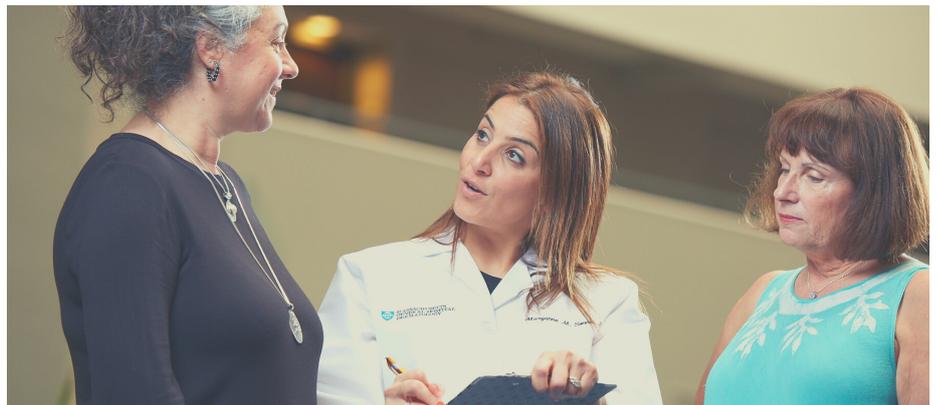
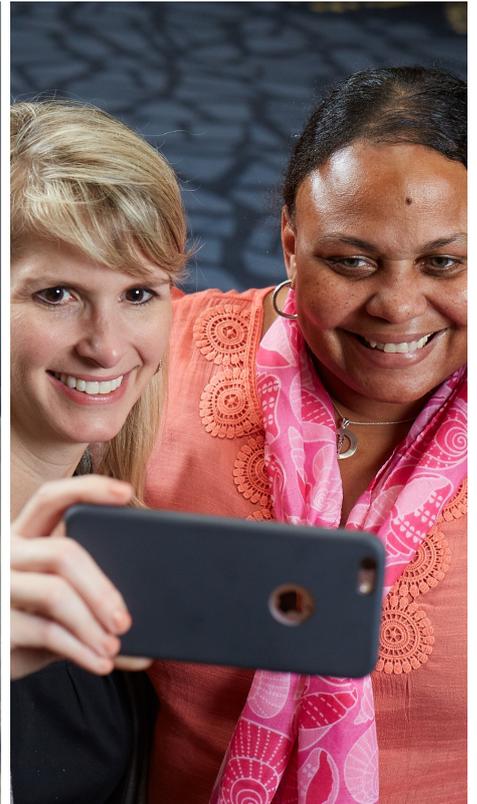


#LETSGETVISIBLE

NSAAM: Tips for Working with Your Elected Officials





Local and national elected officials are voted in to represent the interests and concerns of their constituents. To be as effective as possible, focus your "ask" on either policy or relationship-building. Enlisting their support can be a great way to boost the #LetsGetVisible campaign about scarring hair loss.

YOUR VOICE MATTERS

While government does not function perfectly, and it can sometimes be hard to make your legislators listen, effective communication strategies can increase the chances of your opinion having an impact. Our system of government is slow-moving and complex, but the legislation that makes its way through this process has the potential to fundamentally change the way our society functions. Your voice matters! The only way to make a difference is by using it to advocate for the issues you care about - scarring hair loss research and awareness.





If your interest is in **policy-related** issues, contact the CARF office to learn CARF's position on current and upcoming legislation.

If your interest is in **relationship-building**, see below for some tips and tricks for increased success.

WHAT INFLUENCES ELECTED OFFICIALS

Personal relationships: Friends, family, and staff members have a tremendous influence on the day-to-day decisions of elected officials.

The message: What you say to elected officials is actually important! Contact CARF to craft a winning message.

The media: Media coverage of events will often have an influence on what elected officials talk about in hearings and introduce as legislation.

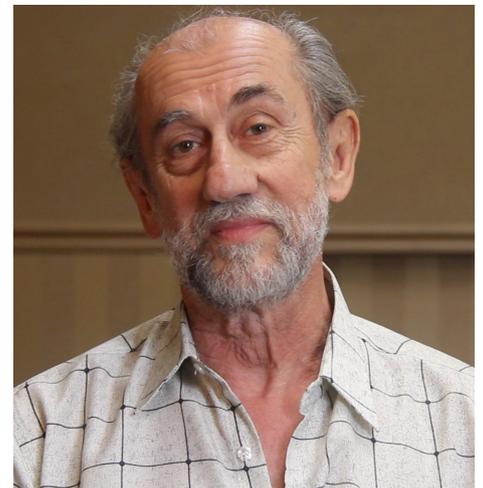
Party considerations: Elected officials are often swayed by their political party's priorities.

Personal interests and passions: All elected officials have one or more policy issues that they care about deeply. Effective advocates will identify those interests and then frame their message accordingly.

Staff: It is critical to build good relationships and communicate effectively with legislative staff, as they are generally responsible for briefing elected officials about an issue and advising on what their position should be.

Most importantly... their constituents: A common refrain in any elected official's office is, "How does this impact my constituents?"

Click [HERE](#) to locate your Federal, State & Local Elected Officials.



Every piece of legislation starts as an idea, and that idea can come from a legislator, a staff member, a professional lobbyist, or an "average citizen."

BUILD YOUR RELATIONSHIP

To set up a meeting, call or email your representative's office to book an appointment – their office will be able to tell you where and when you can meet and for how long. It's a good idea to let them know what you'd like to discuss beforehand, this will allow them to prepare and means you don't have to spend too long explaining the issue when you meet.

Introduction

- State name and address.
- Reinforce that you are a voting member in their district.
- Member of the Cicatricial Alopecia Research Foundation (CARF).
- Your goal is to increase awareness of scarring hair loss and stimulate more research to find better treatments and a cure.

Personalize your situation

- State that you are personally affected by scarring alopecia.
- Provide some brief points about how living with scarring alopecia has impacted your life.
- Thank them for their previous support of XXX (*spend a little time and research what they have supported in the past that relates to healthcare and medical research, i.e., the National Institutes of Health (NIH) funding*).

Explain what you would like

- Need to increase the funding to the National Institutes of Health (NIH)
- Most hair disease research advances come from scientists funded by the NIH.

Following up

After the meeting, write to your elected official to thank them for talking with or seeing you. This gives you an opportunity to confirm what you discussed and what they have committed to do. If you haven't heard anything from them in three weeks, follow up to ask about any progress or other ways you can help.

A few tips to remember:

- Try to be a few minutes early if you are meeting in person. Elected officials have packed schedules and they're likely meeting with other constituents or attending meetings. If you're late, that may mean you get less time to speak with them.
- Remember you don't need to be an expert, just passionate about patients with scarring alopecia. Your elected official will not expect you to know everything (*although you may know more than they do!*).
- If they ask you something and you're unsure of the answer, just tell them that you will find out and let them know. Call CARF.
- Be clear and to the point. You may have less than 15 to get your point across.
- Take a CARF Fact Sheet with you as a 'leave behind.' It will give them something to refer back to and will be useful if you don't get time to cover everything. It should summarize your points.
- CARF can help you prepare for your briefing, so get in touch with us using the details below.

