

Tips for Meeting with a Legislator at your Hospital

How Much Time: Find out in advance how much time your legislator will have. Let the scheduler or legislative assistant know you would like to include a brief tour of the hospital, followed by a sit-down meeting. Ideally you should allot one hour for a tour and meeting.

What to Brag About: Check with WSHA for specific messages / talking points. Choose areas within your hospital that demonstrate the impact of your organization on the health of constituents. Walk the tour yourself in advance to make sure everything is in order and that you deliver your intended message.

Who to Meet: Provide opportunities for legislator to meet key hospital staff — a physician, a board member who knows the legislator, and an employee such as a nurse or social worker who works directly with patients. Inform participants in advance so they can be prepared.

Share Data: If possible, prepare a fact sheet on your hospital to give to the legislator. Include information such as: number of patients served, number employees and volunteers, amount of indigent care provided, Medicare and Medicaid patient load, etc.

Let WSHA Know: Notify WSHA about the planned visit. WSHA can provide you with background information on the legislator and help you compile any statistics or information needed to illustrate your concerns.

Highlight the Visit: With the permission of the legislator, plan to photograph the visit and include a story on the visit in your organization's communications (social media, newsletter, annual report). For any legislator running for re-election, be clear in the communication that the individual was not visiting as a campaign event, they were visiting for educational purposes. Send the legislator copies of the story and/or pictures or tag them in social media posts to remind them of their visit. If local press coverage is desirable, coordinate solicitation of coverage with the legislator's staff.