



OUTLINE FOR LEGISLATIVE VISITS

Following are ASHNHA staff recommendations on how to approach a conversation with Legislators. It is important to be prepared to have a positive conversation regardless of the Legislator's position on an issue.

Rules of engagement:

1. State your case.

Make sure that by the time you leave, they know what you were there for and why, even if they don't agree. (e.g. "I recognize the state's budget problems and the impact of Medicaid on the budget. We want to work with you on solutions.")

2. Try to find common ground.

If you know what issues the legislator is engaged in, try to find that common ground. Or if a particular message seems to interest them, continue to follow that line of discussion. We're successful when what we want is also what they want.

3. Don't engage them in an argument.

If they are inclined to be oppositional, don't argue with them. It's okay to defend your position, but if it turns into an argument be prepared to turn the conversation back to something positive.

4. Feel free to punt.

Legislators may ask you questions you can't answer or ask you for information you don't have. If so, write down their question and tell them that ASHNHA will get back to them. Give us the question and we'll follow up with the Legislator's office.

5. Thank them.

Whatever the outcome, thank them for the meeting and their service. Public service is hard work – acknowledge that and it will help you build future relationships.

Suggested outline for conversations:

Talk about your hospital and how you serve the community.

Lead with the positive. Talk about new services, good quality outcomes, connection to or investment in the community, etc.

Discuss the challenges you face.

These could be financial, geographic or regulatory. It's important that they understand the difficult landscape faced by health care providers.

Talk about the importance of Medicaid to your facility.

Acknowledge their concern about the cost of Medicaid. Communicate the disruptive impact of a Medicaid rate cut. Talk about the importance of Medicaid to your facility and emphasize that solutions to Medicaid costs will be hard and will take time.

Address any other talking points that resonate with you.

Ask if they have any questions.