

Grassroots advocacy: Key to legislative success

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What is grassroots advocacy?

- Advocacy inclusive of/led by those most impacted by an issue.
- Ensures that decisionmakers hear directly from constituents about **true need**
- Adds faces and stories to policy requests
- Educates elected representatives about the impact of epidemic on district/state

Grassroots strategies

- Letters/phone calls/emails
- Media: letters to editor, op-eds
- Rallies/press conferences
- District visits
- Establish ongoing relationship with elected representatives and their staff
- Invite reps/staff to visit local agencies/clinics

Example #1: San Francisco hepatitis C advocacy coalition

- Formed by CalHEP
- Composed of people living with HCV, educators, advocates
- Strong alliance of HCV, HIV, drug policy advocates
- Our charge: create advocacy strategies tailored to local needs
- First success: secured Mayoral proclamation recognizing World Hepatitis Day
- First legislative meeting outcome: likely formation of San Francisco Hepatitis C Task Force appointed by Mayor Newsom

Example #2: Hepatitis C Advocates UNITED!

- Established in August, 2007; 350 members
- Goal: create a national coalition of HCV grassroots advocates to demand leadership from Congress/President.
- Also share info on state/local efforts
- Policy goals: increased appropriations and passage of Hepatitis C Epidemic Control and Prevention Act
- Activities: monthly training calls, Alerts, call/email campaigns, state sign-on letters “mentoring project”

To join Hepatitis C Advocates UNITED!

Send email to: rclary@projectinform.org

Put “subscribe” in subject field.

Include at least first name, city, state