

## **How to Lobby for your Cause**

### **Beginning**

- Introduce your organization
- Explain its mission, goals and objectives
- Introduce and explain the issues you wish to discuss
- Talk about your patients using examples to illustrate problems and solutions
- Talk about solutions that are feasible
- Offer your expertise whenever needed or whenever it might be needed
- Be sincere and passionate without being emotional
- Take notes! Decide ahead of time who of your group will be note taker

### **What Legislators Want**

- To be well-informed about local events/situation
- Reliable contacts for information about their constituency
- To be acknowledged for positive political action

### **What Legislators do Not Want**

- To be talked down to or belittled
- To have his or her time wasted
- To hear repetitive versions of the same argument
- To be part of an emotional display of anger

### **Final Tips**

- Be on time for the meeting
- Do not take more time for the meeting unless it is available
- Answer questions honestly. If you do not have an answer, offer to get back to an assistant with the information
- Be a good listener
- Ask good questions that will keep your agenda in focus
- Plan a condensed version of your presentation in case the meeting time is shortened
- Be flexible
- Prepare an information package of handouts including a one-page summary of your main points in large print. Have enough handouts for participants in your group, the legislator, and his or her assistants.
- Bring a camera and take pictures for your newsletter.
- Follow up with a letter of thanks and a copy of your newsletter with the photo and report of your visit.
- Small gifts with the logo of your organization are often appreciated