anonymous or aggregations of stories – it is important to keep patient information confidential.

- *Follow Up as Needed*

Local legislators often have minimal staff support. If you do not receive a response, it does not mean your message was ignored. Don't hesitate to follow up.

- *Offer to Meet or Speak*

Personal engagement can be impactful, especially with local legislators. Provide your contact details, including your phone number, personal email, and the best times to reach you.

Additional Tips:

- Avoid Assumptions

Do not rely on rumors or assumptions, including those based on political party. Ensure your facts are verified.

- Educate, Don't Assume Knowledge

Local legislators may not be familiar with all topics. Approach them as if they are new to the issue and focus on educating them.

- Be Aware of the Legislative Process

Understanding where an issue stands in the legislative process is crucial. For example, a bill filed in January or February may not have a public hearing until March and may not be voted on until April or May. Timing your outreach appropriately ensures your message is relevant.

- Proactive Advocacy is More Effective

Encouraging a legislator to vote a certain way is more effective than criticizing them after a vote. If you wish to express disappointment over a vote, do so respectfully