

## Tips for Effective Advocacy

### Pre-planning:

- 1) Review College and Chapter priority list. Study background information (position papers, policy materials, other references).
- 2) Become familiar with your LOCAL representative and senator: Political party, committee assignments, priorities including what bills they may be sponsoring. All of this information can be found on their individual House and Senate webpages.

### Delivering the message:

- 1) Go into the phone call, email or meeting prepared. If you are in a group, each person should have a specific assignment (introductions, background information, lead on topic 1, lead on topic 2, etc.). If you are doing this individually introduce yourself, provide background information and be sure to include personal stories if you have them about the issues at hand.
- 2) Be prepared for the unexpected: By researching your legislator and their voting history you will be able to answer questions they may have about the issues and know how they have already voted on the priority issues (if applicable).
- 3) Keep your communications brief to save time.
- 4) Describe who Missouri ACP is and what we do.
- 5) Review agenda items with legislators and be specific on what you are asking them to do: Support/sponsor/co-sponsor a bill or issue. Be direct but polite when asking if they will help.
- 6) Personalize your remarks if you can: Stories and real-life situations can make the issue more credible and easier to remember.
- 7) End your outreach by soliciting legislator/staff opinion on the issue. Be respectful if in disagreement. A friendly exchange of ideas may be the start of a productive relationship.
- 8) Provide them with the printed materials (attach, email to them after the call, or print and provide handouts in person). Thank legislator/staff for their time. Provide them with your contact information in case they have questions in the future.

### After the meeting:

- 1) If you call or meet in person send a follow-up thank-you letter or email to legislator/staff recapping the meeting. Include what action was being asked. Offer to serve as local resource on health-related information if comfortable.