# Meet the Speakers

**Patient Advocacy: How to Get Started** - Feeding Tube Awareness Week | February 7 -11th

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**Bettemarie Bond, OTR/L**  
*Oley Ambassador*  
*Levittown, Pennsylvania*

Bettemarie, who has been diagnosed with mitochondrial myopathy, has been an Oley Ambassador since 1992. She has gained her independence while on home parenteral (IV) nutrition, hydration therapy, and patient-controlled analgesia (PCA) for pain. Bettemarie went to college, graduated, worked for fourteen years, and purchased her own home—all while connected around the clock to an IV infusion.

For years Bettemarie has lobbied on Capitol Hill for various issues. In addition, she has done advocacy work with patient organizations including the Oley Foundation, Digestive Disease National Coalition (DDNC, of which Oley is a member), Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA), United Mitochondrial Disease Foundation (UMDF), and more. She is the first person on HPN to serve as a member of the American Society for Parenteral and Enteral Nutrition (ASPEN) Public Policy Committee. Her positive perspective, kindness, generosity, and “can do” attitude set a terrific example of what can be achieved while on therapy.

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**Dale Dirks**  
*Washington Representative, Digestive Disease National Coalition (DDNC)*

Dale Dirks has worked for nearly 40 years as the Washington Representative for voluntary health organizations, scientific organizations, medical societies, professional societies, health-related industry groups and academic health institutions, advocating for their interests in public health, medical research, patient access, training, and institutional support. His firm has been highly effective at securing federal support for key items of interest to its clients.

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**Beth Gore, PhD**  
*President, The Oley Foundation*  
*Albany Medical Center, Delmar, NY*

Beth is a national patient advocate. Her personal/professional life collide at the intersection of Vascular Access and Intestinal Failure. She is a sought-after keynote speaker, author, and trainer. Beth works in various capacities of patient safety and patient advocacy. Her advocacy work includes Joint Commission, FDA, NIH, National Health Council, VANGUARD, etc. Beth serves on several healthcare and non-profit boards, including as the current president of Oley. Her personal mission statement is, "Speaking for those who cannot speak for themselves." Her youngest son, Manny, lives on Home Enteral and Home Parenteral Nutrition for over 10 years. She, her husband Dan and six children (all adopted with special needs) live in Tampa.