

## **TIPS FOR CONGRESSIONAL MEETINGS**

### **Provide constituent hook**

- Your name, name of business, number of employees, patient numbers/geographic service area (*In other words, give them a reason to pay attention*)

### **Don't forget "The Ask"**

- Be sure to end your meeting with a specific request for action (i.e., Will you cosponsor the bill?)

### **Keep Your Message Focused on the Patient**

- Your message should be about the impact on the patient, not the financial success of the company or the difficulty of the company to survive in current environment
- Reimbursement should not be the discussion topic

### **Be confident but polite**

- Remember that you know more about your profession and your issues than they do. But always be polite and respectful.
- Never be argumentative

### **Be brief**

- Assume you only have ten to fifteen minutes to make your presentation (even though the meeting could last longer)

### **Don't assume the Member or staffer knows anything about your business or is familiar with terminology that may be commonly used in your profession**

- Provide background information in layman's terms without being condescending

### **Personalize the issue**

- Whenever possible, provide personal stories and anecdotes that illustrate your point. This will help the Member of Congress remember your issue

### **Be honest**

- Never overstate your case; your credibility is at stake
- If you don't know the answer to a question, say so and promise to follow up

**Involve the staff**

- Don't ignore staff persons, no matter how young or inexperienced they may appear to be. They are smart. They have issue expertise. They advise their bosses on how to vote and whether to act on a particular issue.

**Be serious, but positive**

- You can demonstrate the seriousness and urgency of the issue without being negative. Focus on the solution to the problem.
- If the Member of Congress disagrees with your position, promise to follow up with information that will address his/her concerns. End on a positive note.

**Always provide written summaries/briefing materials**

- The written materials can provide more detail and will be helpful to staff as they do their due diligence on the issue. They will be invaluable if your meeting gets cut short.