



**ASAM ADDICTION MEDICINE
ACTION NETWORK**

While meeting with Members of Congress and their staff can seem intimidating, it doesn't need to be! You're providing them a valuable service by bringing the issues and policies that matter to you, a constituent, to their attention. **Members of Congress and their staff want to hear from you!**

Meeting with Members of Congress- The Basics

Meetings are typically around 15 minutes long, and most likely, you'll be meeting with staff. Don't be disappointed if your representative doesn't make an appearance- they do value and listen to their staff, and notes on your meeting will be shared and discussed.

Typically, you'll have other ASAM members and representatives in your meeting. It can help to connect with others in your meeting beforehand to determine what key points you'd like to share and who is responsible for raising them in your meeting. Be sure to also do your homework and learn if the representative you're meeting with has been supportive of the ASAM policy priorities you're advocating for.

Virtual meeting? Here are some tips for when you can't meet in-person!

- Join the video/call a few minutes before the meeting is scheduled to begin, to work out any technical issues.
- On the phone, avoid long monologues and try to build in occasional breaks to ask if the staffer has any questions.
- If you're on video, raise your webcam to eye level and look into the camera when you're speaking. Be sure to also check your lighting so your face can be seen!

Anatomy of a Hill Meeting

1. Introductions

Take time at the beginning of your meeting to introduce everyone in your group. Be sure to highlight any connections you have to the legislator's state or district and your connection to ASAM and addiction medicine.

2. Set the Stage

Once everyone has been introduced, ask the staffer if they are familiar with addiction medicine. Most staffers will be familiar with the "opioid crisis," but be prepared to briefly

educate them about the role and importance of addiction medicine. It helps to speak from your own experience so feel free to make it personal and tie your explanation into why you're meeting with them today.

3. Make Your Ask

After you've shared a bit about addiction medicine, give the staffer an opportunity to ask questions. Once they seem comfortable with what addiction medicine is, lay out the issue at hand and ASAM's policy requests. Take the time to explain each request, if possible, touching on the policy's impact in the state or district. You can also take this time to thank them for ASAM priorities they've supported in the past. Once again, allow time for questions from the staffer and for those you can't answer, refer the congressional staffer to ASAM staff.

4. End the Meeting

You may not get a clear answer if your Member of Congress will be able to meet your asks, and that's ok. Be sure to offer up any informational materials that have been provided and let the staffer know they can connect with ASAM on any follow-up questions they may have. When you're wrapping up, be sure to thank them for listening and for their time. Exchange contact information if you haven't already done so and send a follow-up, thank you email. It's always appreciated and leaves a great impression.