



The Do's and Don'ts of Grassroots Advocacy

Be Empowered to Create Change

Grassroots advocacy is one of the most powerful tools we have to influence healthcare policy in Minnesota. Whether you're a healthcare provider, patient, or concerned community member, your voice matters. It's important to approach advocacy strategically. Here's a quick guide on what to do—and what to avoid—when engaging with policymakers and the community regarding your concerns.

DO:

1. Be Personal and Authentic

Your story and those of patients can be powerful. Share personal experiences that highlight the real-life impact of the issue. Legislators are more likely to remember heartfelt stories than statistics alone.

2. Know Your Facts

Be prepared with accurate, up-to-date information. Understand the issue, the policy *ask*, and how it affects your community, your patients and your chiropractic practice. Use credible sources to support your position. You don't have to be an expert to be an advocate, and the MCA will provide you with talking points and other resources, so you feel prepared.

3. Be Respectful and Professional

Whether speaking to a policymaker, staffer, or community member with opposing views—civility builds credibility. Remember: we advocate on policy, not to entertain politics.

4. Follow Up

Send handwritten thank-you letters after meetings to the legislator. Keep in touch with regular updates and maintain the relationship. Policy changes often take time and persistence.

5. Report Back to MCA

After your meeting or interaction with a policymaker, report back to our MCA lobbyist via email (Cody Holliday, cholliday@fredgov.com) on how the interaction went. Most importantly, let Cody know if the policymaker has any questions, concerns, or would like additional resources.

6. Mobilize Others

Advocacy is a team sport. Encourage colleagues, patients, and friends to take action. Provide them with tools and confidence to get involved

DON'T:

1. Don't Be Confrontational

Avoid arguing or making it personal. Your goal is to educate and influence, not alienate. Focus on shared goals, such as improving health outcomes and serving your community.

2. Don't Assume They Know the Issue

Even well-informed lawmakers may not know the specifics of your concern. Explain clearly, simply, and without jargon.

3. Don't Make Stuff Up

If the policymaker asks a question that you can't answer, don't panic and make something up. It is perfectly fine to say, "I'm not sure, but I will forward your question to our MCA team, and they will respond back to you." Make sure to mention these in your follow up email to the MCA lobbyist Cody Holliday (cholliday@fredgov.com).

4. Don't Wait Until the Last Minute

Effective advocacy is proactive. Don't wait until a vote is scheduled or a crisis emerges—build awareness early and often.

5. Don't Forget the "Ask"

Always include a clear call to action. Whether it's supporting a bill, scheduling a follow-up, or attending an event—make your request specific and actionable.

6. Don't Stray Off Topic

Stay focused on your main message and policy goal. Advocacy meetings are often brief, and it's easy to drift into unrelated issues or personal opinions. Stick to your key points, reinforce your ask, and avoid diluting your message with off-topic concerns. Clear, concise communication is more persuasive and respectful of your audience's time.