



In-Person Visits

A GUIDE TO GRASSROOTS ADVOCACY

Legislators appreciate when constituents take time to visit them in the nation's capital or in their home district office when they are home during a recess. Take these visits seriously and follow the suggestions below for a successful meeting.

1. **Plan your visit.** Be clear about your goals and determine in advance which representative or staff person you need to meet with. Contact MGMA's Government Affairs for assistance in targeting specific staff.
2. **Make an appointment.** When attempting to meet with a representative, contact the congressperson's scheduler. Explain your purpose. It is easier for congressional staff to arrange a meeting if they know what you wish to discuss and your relationship to the area.
3. **Be prompt and patient.** When it is time to meet with your representative, be punctual and patient. It is quite common for a representative or staff to arrive late, or to be interrupted during the course of your meeting.
4. **Be prepared.** Whenever possible, bring information and materials supporting your position. MGMA developed Congressional Leave-Behinds for members to use when discussing key healthcare issues, such as reducing quality reporting burdens and simplifying administrative processes. It is helpful to share real life examples that demonstrate the impact or benefits associated with a particular policy. Inform the member how an issue affects constituents locally and relates back to the community. Also, be prepared to answer questions.
5. **Stay focused.** Outline your agenda prior to visiting with your member of Congress. You should signal early in the meeting that you have a specific issue to discuss, and then explain the issue using your personal experience. Stick to one or two issues, as meetings can become ineffective if conversation strays from key points. As always, offer to serve as a local resource for the congressperson.
6. **Follow up.** Send a thank you card to show your gratitude to the lawmaker and staff for taking time out of their busy schedules to meet.



Remember to showcase your advocacy work on social media platforms! Use the hashtag **#MGMAAdvocacy.**