



Health Policy Advocacy: Novice to Expert

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Objectives

- ▶ Explain why nurses' educational and experiential backgrounds prepare them exceptionally well to advocate for effective health policy.
- ▶ Differentiate between health policy issues that fall under the jurisdiction of State legislatures versus those under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Congress.
- ▶ List key components to include when attempting to motivate a policymaker to vote for or against a health policy bill.
- ▶ Describe challenges to and strategies for developing health policy advocacy skills.

Why nurses?

Grounded in holistic health
& systems thinking

Recognize key relationships
between environment,
SDHs, and health

Skilled in effective
communication & patient
advocacy

Health policy occurs at many levels...

Federal – Congress, executive branch agencies



State – Legislature, executive branch agencies



Local – city councils, school boards



Institutional – health care systems, industry

State Legislature or U.S. Congress?

▶ State

- ▶ Nurse Practice Act/
Licensure issues
- ▶ Access to HC (Medicaid,
CHIP, state plans)
- ▶ Many SDH issues
(housing, education,
childcare, LTC, etc.)
- ▶ State public health &
environmental issues
- ▶ Issues related to
reproductive and
LGBTQ+ health
- ▶ Gun policies

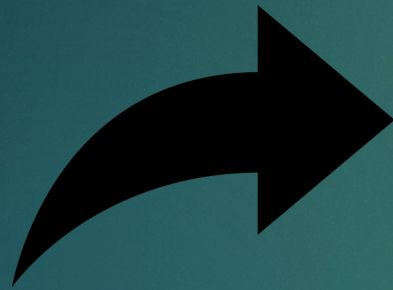
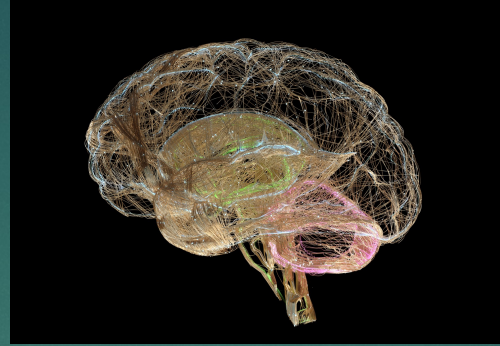
▶ Congress

- ▶ Medicare (includes APRN
practice authority
related to Medicare
patients)
- ▶ Federal environmental
issues (water, air,
chemicals, pollution
standards)
- ▶ Federal public health
policy
- ▶ National gun violence
prevention policies

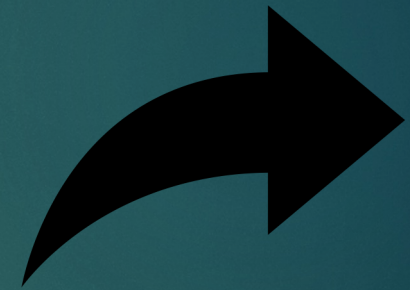
Effective Communication with Legislators

- ▶ Use the power of constituency (essential in a representative democracy)
- ▶ Aim for minimum of 2-3 contacts per year
- ▶ Preferred methods: in-person visit, email, phone call (avoid snail mail)

Effective advocacy: “STAKE”



PUSH



PULL

Getting Started

- ▶ Know your city, state, and federal legislators
<https://www.gis.lcc.mn.gov/iMaps/districts/>
- ▶ Identify health policy issues important to you, your practice, or patients.
- ▶ Pick an issue; read & make connections with others interested in same topic
- ▶ Use state legislature and Congressional website to find bills related to you're your topic.

Allies

► Organizational support

Moms Demand Action- [-https://momsdemandaction.org](https://momsdemandaction.org)

Gender Justice-<https://www.genderjustice.us>

The American Nurses Advocacy Institute -
<https://www.nursingworld.org/practice-policy/advocacy>

“There are no personal solutions at this time. There is only collective action for a collective solution” Carol Hanisch, 1969

- ▶ <https://www.frameworksinstitute.org> reframe common concerns into discussions that can lead to change
- ▶ <https://www.congressionaldistricthealthdashboard.org/maps/district/2708?metric=22&comparison=state> search by your district to get data to support your concerns
- ▶ <https://namimn.org/support/information-and-resources/advocacy-resources/> Mental Health advocacy

More resources...

- ▶ Kaiser Family Foundation – a non-partisan, up-to-date source for health policy information (can search by menu topic)
<https://www.kff.org/>
- ▶ KFF State Health Facts – can search various topics with state-specific data <https://www.kff.org/statedata/>
- ▶ Minnesota Legislature Bill Tracking information
<https://www.leg.mn.gov/leg/legis>