

AMERICAN PSYCHIATRIC ASSOCIATION  
 Medical leadership for mind, brain and body.

# ADVOCACY 101

How you can make a difference for your practice and patients

Brian S. Hart, MD, FAPA | October 2022

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## WHAT IS ADVOCACY?

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**Advocacy is the art of selling an idea.**

-  It aims to influence public policy decisions to align with our interests.
-  With your help, we persuade lawmakers and the general public to see the merits of our point of view.
-  The result is policy that benefits physicians and patients alike.

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## WHY SHOULD I ADVOCATE?

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***“If you don’t have a seat at the table, then you’re probably not on the menu”***

- Senator Elizabeth Warren

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**EXAMPLES OF ADVOCACY TOPICS IN 2022**

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- Expanding the use of the **Collaborative Care Model** to address current workforce shortages and improve patient outcomes
- Enforcing the **Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act** and holding insurers accountable when they are not in compliance
- Removing unnecessary barriers to **expand telehealth access** to help clinicians and patients plan and ensure continuity of care
- Fighting against unsafe **non-physician scope of practice** expansion and safeguarding the practice of medicine
- **Fair reimbursement** and the promotion of psychiatry-friendly innovative payment models

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**LAWMAKERS ARE PULLED IN MANY DIRECTIONS**

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- Members of Congress work approximately **70 hours** per week when they're in DC and **59 hours** per week when Congress is in recess.
- During a typical day in DC a member of Congress will attend **15 events** including constituent meetings, speaking engagements, votes, committee hearings and fundraisers.
  - These events cover a wide variety of topics from healthcare to agriculture to the economy etc.



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**ADVOCACY AT APA**

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**HOW ASSOCIATION ADVOCACY WORKS** AMERICAN PSYCHIATRIC ASSOCIATION

In order to break through all the noise, we must work together to deliver a unified and consistent pro-psychiatry message to each lawmaker.

If we each play our part, lawmakers will hear and be influenced by our message as a trusted source. In other words: **Decisions will be made with us, not for us.**

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**ADVOCACY IN WASHINGTON, DC** AMERICAN PSYCHIATRIC ASSOCIATION

**Our Government Affairs staff in Washington, DC:**

- Monitors legislative and regulatory activity to identify opportunities to advance our policy agenda.
- Persuades policy makers and their staff whenever possible to modify policies or rules to protect our profession and patients.
- Educates policy makers and their staff on our issues so that they are better prepared to make good decisions.

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**ADVOCACY IN YOUR STATE** AMERICAN PSYCHIATRIC ASSOCIATION

- **YOU are the expert**
- **YOU are who members of Congress want to hear from**
- You don't need to know the specifics about a policy, but you should share:
  - How a policy is or isn't working locally
  - How a policy is impacting you, your practice or your patients
  - How that policy can be improved to make things better locally

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**ADVOCACY AT HOME**

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- Members of Congress rated “Staying in touch with constituents” as being the job aspect most critical to their effectiveness.
- Congressional staff said that contact from a constituent who represents other constituents has more influence than a lobbyist
- YOU are who members of Congress want to hear from.
  - That’s you!** You represent your patients and staff to a lawmaker.

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## WHAT GETTING INVOLVED LOOKS LIKE

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**WRITE YOUR LAWMAKER**

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- Go to APA’s Advocacy Action Center on [psychiatry.org/advocacy](https://psychiatry.org/advocacy) and sign up for alerts
- You’ll receive emails when APA needs you to contact your federal or state lawmakers.
- Take action when you receive an alert by sending a pre-written email to your lawmakers.
  - Tip:** Always feel free to personalize these messages and share how a policy is impacting you, your patients, or your practice
- Share with your colleagues over email or social media

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### HOW TO CALL A FEDERAL LAWMAKER

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- APA's Action Center will provide your lawmakers' phone number and talking points to address the issue.
- Calls are short so summarize how the issue would impact you or your patients in a sentence or two.
- Call the office, explain why you're calling and leave a message with the receptionist.
  - **Tip:** Always ask for a response from the office and provide the office with your email and home address.

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### SAMPLE CONVERSATION

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Congressional office:	Hello, this is Senator John Smith's office.
You:	Hello. My name is Dr. Mary Jones and I am a psychiatrist from [state]. I am calling to express my support of [S. 1234], which the Senator will be voting on this week.
Congressional office:	I'd be happy to relay your views to the Senator. May I take a message?
You:	Yes, I hope that the Senator will support S. 1234 this week. Many of my patients are affected by the loophole [S.1234] would close.
Congressional office:	Thank you, I will pass that message along.
You:	Thank you. Could you please send me a response indicating how the Senator voted? My address is: [ ]

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### ATTEND A TOWN HALL

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- Sign-up for your lawmakers' newsletters by going to their websites or following them on social media. This is how lawmakers communicate events to their constituents.
- Ask a question but include information about who you are and how the issue impacts you.
- Always be polite and courteous.
- If possible, introduce yourself to the lawmaker's staff and let them know you're available as a resource.

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**SAMPLE CONVERSATION**

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Good evening, Representative Pingree.

My name is Dr. Mary Jones and I'm a psychiatrist practicing and living in Brunswick.

Recently, many of my patients have been impacted by cuts to a specific SAMHSA program so I am concerned about funding for this important agency.

Would you explain your position on federal funding for substance use disorders?

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**GET INVOLVED IN GRASSROOTS ADVOCACY**

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**Join APA's Congressional Advocacy Network – our political grassroots program**

- Congressional Advocates serve as "key contacts" for their members of Congress.
- Advocates advance their lawmaker's understanding of psychiatric issues and build a relationship with the lawmaker.
- When important policy issues arise, CAN members get our message out to congress through direct and personal communication.

**CAN members get one-on-one support from APA's government affairs staff**

- They build their relationships with lawmakers by setting up local meetings and/or attending events hosted by the lawmaker (townhalls, fundraisers etc.).
- District-level advocacy is key since lawmakers are more relaxed, have more time to meet with constituents, and tend to be more informal than when they're in D.C.

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**APA POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE (APAPAC)**

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### APAPAC'S ROLE DURING ELECTIONS

- APAPAC is our bipartisan voice on Capitol Hill and one of our most important ways to participate in the political process.
- Through individual contributions, APAPAC makes significant and strategic campaign contributions to elect Members of Congress who champion psychiatry and Congressional leaders who control our issues.
- APAPAC is a democratic tool with a singular focus: To shape a Congress more friendly to the profession of psychiatry.

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### 2022 PARTICIPATION IN APAPAC

- Total amount raised: **Over \$175,000**
- Average contribution: **\$170**
- Number of contributors: **Over 1,000**
- Pro-psychiatry congressional campaigns supported : **128**

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### AREA 5 MENTAL HEALTH CHAMPIONS

Member of Congress	Party	State	Contribution	Justification
Rep. Terri A. Sewell	DEM	AL	\$1,000	Ways & Means Committee
Sen. John Boozman	REP	AR	\$5,000	Former healthcare provider, supportive of telehealth expansion
Rep. Stephanie Murphy	DEM	FL	\$1,000	Ways & Means Committee
Rep. Darren Soto	DEM	FL	\$5,000	Member of the mental health caucus
Rep. Gus Bilirakis	REP	FL	\$6,000	Member of the mental health caucus
Rep. Kathy Castor	DEM	FL	\$1,000	Active on GME and physician workforce issues
Rep. Vern Buchanan	REP	FL	\$3,500	Ways & Means Committee
Rep. Lois Frankel	DEM	FL	\$1,000	Appropriations Committee
Rep. Brett Guthrie	REP	KY	\$1,000	Energy & Commerce, Health subcommittee
Morgan McGarvey	DEM	KY	\$2,500	Candidate, supportive of MH legislation while Senator
Sen. Bill Cassidy	REP	LA	\$2,500	Sponsor of APA's Parity Bills, physician
Rep. Deborah K. Ross	DEM	NC	\$2,000	Freshman ally; Father was psychiatrist; very supportive of APA priorities
Rep. Nancy R Mace	REP	SC	\$1,000	Freshman VA Committee
Rep. James E. Clyburn	DEM	SC	\$2,000	Majority Whip
Rep. Tom Rice	REP	SC	\$1,000	Ways and Means Committee
Sen. Tim Scott	REP	SC	\$1,000	Finance & HELP
Rep. Daniel Crenshaw	REP	TX	\$2,000	Energy & Commerce
Rep. Lizzie Fletcher	DEM	TX	\$3,500	Energy & Commerce; Lead on APA's collaborative care legislation
Rep. Kevin Brady	REP	TX	\$1,500	Ways and Means Ranking Member
Rep. Lloyd Doggett	DEM	TX	\$2,000	Member of the mental health caucus
Rep. Elaine Luria	DEM	VA	\$1,000	Veterans Affairs Committee
Sen. Tim Kaine's LPAC	DEM	VA	\$5,000	Sen. Kaine's Leadership PAC

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### APAPAC'S EFFECTIVENESS

**96%**  
of APAPAC  
Supported  
Candidates  
WON  
Election/Re-Election  
In 2020

**Looking ahead:**  
APAPAC will continue to identify and support members of the 118<sup>th</sup> congress who determine policies critical to psychiatry, our practices and our patients:

- Parity
- Network adequacy
- Federal scope of practice standards
- Medicare funding
- Physician payment levels
- Telepsychiatry
- Residency education

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### THIS YEAR IS CRITICAL

- The 2022 midterm election will take place on November 8<sup>th</sup>, and the outcome will shape the future of psychiatry and patient care for years to come
- All 435 seats in the House of Representatives and 35 seats in the Senate will be contested
- Now is our opportunity to positively impact the results of this election and ensure the voice of psychiatry is heard
- It is imperative we have the resources to support our mental health champions in Congress who will fight for psychiatry and our patients
- **Alabama is <1% away from meeting this year's state average contribution!**  
**In this critical election year, please consider showing your full support to solidify our voice on Capitol Hill.**

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### APAPAC TARGETS KEY DECISIONMAKERS

- **Congressional leadership:** APAPAC supports 7 members of the Democratic leadership and 6 members of the Republican leadership
- **Key Committees:**
  - **Ways and Means Committee:** APAPAC supports 40% of members serving on the Ways and Means
  - **Energy and Commerce Committee:** APAPAC supports nearly 60% of members serving on the Energy and Commerce
  - **HELP Committee:** APAPAC supports nearly 40% of members serving on the HELP Committee
  - **Finance Committee:** APAPAC supports nearly 40% of members serving on the HELP Committee

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**THANK YOU TO ALL DONORS!**

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**Show your leadership investment in APA advocacy by making your 2022 APAPAC contribution**

- As psychiatric leaders, you play an authoritative role in shaping laws and policies that impact our profession and our patients
- You are a leading voice on advocacy efforts for APS
- If you have not already given to APAPAC for 2022, please do so by going to: [psychiatry.org/APAPAC](https://psychiatry.org/APAPAC)

**If you have given in 2022, THANK YOU.**  
Your contribution will help us elect more friends of psychiatry to Congress in 2022 on both sides of the aisle.

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**THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND PARTICIPATION!**

For more information about any of the topics discussed, please email [advocacy@psych.org](mailto:advocacy@psych.org).

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