



PT LOCAL OUTREACH

How to Meet with Your Local Legislator

Why should you meet with your local legislator?

- Building statewide influence begins at the local level.
- That means in order for CPTA to be recognized and respected by state decision makers, members must demonstrate their value to their legislators at the local level (their home district).
- Building awareness about PTs and their value to the community is a potent weapon, and accomplishing this goal has the added bonus of helping PTs win favor for local issues as well.

Keep in mind that you are there to educate and build an important relationship.

- District office meetings with local legislators are a good chance to get to know your representative.
- Introduce yourself and share why physical therapy is important and a valued health care benefit to the legislator's constituency.

How to set up a meeting with your local legislator.

- Contact your local district legislator and ask to speak with the scheduler.
- Identify yourself as a constituent and a member of the California Physical Therapy Association (CPTA).
- Explain the reason for the meeting is to inform the legislator about the importance of legislation allowing consumer direct access to physical therapy.

How to prepare for the meeting.

- Know your legislator's background: whether he/she is well versed on health care issues, has taken a position on an issue or has heard of pertinent legislation.
- Be direct, clear and brief and keep in mind the legislator's time is limited.
- Study the CPTA key messages, fact sheets and frequently asked questions beforehand.

How to start the conversation.

- Introduce yourself. Provide your business card and the CPTA Legislative Resources, available on the CPTA Website.
- Stay focused on the issues. Try to redirect the conversation if it veers off course. Legislators tend to be wishy-washy and non-committal early on. That's why it's important to make your voice count at the onset.

How to conclude the meeting and follow up.

- Make your position clear, and tell your legislator exactly what you want him or her to do. Be very specific about the action you need from your legislator on the issue.
- Ask if the legislator has any questions or would like additional information.
- Offer to be a resource on health care topics. Offer to provide a Move California presentation to a community group of the legislator's choosing.
- Always follow up with a brief thank-you note mentioning your bill number or agenda.
- Send positive news articles to your legislator as well.
- If a special event is going to take place, invite the legislator and his/her staff.