

APTA Maryland

Tips On How To Visit With Your Legislator



1. Get to know your legislator beforehand.

Research your legislator ahead of time. Know what their background and profession is and know what committees they are on. Learn about their family, schooling, career, etc. Research what other political offices they have held, as well as the civic organizations in which they have been involved.

Address the legislative member by their title (Representative or Senator) and use yours in all communication

2. Present your issue(s) briefly and persuasively.

If you are talking about a specific legislative proposal that has been introduced, have the bill or at least the bill number with you. State your position on the issue clearly and support your position with facts. If possible, have some background material to leave with the legislator. **APTA Maryland will have talking points for you to use regarding specific legislation.**

3. Educate on Your Profession!

Even if we do not have a bill we are sponsoring, it is always important to share the value of physical therapy. Provide brief, easily digestible facts about the profession and what differentiates us from other similar professions- what makes us unique and special!

4 Represent APTAMD and the physical therapy profession.

If you would like to discuss other issues, please make another appointment with your legislator for another time.

5. Be polite and avoid politicizing an issue.

Be calm, reasonable, and respectful and remember that patient care is apolitical – it never helps to alienate a member by infusing politics into a health care issue.

6. Be accurate.

If you are asked a question and you don't know the answer, DON'T GUESS. Tell the legislator you'll provide the information later ... and make sure that you do. Giving a legislator misinformation will only erode your credibility.

7. Share your story.

If the issue is one that personally affects you, your practice or your patients, and you have first-hand experience, make sure you tell the legislator your story.

8. Try to secure a specific response.

If they have not already offered it, politely ask for your legislator's position on the issue in question. Also, seek their support in urging other legislators, and especially leadership, to support your position. Encourage them to feel free to contact our lobbyists with questions, informational requests etc. Also, offer them access to you.

9. Legislator's staff are just as important to share your message with.

They have a great deal of influence.

10. Follow-up.

Always send a letter of thanks following a personal meeting. And remember that your initial meeting should be the beginning of a long-term working relationship.

Thank You for Your Interest and Desire to Help Move Our Profession Forward! Join APTA Maryland's Government Relations Committee and Get Involved Today!

For more information contact aptamd@aptamd.org