

Tips for a Successful Legislative Visit

Meeting Preparation

Determine who will be attending- Know who your group leader is and who is best at discussing different issues/topics. If someone has a personal story that goes along with the topic, be sure to account for that.

Make a Plan- Don't forget to discuss who you are, where you live, and where you work. It is very important to also research your legislator. Always know background information and what key committees he/she serves on.

Identify your main message- Make sure all of those in attendance know the main points of the message that you are trying to relay to your legislator. If too many ideas are discussed, the takeaway message could be lost.

Know the issues- It is very important during legislative meetings to know the issues that you are discussing with the Senator or Representative. However, if a question should arise during your visit that you do not know the answer to, always answer honestly. Following up with the correct information is much better than relaying inaccurate information. This also opens the door for follow up discussion.

Prepare and practice- Be sure to run through how you envision your meeting going. This is key to overcome discussion hurdles and for time frame references!

Continue to be involved- Legislative meetings are a great time to get to know your State Representative or State Senator on a personal basis, if you don't already. During your meeting don't hesitate to extend an invitation for your legislator to come and visit you at your practice in the district. This is the best time for the legislator to see what issues really matter to you and your practice!

Leave behind information tailored to your practice- Leaving behind information serves as a great resource for your legislator to use if he/she should need information or a reference in the future. In addition, feel free to leave your card behind to serve as an industry expert!

Send a thank you- It is best practice to send a follow up thank you note to your legislator for meeting with you.

The best type of legislative advocacy comes from the experts and individuals that are in the field practicing every day! It is very important for advocates to own their professional identity. No matter the specialty or practice environment, the decisions made in Columbus effect your practice on a daily basis! By creating a relationship with those that represent you, you are able to set the standard.