

## **Advocacy on Capitol Hill**

### **The Ohio State University**

#### **Project Description & Implementation Overview**

In honor of American Pharmacist Month in October, six student pharmacists from The Ohio State University AMCP Student Chapter went to Capitol Hill during Nexus to meet with the Office of U.S. Congresswoman Joyce Beatty of Ohio's Third Congressional District. These student pharmacists educated the legislative aides on the expanding role of pharmacists in various practice settings and their positive impact on patient care in the state of Ohio and throughout the nation. The students also thanked Congresswoman Beatty for her continued support of the Pharmacy and Medically Underserved Areas Enhancement Act (H.R. 592) commonly known as Provider Status and the 21st Century Cures Act (H.R. 6). In concluding the meeting, the students requested that Congresswoman Beatty send a message recognizing American Pharmacist Month and her support for H.R. 592. Shortly after the meeting, the Congresswoman tweeted how proud she was to cosponsor H.R. 592 during American Pharmacist Month and used the hashtag #ThankAPharmacist.

#### **Purpose of the Project**

The purpose of this project is to give student pharmacists an opportunity to advocate for legislation impacting patients, pharmacy, and the U.S. healthcare system. The project also aims to empower students to become educated on issues affecting managed care pharmacy and instill in them the confidence to articulate those issues to Members of Congress in an effort to raise awareness and gain their support for current and future legislation. While this particular advocacy initiative was implemented at the federal level, this project can also be replicated at the state and local level.

#### **Project Budget: Expenses and Revenues**

Since meeting with a Member of Congress is free, our only significant budget consideration included the cost of transportation to Capitol Hill.

#### **Who and How Many Chapter Members are Involved?**

The meeting with our Member of Congress was organized by the Health Policy Chair with assistance from the Chapter President. Student members attending AMCP Nexus were also invited to participate in the meeting.

#### **Who Should be Targeted? Audience or Involvement? How Do You Find Them? How Do You Contact?**

The target audience for this meeting was a U.S. Representative or U.S. Senator from the state of Ohio or their legislative aides. After several weeks of emailing and calling the offices of various representatives and senators, the Office of Congresswoman Joyce Beatty of Ohio's Third Congressional District confirmed to meet with our group during AMCP Nexus.

## **What Materials are Needed? Outside Resources, Ordering, etc?**

- AMCP Federal Tracking Chart
- AMCP Where We Stand Position Statements
- AMCP Policy Resource Center
- AMCP Legislative-Regulatory Briefings
- Congress.Gov
- Business Cards
- Thank You Letters

## **Timeline for Implementation and Execution**

- 12 Weeks Prior: Executive Board appoints a Health Policy Chair
- 6-8 Weeks Prior: Health Policy Chair becomes familiar with AMCP legislative priorities and advocacy resources such as the Federal Tracking Chart and Position Statements
- 5 Weeks Prior: Inform the Executive Board on current issues and prioritize legislation to be advocated
- 4 Weeks Prior: Begin contacting the offices of U.S. Representatives and Senators
- 3 Weeks Prior: Confirm meeting date/time and who the group will be meeting with such as the Member of Congress or their legislative aide. Send an email to members informing them of the advocacy opportunity and inviting interested members to participate in the meeting on Capitol Hill.
- 1-2 Weeks Prior: Hold an informational session with all students committed to attending the meeting. Provide resources to students to become familiar with the issues and solicit their feedback and input on the meeting outline and agenda. Encourage students to do further research on the issues.
- 1-2 Days Prior: Conduct a meeting to finalize the meeting outline/agenda. Discuss the anticipated flow of the meeting including introductions, talking points, and conclusion. Ensure that all students attending the meeting know where and what time to arrive. Prepare students to be flexible as the meeting time could change on short notice.

## **Follow-up with Faculty Members/Volunteers/Participants**

At the conclusion of the meeting, the legislative aide was given our business cards and an open offer to contact us if they had any follow-up questions or concerns regarding the issues discussed. Group photos of the meeting attendees were taken inside the office and outside on the steps of the Capitol building. A short summary of the meeting along with the pictures were then emailed to the Assistant Dean for Outreach and Engagement at our College of Pharmacy in order to document our advocacy efforts. The meeting attendees signed and mailed a hand-written letter thanking the Congresswoman and her staff for taking the time to meet with us.

## **Project Evaluation:**

### **What Went Well? What Didn't? How Would You Improve for the Next Year?**

What went well:

- Timing of the meeting to coincide with AMCP Nexus in National Harbor, MD
- Patience and persistence in securing a meeting with a Member of Congress
- Being prepared with a meeting outline/agenda
- Having a specific and actionable request of what the Member of Congress could do to support the legislation we advocated
- Thanking the Congresswoman for her continued support

What didn't work/could be improved:

- Reaching out to working professionals experienced in advocacy or our State Advocacy Coordinator to conduct a workshop on how to engage with elected officials
- Developing a 1-page summary of all the main points that can be left behind as a resource for the congressional office
- Practice articulating the issues in advance of the meeting
- Consider implementing this initiative at the state level also by working with our State Advocacy Coordinator

### **Timeline/Checklist for Project:**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>
<b>July</b>	Appoint a Health Policy Chair	Executive Board
<b>August</b>	Review AMCP legislative priorities and advocacy resources	Health Policy Chair
	Prioritize issues and legislation to be advocated	Executive Board
<b>September</b>	Contact the offices of Members of Congress	Health Policy Chair
	Host an informational session about the advocacy opportunity	Health Policy Chair/Chapter President
	Conduct a meeting with participants to finalize the agenda and establish talking points	Health Policy Chair
<b>October</b>	Meet with the Member of Congress or Legislative Aide	Health Policy Chair
	Take pictures and document the meeting	Chapter President/VP of Communications
	Send a thank you letter to the Member of Congress	Health Policy Chair