Creating a Community Pharmacy Majority - Keys to a Successful Grassroots Movement

Presented by:
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This program is approved by NCPA for 0.15 CEUs (1.5 contact hours) of continuing education credit. NCPA is approved by the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education as a provider of continuing pharmacy education.
Why Grassroots?

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Why Grassroots?

Your business needs your personal political action

Why Grassroots?

• “All politics is local”
• Every federal and state legislator has to stand for election – locally
• When you step forward, politicians listen
Grassroots is You

• You are the key link to Members of Congress and state legislatures
• No one can replace your grassroots voice
• You put a local face on national and state issues
• The future of your business/profession is riding on you grassroots participation

Why Will Politicians Listen to You?

• You are a local small business leader
• You are a health care expert
• No one can replace your authentic grassroots voice

The Five “W’s” of a Grassroots Program

• Who? You! No one else knows our issues, needs and goals the way you do
• What? Education and Action! Work with NCPA and your state association to educate lawmakers
• Where? Live in-person and via phone calls, emails and letters
• When? Now and Always! Work on an on-going basis
• Why? Pharmacy is vulnerable to the impact of legislation and regulation. The success of your business is at stake.
What is Grassroots?

Communicating with lawmakers in order to influence governmental policy that affects you

The Grassroots Myth

• Most organizations who claim grassroots support are unable to make that support materialize
• Of the few organizations that do generate grassroots support, it is often overly orchestrated – it becomes “astro-turf”
• Real grassroots’ clout is the rarity on Capitol Hill or in state capitals

How Do We Build Real Grassroots Clout?

• Recognize that the “grassroots” is you – now one knows our issues, needs and goals the way you do
• Grassroots is all about educating elected officials
• Effective grassroots requires sustained communications with lawmakers
• Effective grassroots requires rapid response to issues as they arise
• It is up to us to amplify our voice at the grassroots level
How Do We Build Real Grassroots Clout?

- Nothing is more important than access to legislators and their staff
- Constituents enjoy a special access to elected officials that others do not
- A team approach represents our best chance of success – NCPA members using their constituent access working with NCPA’s government affairs team

Grassroots Lobbying – Get Involved

- Access to legislators and key staff are critical
- Constituents enjoy special access to their elected officials

“It’s All About Access”

- Access means getting appointments with legislators and their staff
- Access means visiting legislators when they are “back home”
- Access means emailing, calling or writing legislators when they are considering important health care issues
**Grassroots Communications**

**Tools**
- Emails
- Phone Calls
- Letters
- Faxes
- Visits with elected officials
- Town Hall meetings
- Pharmacy visits

**How to be an Effective Grassroots Communicator**
- Be understandable. Avoid using industry jargon, lingo, or acronyms.
- Keep it short, be tactful, make the case.
- Use NCPA’s one-pagers
- Back up what you say with facts.
- Use your credentials to substantiate your views.
- Always ask for a specific action (co-sponsorship, a vote, contact CMS/HHS etc…)

**How to Meet with a Legislator**
- Call ahead for an appointment.
- When you meet, get to the point. Most meetings with elected officials are 30 minutes or less
- Don’t be disappointed if you meet with staff. Staff are key advisors to elected officials.
- Volunteer as a source of information.
- Stick to the facts.
- Provide the NCPA one-page “leave behind” that summarizes your position.
- Listen to the legislator.
- Always ask for a follow-up and send a thank you note after the meeting.
Grassroots Organizing

• Make your efforts as broad-based as possible
• Solicit others outside the pharmacy to weigh-in on key issues
  – Health professionals
  – Senior advocacy groups
  – Patients
  – Medicare and Medicaid recipients
  – Your colleagues, employees, suppliers and members of community organizations to which you belong
• Consider formal or informal coalition building

Coalition for Community Pharmacy Action

• Community Pharmacy needs to conduct a permanent legislative campaign
• First time in history all 55,000 pharmacies are speaking with one voice on key issues

Coalition for Community Pharmacy Action

• Direct lobbying
• Strategic communications – PR and issue advertising
• Polling/Focus groups to hone messages
• Full-time grassroots staff
• Public outreach
• Issue focus: TRICARE, Medicaid and Medicare
Understanding Legislators

- Many factors influence legislators’ decision-making
- The daily work of Congress and state legislators happens in committee
- Most legislators’ actions are budget driven
- Most elected officials are constantly campaigning and raising money

Every Vote has Political Implications

- Consider the context of the vote (issue) you are lobbying on
- Politicians suffer from information overload
- Stress the timelines and urgency of the issue
- Consider the fiscal implications
- Are you asking legislators to vote for or against their party line
- What public scrutiny will result because of the vote
- Give lawmaker support to justify supporting you

How do You Know When You are an Effective Grassroots Lobbyist

- Does the legislator or staff member return your phone calls?
- Do you receive emails or calls from a legislator’s office asking you for information?
- Do legislators or their staff know you by name or sight?
- Are you comfortable calling a legislator’s office?
- Has the legislator used any of your words in a speech or statement?
- Did the legislator do what you asked?
Money is the “mother’s milk” of Politics
• Campaign financing is the paramount concern of most politicians
• PACs – are a major part of the government relations process
• Campaign contributions are appreciated – DO NOT expect quid pro quo
• Participate in NCPAPAC – become a monthly contributor (by credit card)
• Host fundraisers for “friendly” lawmakers

It’s Campaign Season!
• Volunteer on campaigns of elected officials who help with our issues
• Host fundraisers for “friendly lawmakers”
• Put up campaign signs
• Distribute campaign literature
• Tell your patients with politicians are helping on health care issues important to them

Why Grassroots?

“Every man owes a part of his time and money to the business or industry in which he is engaged. No man has a mortal right to withhold his support from an organization that is striving to improve conditions within his sphere.”

President Theodore Roosevelt
The Key Issues

• Medicaid – defining AMP
• Medicaid – state legislatures to increase dispensing fees for generics
• Medicare – addressing the proposed “fixes” to Part D – low and slow reimbursements
• The PBMs – contain their assault on Community Pharmacy
• TRICARE – stop mandatory mail order for military beneficiaries

Medicaid

• Average Manufacture Price (AMP) is the new baseline for generic drug reimbursements in Medicaid starting in 2007
• AMP will only reflect about 50% of the actual acquisition cost for generic drugs
• Manufacturers report the lowest AMPs possible because their rebates are based on these numbers

Medicaid

• OIG has found serious problems with manufacturers AMP reporting
• Generic dispensing will be discouraged
• The Secretary of HHS controls the ultimate outcome
• Final definition for AMP must be determined six months after the effective date of the new benchmark
Medicare – Part D
• Pharmacy is being asked to “bank” the Medicare Part D program
• Reimbursements are low and slow
• PBMs get paid upfront, making significant money on “the float”

Fixing Medicare - Part D
HR 5182/S 2563
• Requires PDPs to pay within 14 days by electronic transfer
• Establishes a Medication Therapy Management pilot and better defines opportunities
• Address co-branding (misleading advertising) more thoroughly than CMS does
• Establishes a minimum dispensing fee for generics to promote taxpayer savings