



We Need YOU to Reach our Goal:

**Help us Achieve a
Comprehensive Medicare Home Infusion Benefit!**

As a health care provider and member of your community, you are the most effective voice to explain why Medicare patients need comprehensive coverage rather than drug-only coverage for home infusion therapies and how your company benefits patients while saving money.

YOUR Voice Really Matters

Authentic communication directly from real constituents is one of the most convincing ways to influence policy decisions. Legislators are constantly presented with information from lobbyists and others. Your personal communications are the most important and credible.

Why We Need YOU

Legislators cannot ignore the personal voice of real constituents like you when they consider critical issues that affect the health and lives of people in their districts. To pass legislation to create comprehensive Medicare home infusion therapy coverage we need as many NHIA members as possible to be part of our nationwide network of home infusion activists.

Still Not Convinced? Let us Tell You More

- NHIA staff can't achieve this goal alone! We'll work closely with you, but your role is just as important as ours.
- Grassroots action is a vital factor in our advocacy arsenal. Combined with paid lobbyists and the policy and advocacy work of NHIA staff, grassroots plays a crucial role in impacting political outcomes
- Thanks to the efforts of NHIA members in 2005, Congress and CMS have a better understanding of home infusion therapies and many now agree that Part D is inadequate for safe and appropriate home infusion care.
- We now have a chance to build on these successes to achieve the end goal. We're not there yet, and we're competing for attention against many other interests.
- **YOU** have an unprecedented opportunity to shape access to quality infusion care for Medicare beneficiaries!
- **YOU** have an unprecedented opportunity to shape the future of our industry!

The First Step is Easy!

Visit NHIA's Political Action Center at: <http://capwiz.com/nhianet/home/> to read more about this campaign and download talking points and advocacy information. Simply enter your zip code to send letter directly to your federal lawmakers or access contact information for Congressional staff.

**For more information, contact John McGlew at (703) 838 2678
or john.mcglew@ncpanet.org**



National Home Infusion Association Guide to Effective Grassroots Action

Communicating With Your Legislators

The days in which lobbyists could single-handedly get things done in Washington and in state capitals are long gone. Today legislators want to hear from people in their home districts – from constituents who elected them to office.

Letters (delivered by fax and e-mail) and phone calls are two excellent tools you can use to try to support your position. Due to security issues causing delivery delays on Capitol Hill, letters sent via the U.S. postal service are not recommended. Communications are most effective if they are written and stated in your own words, avoiding overly technical language or jargon.

Personal meetings with legislators (or policy experts) in their district or capital offices are an extremely effective option to get your message across.

Regardless of the method of communication, keep in mind two important goals:

1. Convince him/her to support your position
2. Establish a relationship with the legislator that will make you a valued source of information, both now and in the future.

Do's and Don'ts of Grassroots Action

Do

- Familiarize yourself with each of your legislators' positions on health care issues and their voting record
- Understand both sides of the issue so you can better develop your argument
- Be specific and provide facts and tangible examples of the impact an issue will have on your business, and your patients.
- Offer to help educate your legislators to better understand the home infusion industry, and its benefits to patients and health care payers
- Remember to thank your legislators for supporting your position
- Always keep the door open for future discussion

Don't

- Overload legislators and/or staff with too much material
- Forget to tell your legislator how the issue affects you and your patients (his/her constituents)
- Back a legislator into a corner so he/she takes a position against you
- Forget to ask your legislator to tell you his/her opinion. Follow up, as necessary, until you know where he/she stands on your issue.



Tips on Meetings in Your Legislator's Washington Office

Before the Meeting

- Make your meeting request in writing (this is to ensure that the legislator understands the nature of your visit and to arrange for the appropriate staff member to be present. Most offices will accept the request by fax or e-mail.)
- Assume you will have your legislator's attention for five minutes
- Decide who in your group will speak, and the two or three points you wish to make

At the Meeting

- Identify yourself as a constituent, and remind the legislator of the number of his/her constituents you are representing
- Make your key points at the outset of the meeting
- If there is additional time, use it to go over the key points and elaborate with anecdotes or statistics
- Always leave behind a short written summary of the issue and your position, as well as the names and contact information of people on your side of the issue who are available for follow-up discussion. Bring extra copies for staff.

Note – In meetings with federal legislators, expect one or more staff to participate in the meeting, in many cases in lieu of the legislator. Remember that staff members are critical to decision making and to treat them with the respect you would the legislator.

In meetings with state legislators, you are more likely to meet with the actual legislator – in some cases alone as many state legislators do not have staff support.

After the Meeting

- Be certain to stay in touch. Write a short note to the legislator and/or staff, thanking them for their time and reminding them of the importance of this issue.
- Tell NHIA! It is important that we are kept informed of meetings conducted by NHIA members, along with the response of the legislator.



Tips on Meetings in your Legislator's District Office

Scheduling the Meeting

- State and Federal legislators are usually available to meet in-district on Mondays and Fridays, and often attend events around the district on weekends.
- Most federal legislators will also be in-district during Congressional recesses and during campaign season.
- State legislators are often not full-time politicians, can be found working other jobs in-district the legislature is out of session

At the Meeting

- The advantage of meeting in-district is that there are far fewer distractions than in Washington.
- The disadvantage is that the legislator's policy experts are almost always in the Washington office. Always remember to ask for the name of the policy expert(s) who handles the issue.
- Try not to leave the meeting without getting a specific response from the legislator.

After the Meeting

- Remember to write a thank-you letter to the legislator and send a copy to the staff expert in Washington.

Tips on Writing your Legislator

- Write only your own legislators
- Write as a constituent, using your home address, not company letterhead, unless otherwise instructed
- Avoid overly technical language
- Stick to ONE issue and limit it to one page
- Identify your issue early and clearly, providing a bill number if applicable.
- Stress how home infusion patients will be affected.
- Support your position with facts - State why you are qualified to be writing on this issue
- Avoid angry or threatening comments
- Ask your legislator to support your position. Always seek a commitment
- If you don't get a reply, or get one that is unsatisfactory, write again or call
- If your legislator votes your way, be certain to say "thanks." If he/she votes the other way, send a note of thanks for considering your position. Either way, your legislator will know that you are keeping track of how he/she votes.



Tips for Calling your Legislator

- Whether you call your legislator in his/her district or capital office, ask to speak with the legislator directly. Don't be surprised if you are told that he/she is unavailable.
- If the legislator can't speak with you, ask to speak to the staff member handling the issue.
- Explain your views to the policy expert clearly, ask that they be presented to the legislator, and request a response.
- Write a brief letter thanking the legislator and the staff member by name for their time and interest, and restate your position.
- Be certain to ask for your legislator's support
- Telephone calls are a useful follow up on previous communications.
- Remember – don't assume a single communication will do the job of getting the legislator's vote.

Tips on E-Mailing Your Legislators

- Be certain to identify yourself as a constituent by including your mailing address
- Discuss the issue in the same manner that you would in a letter
- Be certain to follow up on your e-mail just as you would with a traditional communication
- Direct your e-mail to the appropriate person on the legislator's staff to be sure that your message is not lost.
- Be aware that some congressional offices will delete any e-mail message that has multiple addresses – don't flood a legislator's e-mail box!



The Roles of Federal Level Congressional Staff

Each member of Congress has a staff to assist him/her during a term in office. Knowing the titles and principal functions of a key congressional staff will help you to work more effectively with your legislators.

Commonly used titles and job functions:

Chief of Staff (CoS) or Administrative Assistant (AA): The CoS reports directly to the member of Congress. He/she usually has overall responsibility for evaluating the political outcome of various legislative proposals and constituent requests. The CoS is usually the person in charge of overall office operations, including the assignment of work and the supervision of key staff.

Legislative Director (LD), Senior Legislative Assistant (Sr. LA), Legislative Coordinator (LC): The LD is usually the staff person who monitors the legislative schedule and makes recommendations regarding pros and cons of particular issues. In some congressional offices there are several LAs and responsibilities are assigned to staff with expertise in specific areas. For example, depending on the responsibilities and interests of the member, an office may include a different LA for health issues, environmental matters, taxes etc.

Press Secretary or Communications Director: The press secretary's responsibility is to build and maintain open and effective lines of communication between the member, his or her constituency, and the general public. The press secretary is expected to know the benefits, demands and special requirements of both print and electronic media, and how to most effectively promote the member's views or position on specific issues.



Addressing Correspondence to Elected Officials

To the President of the United States

President John Doe
The White House
Washington, DC 20500
Dear Mr. President:

To a U.S. Senator

The Honorable John Doe
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510
Dear Senator Doe:

To a U.S. Representative

The Honorable John Doe
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20510
Dear Representative Doe:

To a State Governor

The Honorable John Doe
State Capitol
City, State and Zip Code
Dear Governor Doe:

To a State Senator

The Honorable John Doe
(State) Senate
City, State and Zip Code
Dear Senator Doe:

To a State Representative

The Honorable John Doe
(State) House of Representatives
(Assembly/House of Delegates
City, State and Zip Code
*Dear Representative (Delegate,
Assemblyman, Assemblywoman) Doe:*

Note: When writing to the Chair of a Committee or the Speaker of the House, it is proper to address them as *Dear Mr. Chairman or Madam Chairwoman:* or *Dear Mr. or Madam Speaker*