

# Advocacy in Medicine

## Charleston WIM



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**MEDICAL ASSOCIATION**





Thank you, health care hero!

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No financial disclosures  
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Twitter: @LisaCostelloWV

Thank you @AmerAcadPeds – slide content



**One disclaimer ...**

# I'm a #Tweetiatrician



# #TweetiatricianSelfie

# Why Medicine/Health Care?



# What is Advocacy?



“It should be our aim to discover neglected problems and so far as in our power, to correct evils and introduce reform”

-Isaac Abt, MD, first AAP President

“Advocacy means creating a situation in which change can occur”

-Sandra Hassink, MD, Past AAP President






# Advocacy defined



ad·vo·ca·cy

/ˈadvəkəseɪ/ 

*noun*

public support for or recommendation of a particular cause or policy.

"their advocacy of traditional family values"

*synonyms:* support for, backing of, promotion of, championing of; [More](#)

• the profession or work of a legal advocate.

- “Giving aid to or actively supporting a cause or position”
- Simply put...
  - **Speaking out on your patient’s behalf**
- Problem that needs change, issue needs awareness, improvement in system
- Advocacy allows one to move from treating one patient at a time to being part of broader network

Impact Decisions...

Use your stories  
& experiences

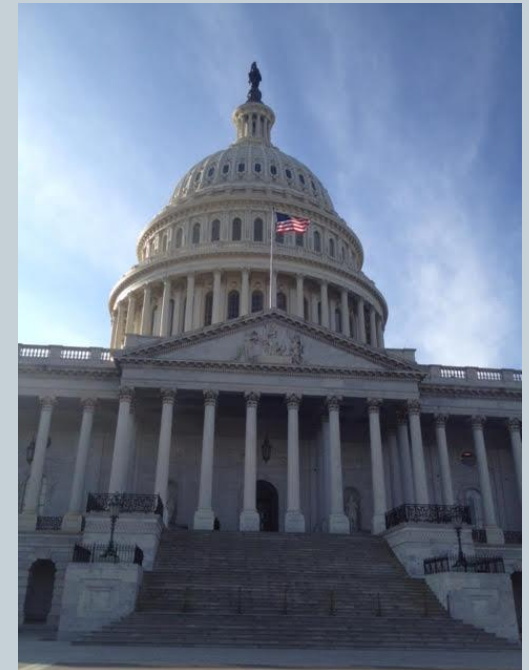


# Advocacy Overview



## 4 levels of advocacy

1. Individual
2. Community
3. State
4. Federal



# Individual Advocacy



- Direct care & resources provided to patients everyday
- Examples:
  - Calling insurance company, social service agency
  - Coordinating with another provider
  - Needed test or procedure



# Individual Advocacy: Example



- Dr. Emma Somers, as PGY 2 Internal Medicine resident



- Patient with back pain, tried multiple pain medications, physical therapy, best relief from Lidoderm patches
- Lidoderm patches not covered by insurance, unless postherpetic neuralgia
- Called insurance company...denied
- Letter to insurance company...denied

# Individual Advocacy: Example



- Visit with family, explains situation
- Patient's mother, "maybe you should call Joe Manchin"



- Speaks with staffer, tells patient's story
- Lidoderm approved, patient able to receive, patient & family grateful
- Experience + empathy + compassion + patient's story = impacted decision

# Community Advocacy



- Reaches beyond individual advocacy to affect those in your community, beyond those seen in the professional setting
- Takes into consideration the environmental and social factors influencing health
- Examples:
  - Health Fairs
  - School Health
  - Facing Poverty
  - Air & Water quality

# State Advocacy



- Changing public policies, laws, and rules that impact health at state level
- Physicians use voice and credibility to advocate on behalf of public policies that impact patients
- Legislative, Governor's office, regulatory agencies
- Examples:
  - Substance Use Disorder
  - Immunizations
  - Changing HIV testing Policy (2011 SB 488)
  - Biologics Medication Access

**Advocacy = Speaking out on your patient's behalf**



# State Advocacy



**SR 39**  
 Designating February 12, 2020,  
 as **Wing Nurses Day**

ARMOUR	PITTSBURGH
BALDWIN	PLYMOUTH
BASCH	PROBODD
BLAIR	ROBERTS
BOLEY	RODRIGUEZ
CLAMMITE	RUCKER
CLINE	SMITH
FACCHINI	STOLLINGS
HAMILTON	SWICE
HANCOCK	SWOLF
HEMPFIELD	TAYLOR
JOFFRE	YANEZ
LANDAY	YOUNG
MAW	LOUISIANA
MCCRARY	WELLS
MURPHY	WOLFEL
PALOMO	MR. PRESIDENT

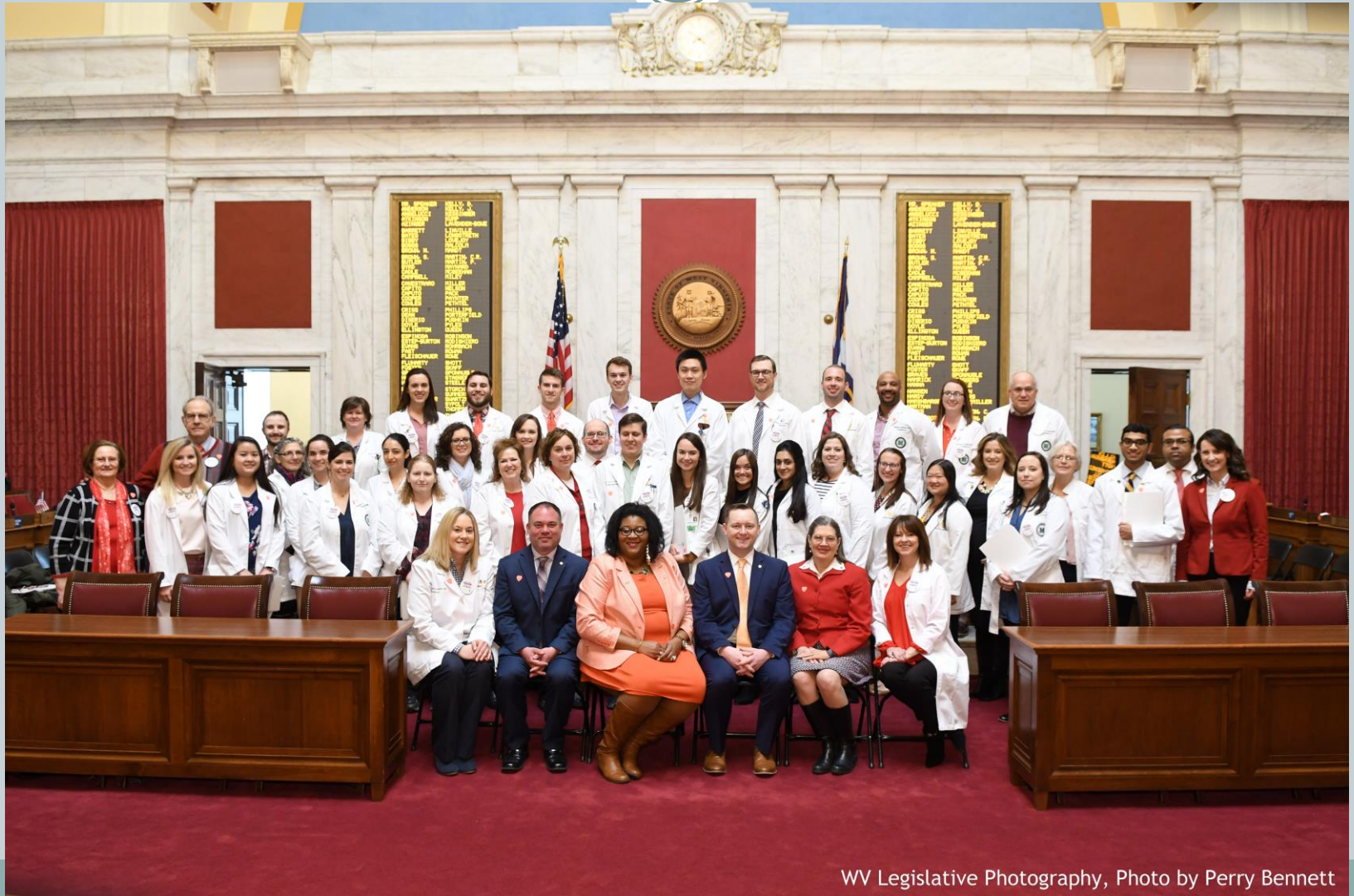
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WV Legislative Photography, Photo by Will Price

# State Advocacy



# Federal Advocacy

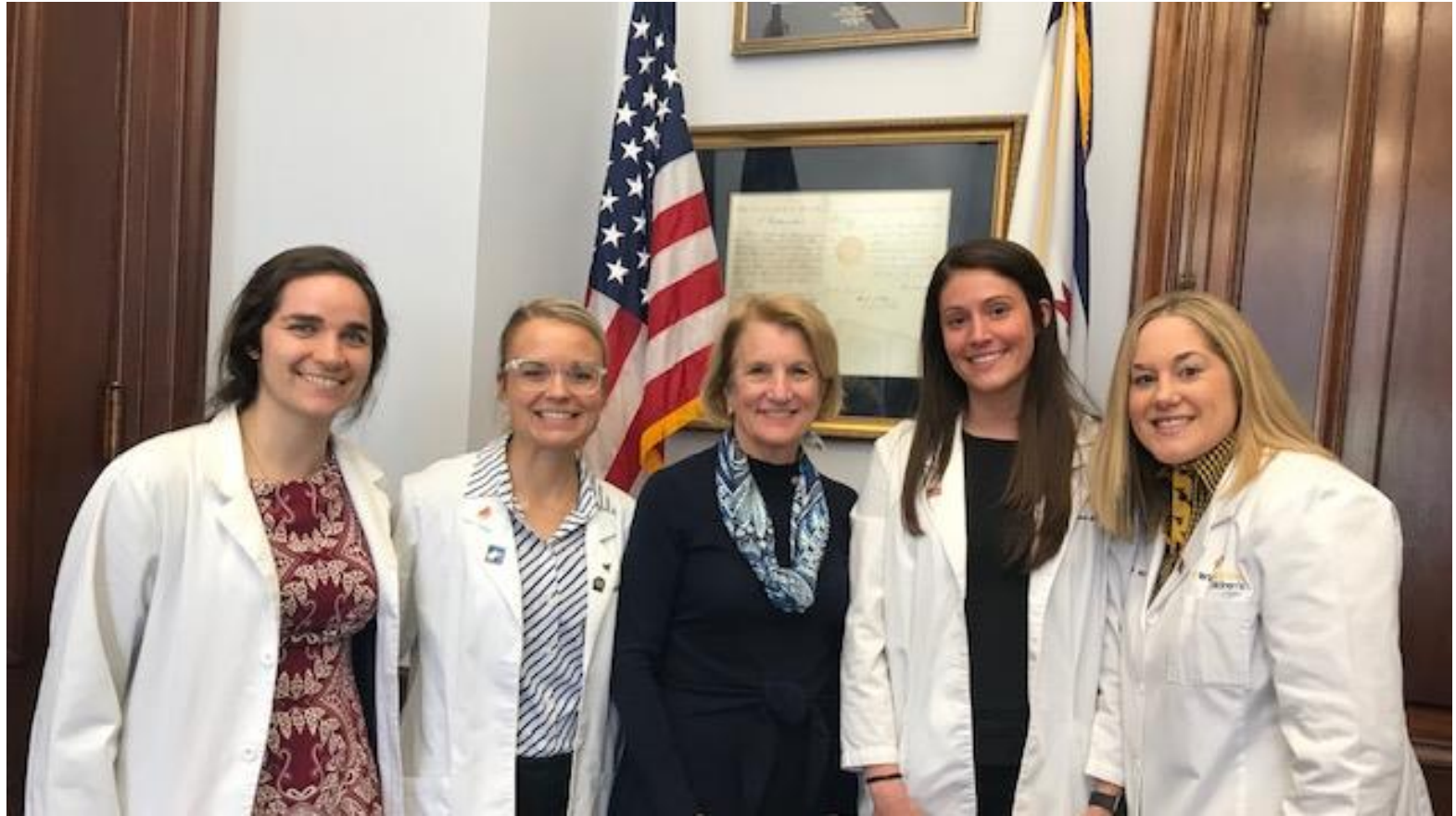


- Changing public policies, laws, and rules that impact health at federal level
- Physicians use voice and credibility to advocate on behalf of public policies that impact patients
- Legislative, Supreme Court
- Examples:
  - Access: ACA, AHCA, BCRA, Graham-Cassidy, CHIP
  - Payment for physicians, conditions, procedures
  - Nutrition: SNAP, WIC
  - Immigration, Women's Health, Environment, Substance Use Disorder, etc.

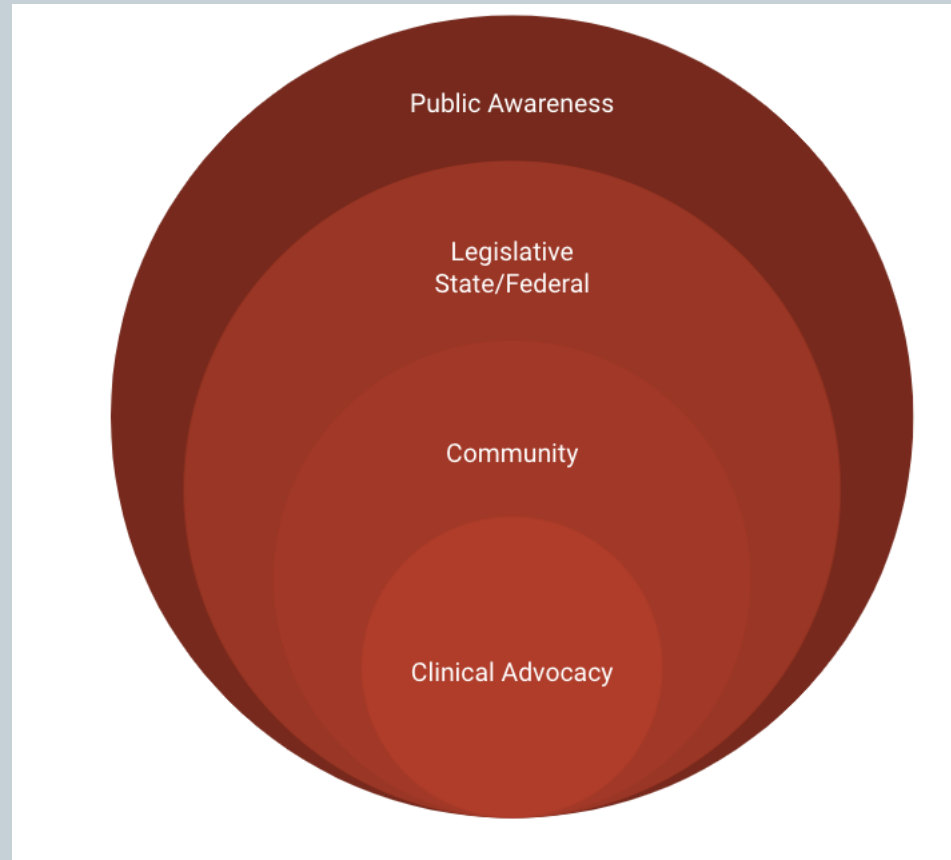
**Advocacy = Speaking out on your patient's behalf**

# Federal Advocacy: SAIDOH travels to DC





# Different Levels of Advocacy



# Why Advocate?





# Your Voice Makes a Difference



Physicians can play a powerful role in creating lasting and meaningful change for the public and the patients and we serve

Stories are powerful!

# Learn

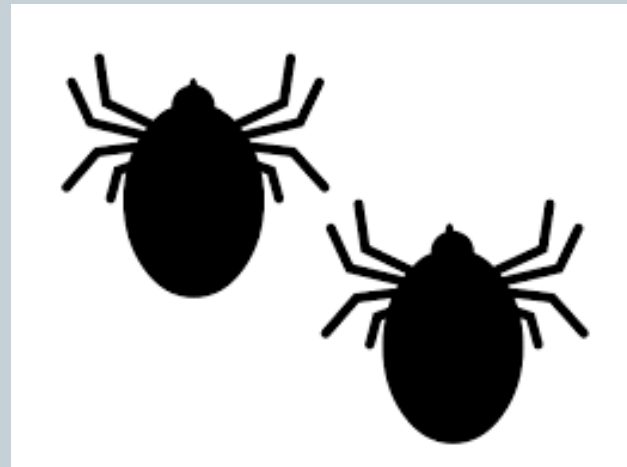


- Definition of “Politics”

- The art and science of government
- Competition between interest groups or individuals for power and leadership (as in government)
- You don't need to be an expert on the legislative process, but a general familiarity can help you feel more comfortable and confident

- Origin: **POLI – TICS**

- Many, blood sucking parasites



# Advocate



- Individual Level
- Community fair, schools
- Op-Ed or Letter to Editor
- Participate in organizations
- Call, email, meet with legislators
- Social Media
- Testify
- Vote



**Editorial: Dr. Lisa Costello: Keep CHIP strong for kids**

03/28/2014 - The Charleston Gazette





# Connect



- Peers
- Groups – community, state, federal
- WV State Medical Association
- Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC)
- American Medical Association (AMA)
- American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP)
- American College of Physicians (ACP)
- American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)
- Specialty organizations

# WV State Medical Association



- Established in 1867
- Physician-based organization which focuses on public health issues, strives to provide the highest level of continuing medical education, and seeks to promote the time-honored commitment of the medical profession while improving quality of life for West Virginians.
- The largest physician advocacy organization serving physicians across the state.

# Making a Difference



- You don't have to be a legislative expert to impact decisions
- Decision-makers do not necessarily have health or medical backgrounds and need to hear from people who do.
- Opportune times to weigh-in:
  - during committee hearings
  - before key votes
  - during the budget process—when budget is being created by executive branch and when being adopted by legislative branch
  - before a bill reaches the governor's desk

# Making a Difference



- Decision-makers that need to hear from you include:
  - your own decision-maker(s)
  - committee members and conference committee members
  - governors and other members of the executive branch
  - the public



# Your Voice Makes a Difference



#tweetiatricianselfie

# Summary



**Advocacy = Speaking out on your patient's behalf**

- Embedded in our profession
- Individual, Community, State, Federal
- Learn, Participate, Advocate, Connect
- Build Coalitions
- Your Voice Makes A Difference
- You can do it!





Thank you!



**QUESTIONS/NEXT STEPS**  
**LET'S GO MOUNTAINEERS**

