

BDASC

Advocacy Days Do's and Don'ts

Attire

- Please dress appropriately for visiting the State Capitol and meeting with your legislator. Business or “business casual” attire is preferable. (Specifically avoid jeans, sneakers, flip flops, tee-shirts.) Wear a red scarf or tie to represent Bleeding Disorders Awareness Month, if possible. (The Chapter has extra ties, if you need them.)
- If possible, wear comfortable shoes (you will be doing a lot of walking).

Preparation

- Time is scarce. Prepare your concerns in advance, bring pictures, factor bills, etc.
- Expect to be granted about 15 minutes with your legislator or member of their staff.
- Be flexible—things change at a moment's notice and don't be offended if you are interrupted.
- Don't be upset or offended if there is a change in the schedule and the member doesn't join the meeting—there are hearings and votes going on all at the same time. Don't be offended if you are kept waiting. It is sometimes impossible for legislators to be prompt.

Etiquette

- ***Be on time to your scheduled meeting times.*** Better yet, be early. You can use the few extra minutes to collect yourself and review your strategy. Call ahead if you are coming from another meeting and are running late—they will understand.
- Identify yourself at once to your legislator, by name, organization, and hometown.
- You should address your legislator as “Representative” (for members of the House of Representatives) or “Senator” (for members of the Senate).

Strategy

- Do not bring politics or party affiliation into it, even if you identify with your lawmaker's political ideology. You are there to talk about issues that *every* lawmaker should care about.
- Use persuasion, not confrontation. Present your concerns clearly and in an orderly fashion.
- Remember that you are there to give a “face” to your issue. Although you want to be brief and concise you are there to put a personal touch to the meeting. Give real examples of how issues affect you or your family.
- Have a good time and try not to be nervous. While this is a formal meeting to discuss important issues, lawmakers are people just like you and they live in the same community you live in. You might have more in common than you think.

Leave-Behind Info & Follow-Up

- Be sure to leave them with the main BDASC folder provided to you with the legislative priorities sheets (about HAP, accumulators, and the RDAC). Ask your legislator if there is any way that *you* or the chapter can help them. Inform the legislator as to how you will follow-up after the meeting. Offer to provide supplementary information and further assistance if they need it.
- During or once you leave the meeting, jot down notes about any follow-up that is needed.
- Send a “thank you” note to the legislator (handwritten if possible). Ask for a business card for the staffer or legislator. If you thank the staffer you met with by name, the letter is sure to end up on the legislator's desk. In your letter, take the opportunity to review the issue. The importance of follow-through cannot be overstated. And please send a copy to the Chapter!