8 Steps to Good Advocacy

1. Define Your Goals
   - What needs changing?
   - Long term/short term?
   - What do we want to ask for? Does it require change to:
     - Legislation
     - Policy
     - Regulation
     - Programs
     - Funding

2. Know Your Audience
   - Multi-layered: policy makers, media, key constituencies, public
   - Different strategies for each target – research
   - Provincial and Territorial governments, health authorities and general public

3. Craft Your Message
   - Be clear on what we are asking for
   - Keep it simple and focused
   - Use positive language
   - Tailor message to audience – research
   - Appeal to audience’s self-interest
   - Acknowledge environment/context – be pragmatic
   - Make the case
   - Need to look at the problem, the solution(s) and the benefit(s)
   - Be consistent
   - Distribute clear concise position statements
   - Use evidence - facts carry more weight than anecdotal evidence
   - Economic arguments are important

4. Identify the Messenger
   - The target audience will determine the messenger
     - For example: approach MPs as constituents
   - As we cultivate champions, they will also become messengers
   - Media is best handled by a designated person(s)

5. Identify Delivery Methods
   - Advocacy is relationship building
   - Tactics change by target audience
   - Tactics to reach general public
     - Ads
     - Media stories
     - Editorials
     - Awareness campaigns
     - Local events
Tactics to reach media
- Choose right communication tool:
  - Press releases, Op-Ed, press conferences, letters
  - Use positive language
  - Make sure sources are credible
  - Make sure information is timely
  - Localize the issue
  - Accent human interest angle
  - Demonstrate support

Tactics to reach political level of government
- Meetings with elected officials – follow up
- Letter writing campaigns then follow up in person
- Distribute background documentation proving our case
- Petitions
- Appear before Caucus
- Appear before a Parliamentary Committee

Tactics to reach departmental level of government
- Meet with departmental employees responsible for issue
- Meet with other government employees that may have an interest in the issue
- Be prepared with discussion information and background info that they can use to make the case within government

6. Identify Resources and Gaps
- Do a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) analysis
- Build on existing resources and opportunities
  - Alliances, relationships, information, political intelligence, capacity of staff, opportunities
- Develop capacities which are lacking
  - Research, media, outreach

7. Plan Next Steps
- Identify achievable goals that set stage for larger work
- Include in the advocacy strategy/plan
  - Priority area
  - Action
  - Target
  - Timelines
  - Partners
  - Resources
  - Critical path or Next Steps

- Set out clear steps – including timelines
- Be clear on who needs to do what and when
- Communicate the plan with partners
- Be flexible
- Keep focused on long term goal
8. Evaluate Effectiveness

- Regularly revisit each of the steps to make sure the strategy is effective
- Discard any tactics which are not working and build on those that do
- Re-evaluate as new opportunities and challenges emerge
- Communicate changes internally

Remember…

- Communications are key!
- Build a coalition of voices
- Planning is crucial
- Positive messaging is important
- Advocacy is about relationship building