Instituting Advocacy at Your Health Center

Grassroots Leadership & Strategy

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Institute Advocacy: Become a champion
Advocacy is . . .

The World Health Organization describes advocacy for health as a “combination of individual and social actions designed to gain political commitment, policy support, social acceptance and systems support for a particular health goal or program”

*In other words . . .*

*Using your voice to support causes you believe in.*
Advocacy matters because….

“True change rarely comes from the halls of Congress alone.”

–Dr. Paula A. Johnson

• Sometimes legislative action is the only way to accomplish your goal.
• Legislative advocacy lends focus to your issue.
• Advocacy creates its own positive publicity.
Health Centers must advocate!

- The strength of the health centers program depends on our advocacy
- Your patients and community’s health depend on our advocacy
- Policy decisions don’t happen in a vacuum
- Advocacy is not just lobbying
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<th>Level of engagement</th>
<th>Awareness</th>
<th>Will</th>
<th>Action</th>
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<td>Public awareness and education</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>Community mobilization</td>
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<td>Voter education</td>
<td>Influencers</td>
<td>Coalition building</td>
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<td>Advocacy capacity building</td>
<td>Decision makers</td>
<td>Model legislation</td>
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<td>Leadership development</td>
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<td>Regulatory feedback</td>
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<td>Media advocacy</td>
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<td>Development of elected official champions</td>
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<td>Communications and messaging</td>
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<td>Policy analysis</td>
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<td>Influencer education</td>
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<td>Policymaker education</td>
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Does the issue require advocacy?

- Is there a problem you’ve noticed in your community AND does the power to create the solution to that problem lie with someone other than yourself?
- Do services and benefits in your community depend on the will of decision makers?

If yes, then the issue requires advocacy!
Advocacy helps to address social determinants of health.

- **Transportation**
  - Local government

- **Education**
  - School board and local government

- **Housing**
  - Local housing authority

- **Immigration**
  - Law enforcement and state and federal policies

- **Access to health care and coverage**
  - Local, state, and federal policies

Advocacy

Hcadvocacy.org
Advocacy In Action

#REDALERT4CHCS
2.6.18
HEALTH CENTER Advocacy NETWORK

NATIONAL CALL-IN DAY
DECEMBER 14, 2017
DIAL (866)456-3949
TELL CONGRESS,
NO MORE DELAYS

#FIXTHECLIFF
#VALUECHCS
#HEALTHCOMESFIRST

FUNDING
CLIFF AHEAD

Hcadvocacy.org
Advocacy fixed the health center funding cliff

- $7.8 billion in federal grant funding for health centers
- $600 million dollars to further support health center operations and address unmet need in communities across the country
- $60 million dollars to assist health centers in areas impacted by recent natural disasters.

230,000 • Emails
35,000 • Calls
25M • Social Media Impressions
200+ • Congressional Meetings
Institute Advocacy: Lead the Charge
Grassroots Advocacy Model

Organize individuals around an issue

Shift in social norms and strengthened base of support

Change in Capacity

Grassroots advocacy actions towards decision makers

Shift in social norms and strengthened base of support

Change in capacity

Improved Policies

Impact

Build advocacy capacity

Organizational Research Services, 2009, Pathways for Change
<table>
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<th><strong>Decide Grassroots Advocacy Objectives</strong></th>
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<td>To increase health center awareness among influential groups and the public;</td>
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<td>To reduce stigma and fear of lack of care in the low socioeconomic groups;</td>
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<td>To engage and mobilize key stakeholders within the health center community who will champion the development and implementation of a comprehensive health center advocacy plan and its components;</td>
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<td>To progressively expand advocacy groups, including community volunteers and patients groups, to cover all the regions or provinces of the country;</td>
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<td>To mobilize resources to support the implementation of key priority areas;</td>
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Who, What, When, Where, Why

**Who** your targets, allies, and opponents are
- How will you reach your targets?
- Which people and organizations should be on your side? How will you engage them?
- Who will actively try to stop you? Why? How will you respond?

**What** you want – be specific for both targets and allies

**When** it’s important to take action – timing is everything

**Where** the issue is pertinent – is this a local, state, or federal issue?

**Why?** This might be the most important piece!
Ask leadership to make the commitment.

Designate an advocacy coordinator

- This is you!
- Create a plan, and recruit an internal team

Get the Board on-board

- Ask the Board to pass a resolution
- Create a sub-committee on the Board
Leaders Evaluate...

Make sure you learn what works and what doesn’t work for your community.

• Status update in planning/strategic meetings
• Create a patient advocacy group
• Put a comment box in clinic waiting rooms asking for feedback on campaigns
• Follow-up with advocates with results of your campaign
• Statistics, measurement, data
Institute Advocacy: Change the Culture
Can you Advocate? Yes!

Personal

You have the right to think, feel, express whatever you want!

Professional

Keep it focused on your health center – educate people about what’s happening at your health center specifically.

Look to NACHC and your primary care associations for broader messaging.
Advocacy at the Health Center Level

BUILD

LISTEN

ENGAGE
Advocacy at the Health Center Level

Building a culture of advocacy means:

• Changing the culture and attitude from within the health center, recognizing advocacy as a critical and mandatory component to our daily work and planning.

• Making a commitment to doing the work to build and organize our grassroots in order to fully realize the potential of our grassroots power.

• Growth and recognition of grassroots advocacy and effectiveness the same way other critical skills and programs are recognized for health center staff and boards.
Advocacy Center of Excellence Program

Does your Health Center have an advocacy program in place? You could be the next ADVOCACY CENTER OF EXCELLENCE (ACE)!

Apply today!

Visit www.hcadvocacy.org/ace

- Incorporating advocacy as an element of operational excellence
- Focuses on engaging your diverse patient population in advocacy
- Establishes a standardized framework for building engagement in your community and an appetite for advocacy

✓ Make the commitment to advocacy
✓ Register staff and board as advocates
✓ Participate in NHCW
✓ Engage elected officials
✓ Establish an online presence
Institute Advocacy: Guidelines and Relationship Building
Can Health Centers Lobby?

**YES**, and you should. More than 75% of a health center’s budget can be determined by federal, state and local governments’ decisions. However, there are limits to what health centers can do.
Advocacy vs. Lobbying

**Advocacy**
Meeting with legislators, or decision-makers to educate them about your Community Health Center. *Unlimited!*

**Lobbying**
Face to face, phone call or email contact with legislator asking for a specific action
*<5% of total budget (non-330 funds)*
Tips for keeping your health center advocacy non-partisan

- Keep your social media accounts separate
- Share stories
- Look at data – think about objective impact on your health center
- Tell your health center’s story to elected officials and the public alike
Engaging Elected Officials

- Identify your elected officials at the federal, state, and local levels
- Create a grid with relevant information to keep you organized
- Conduct a relationship inventory (at the HC and within the community)
- Start with the basics—Health Centers 101

www.hcadvocacy.org/electedofficials
Build and Maintain

• Access and communication are key!
• Ask questions and respect opposing views
• Be approachable and offer yourself as a resource
• Don’t forget about public recognition
• Get to know their staff
• Do your homework—prep information (fact sheet, brochure, etc.)
• Take photos, promote visit on social media, engage local media
• Make a personal connection/be sincere
NACHC’s Key Contact Program

Do you have a direct relationship with your Member(s) of Congress or their staff?

Do you consistently respond to calls to action with a phone call or personal email to these contacts?

Are you committed to delivering the Health Center message on behalf of your Health Center and the Program as a whole?

If you answered YES – YOU could be a Health Center Key Contact.
Institute Advocacy: Build a Strong Grassroots Network at Your Health Center
Start with you!

Go to hcadvocacy.org, to sign up as an advocate today.

- AND/OR –

Text ADVOCATE or DEFENSOR to 52886
Planning

• Review past efforts and identify obstacles.
• Inventory grassroots resources—lists, potential volunteers, events, communication vehicles, etc.
• Develop a grassroots plan with timelines and benchmarks.
• Explore the intersection of advocacy and electoral objectives.
• Identify and prioritize the target districts or areas where you will focus grassroots efforts.
• Develop internal and external messages to support your organizing.
Recruitment

• Know your audience and what will motivate them.
• Develop messages that will inspire staff and patients to get involved.
• Sell it—asking is not enough. Give reasons why they should get involved.
• Prioritize your requests. Determine the one or two most important activities in order to avoid overwhelming volunteers.
Tips for Finding, Engaging and Developing Advocates

1. Encourage health center advocates to spread the world online
2. Provide updates and calls to action
3. Tell the health center story through the patient lens
4. Make the important information front and center
What about voter registration?
YES, you can!

• **Register Voters**
  • Drives must be designed to educate the public about the importance of voting.
  • Activities cannot be biased for or against any candidate or party.
  • Nonprofits may target registration and turnout efforts to the areas or people they serve.

• **Educate Voters**
  • Educate the public on issues and encourage participation in the political process.
  • Educate all candidates and political parties on your issues.
  • Conduct or participate in a nonpartisan candidate forum. The forum must be open to all candidates, be run in a balanced way, and include a broad range of nonpartisan questions for the candidates.
  • Make presentations on your organization’s issue to platform committees, campaign staff, candidates, media, and the general public.

http://communityhealthvote.net
Choosing a Target Group
• You **CAN** target historically disadvantaged populations
• You **CANNOT** target ideological groups: liberal, conservatives, etc.

Choosing a Geographic Area
• You **CAN** target an area because it has historically low voter turnout
• You **CANNOT** target an area because it has a close race
Voter Registration Guidelines

Get Out the Vote (GOTV)

• As with voter registration, your GOTV drives must be designed to educate the public about the importance of voting, cannot be biased for or against any candidate or party, and may be targeted to underrepresented communities or those the nonprofit serves.

• Work on behalf of a ballot measure. Note that this counts towards your direct lobbying limits.
NVRD 2018

Mark your calendar:
Tuesday, September 25

Hcadvocacy.org
Legalese Resources

For information on legal implications of advocacy, including a Q&A on lobbying, past webinars, and sample policies for your Health Center, visit www.hcadvocacy.org/legalese.

For information on engaging candidates, advocacy on ballot measures, getting out the vote, and more, visit www.nonprofitvote.org.
Effective advocacy is powerful.

Every voice counts.

We have the ability to create meaningful change for the health of our communities.

You can make a significant difference by constantly educating and building public awareness.
Your role as an advocacy leader!

Motivate, engage, and further the health center movement.

Serve as an advocacy leader.

Be an advocate.
Become a part of the Health Center Advocacy Network

Visit: www.hcadvocacy.org/join

or

Text HCADVOCATE to 52886
Questions?
NACHC

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