



THE NORTH CAROLINA PA STUDENT
TOOLKIT
FOR ORGANIZING ADVOCACY EVENTS

CHECK-LIST

- Review Toolkit
- Review Legislators' Biographies
- Pre-Brief Training with NCAPA
- Assign Roles
- Quick Group Practice
- Attend Meetings
- Deliver Leave-Behinds
- Exchange NCAPA and Legislator Business Cards
- Complete Survey
- Attend De-Brief
- Thank You Email

NOTES:

PA WHY BE A ADVOCATE



If not you, then who?

In order for progress to happen, we need the help of you! If no one steps up to the plate, things will remain in the current state of affairs.



You make it personal.

You know what it is like to be a PA student (and future PA). You have the experience – **your stories** make the issues real. You are a constituent and will care for many of their constituents.



Legislators likely unaware of your issue.

Our elected officials have various backgrounds and interests. Few decision-makers have backgrounds in healthcare, and there are no legislators who are PAs. Your participation increases knowledge and confidence in our issues.

NORTH CAROLINA EXAMPLES OF ADVOCACY IN ACTION

CONCUSSION MANAGEMENT *Informed by PA Ryan Vann*

“In late 2017 ... only physicians were designated as being authorized to return athletes to play after a concussion. Due to this, I had several patients in my family practice clinic who could not be cleared by my authority alone, resulting in necessary office visits with a physician who likely had not seen him/her before. Our research into the issue quickly showed that our exclusion from the full concussion clearance process was not consistent with existing law. In considering our next steps, we focused on the fact that **the existing law clearly states that PAs (among other non-physician providers) are allowed to oversee concussion management from beginning to end.** We asked Rep. McGrady to intervene on our behalf, and he kindly sent a letter to the NCHSAA, **resulting in PA inclusion** in the concussion clearance protocol. To their credit, our partners at the NCHSAA support the change, as they realize that it will increase patient access to quality care.”

SIGNING DISABILITY PLACARDS *Informed by PA Marc Katz*

On April 25, 2017, the Senate unanimously agreed to **SB 160: Handicap Parking Privilege Certification.** SB 160 clarifies that PAs and NPs may sign for handicap placards, which is a necessary clarification after the DMV took a strict interpretation of the law in late 2016, which currently does not explicitly name PAs. Shortly thereafter, the bill was passed in July 2017.

THE PROCESS OF PUBLIC POLICY



North Carolina General Assembly:
House of Representatives and Senate

Role: Legislation

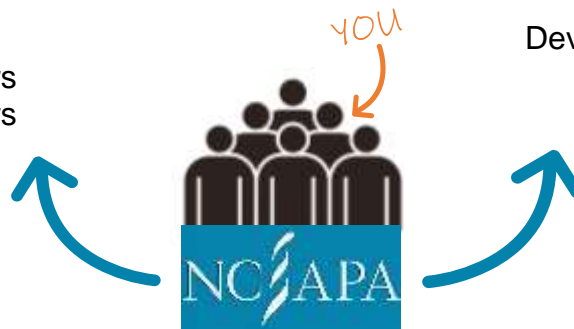
Propose laws
Monitor laws
Support new laws
Oppose new laws



North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services

Role: Regulation

Rulemaking
Develop New Rules
Rule Review



THE DOs AND DON'Ts PRO TIPS

DON'T

- Be intimidated
- Make up answers
- Argue or appear aggressive
- Stray from your message
- Negotiate legislation
- Discuss politics
- Expect the legislator to agree with everything
- Forget your “ask” or leave-behinds

DO

- Be positive
- Refer legislator and staff to NCAPA for any questions you cannot answer
- Be prepared to educate on what a PA is and how a PA is educated
- Offer to be a resource
- Leave your business card
- Make a clear “ask”
- Follow-up with legislator
- Thank the legislator and staff

STEPS TO A **SUCCESSFUL** MEETING

INTRODUCTION 1

Introduce yourself and your group as PA Students from your school. Ask if the legislator (or staffer) is familiar with the PA profession. Go ahead and give a refresher on PAs and PA education even if they are aware of PAs!

2 CLEAR MESSAGE

Have a plan and stay on message. Be direct. For example, "Today we are here to talk about an issue that affects PAs and PA students."

MAKE IT PERSONAL 3

Be a story teller – a succinct and memorable story teller. Share anecdotes that show why this issue is relevant to you. Hearing HOW an issue impacts constituents is the best way to promote action!

4 SHORT & SWEET

You want to address your talking points quickly. Staffers and legislators have meetings all day, and you do not want your message to be lose momentum if they start nodding off.

STATE THE "ASK" 5

The "ask" is essentially what you want them to do. Re-frame your message, and be clear when you state the "ask."

6 THANK YOU!

Regardless of how you think the meeting went, end on a positive note! Thank them for their time. Offer to be a future resource and follow-up.

ASSIGNING ROLES

Working in a group is a great way to allow multiple people to gain exposure to advocacy, without having all of the pressure on you! Plus, it helps keep you organized and stay on message.

Here is an example of how to assign roles to a group of 4 individuals:

Person 1: Introduce the group, ask if the legislator/staffer is familiar with PAs. Even if they are familiar, go ahead and give a quick explanation on what a PA is and/or PA education.

Person 2: Discuss 1st issue. Give anecdotes and show its relevance to PAs.

Person 3: Discuss 2nd issue. Give anecdotes and show its relevance to PAs.

Person 4: Give a quick re-cap on the issues and **clearly state your asks. Thank the legislator/staffer** for their time and ask for a business card. Don't forget to give the leave-behind!

PERSON 1 SAMPLE

Hi! My name is Morgan, and this is Cameron, Ciara, and Rachel. We are all first-year PA students at Campbell University in Harnett County, NC. Are you familiar with PAs, or Physician Assistants? PAs are able to work in any and every health care specialty! You can find a PA in cardiology, family medicine, emergency medicine, surgery, and more! PAs deliver high quality health care at a reduced cost. PAs are paid at 85% of the physician fee schedule, making PAs an accessible health care provider.

Are you familiar with how a PA is trained? PAs obtain a graduate, masters-level medical education. We are trained to do physical exams, order and interpret lab tests, diagnose, treat illnesses, and assist in surgery. We spend the 1st year of our Masters in the classroom setting. Our 2nd year of school is spent on 1 month clinical rotations in different settings, such as 1 month of family medicine, 1 month of surgery, 1 month of OBGYN, and so on. Once we graduate, we sit for our certification exam and become licensed.

Today, we are here to talk to you about issues that are important to my classmates and I.

PERSON 4 SAMPLE

Cameron discussed HB 0001 with you, and Ciara discussed HB 0002 with you. Both of these issues affect the way PAs are educated, which can have an affect on the growth of our profession. We believe that these bills will help PAs continue to do their job of delivering accessible high quality health care.

Would you be willing to (co-sponsor / introduce) this bill?

We know you are very busy. Thank you for taking time to listen to us. (Ask for business card.)

We have some print materials that we would like to leave with you. (Give the leave-behinds.)

***If they have any questions you are unable to answer, tell them that NCAPA will follow-up.*

Refer to “Current Issues” page for Person 2 and Person 3 Samples.

FILL IN YOUR SCHEDULE

EXAMPLE

TIME	WHAT YOU ARE DOING?	LOCATION
8:00AM	Pre-Brief with NCAPA	Stead Center

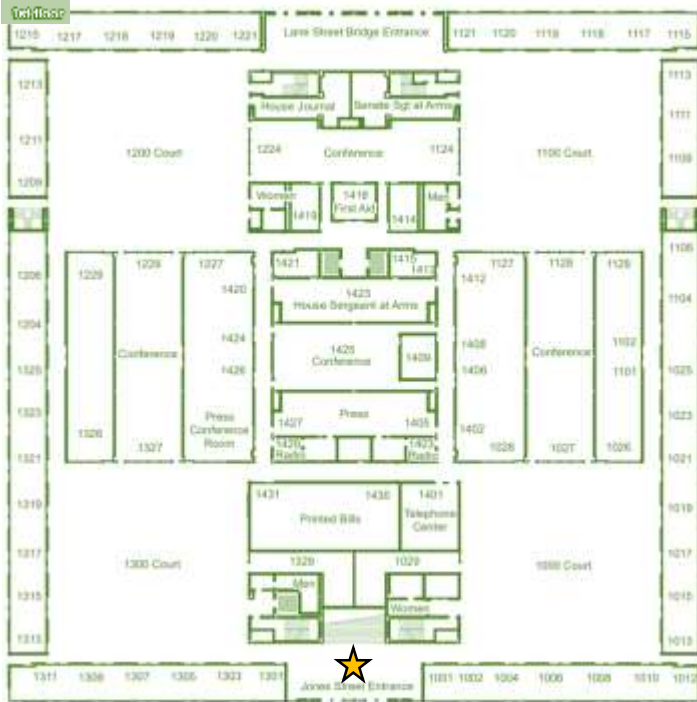
WALKING THROUGH YOUR “ASK”

*“We believe that these bills (_____, _____) will help PAs continue to do their job of delivering accessible high quality health care. **Would you be willing to (co-sponsor / introduce) these bills?”***

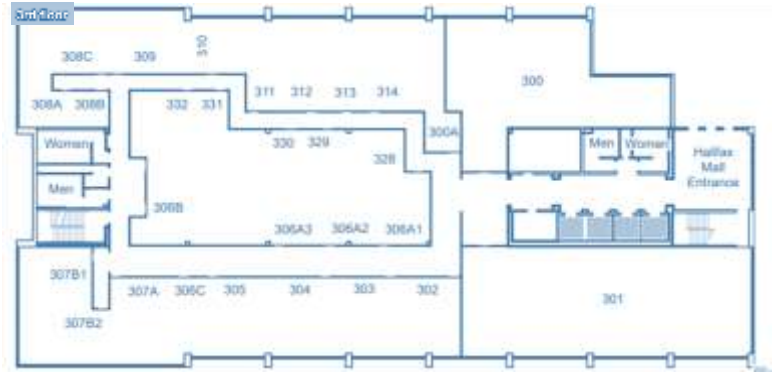
Asking for **co-sponsorship** means that the bill has already been introduced in the House (if you are talking to a Representative) or in the Senate (if you are talking to a Senator). Let’s say a bill has only been introduced in the House, but you are talking to a Senator, you would ask the Senator to **introduce** the bill.

NC GENERAL ASSEMBLY NAVIGATING

STATE LEGISLATIVE BUILDING



LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING



PARKING PARKING GARAGES HAVE RATES CHARGED BY THE HOUR

- Visitor's Lot 1: 140 E. Jones St, Raleigh, NC 27601
- Visitor's Lot 2: 329 N. Salisbury St, Raleigh, NC 27603
- Visitor's Lot 3: 120 W. Edenton St, Raleigh, NC 27603

PROHIBITED ITEMS

- Aerosol Containers, Mace and Pepper Spray
- Knives of any size
- Guns, Replica Guns, Ammunition
- Razors, Box Cutters
- Pets or Animals (*guide and assistance animals permitted)
- Any other item that can be considered a dangerous weapon

SAMPLE EMAIL FOLLOW-UP

New Message

Recipients

Subject **Student PA Meeting Follow-Up**

Dear [INSERT STAFFER'S OR LEGISLATOR'S NAME],

Thank you for meeting with me on [INSERT DATE] to discuss issues that impact physician assistant (PA) education.

*RESTATE THE PROBLEM (1-2 SENTENCES)
THEN SUMMARIZE THE BILL (1 SENTENCE)*

In North Carolina we do not have enough preceptors to accommodate PA students, which leads to clinical site shortages. This often causes PA students to have to train in other states, which often leads to loss of PA talent in NC as students tend to seek jobs where they are trained. **HR 1686** addresses this through incentivization of health care providers to become preceptors at rural health clinics, FQHCs, and critical access hospitals. This can help improve access to high quality and affordable health care by training PAs in these areas.

*RESTATE THE PROBLEM (1-2 SENTENCES)
THEN SUMMARIZE THE BILL (1 SENTENCE)*

We also discussed borrowing parity for PA students. PA students are eligible for less than half of the funding (at a lower interest rate of 6%) that is available to *all other* health professions students. **HR 1685** proposes to increase Stafford Loan Limits for PA students, *matching* the loan limits allowed for medical students, dental students, pharmacy students, and public health students.

Would [INSERT LEGISLATOR'S NAME] be willing to visit our PA program at [INSERT YOUR PROGRAM]? We would love to host your office this year!

Please let me know if I can provide additional information about [INSERT YOUR PROGRAM] or PA education. Again, thank you for your time and consideration of our request for your office's support of these bills. I would be more than happy to be a resource to you, so please always feel welcome to reach out to me!

Sincerely,
[INSERT YOUR NAME]



CHECK-LIST

- Review Toolkit
- Review Legislators' Biographies
- Pre-Brief Training with NCAPA
- Contact Your School's Government Affairs Office
- Contact Your School's Communications Office
- Arrange for Campus Security's Presence
- Make Sure Your Classmates and Faculty Attend
- Give the Legislator a Tour
- Allow Legislator to Speak to your Program
- Hold Q&A Session with Legislator
- Follow-up with Thank You Email

NOTES:

LEGISLATOR PA PROGRAM VISIT

What is the goal?

Having a legislator visit your PA program builds relationships and familiarity. You have the tangible opportunity to show them the rigorous medical training that all PAs must go through. This helps demonstrate our value.

THE PROCESS



PRO TIP:
Find out if anyone at your institution has a personal connection to a legislator – that can help make your event possible and move things quicker!

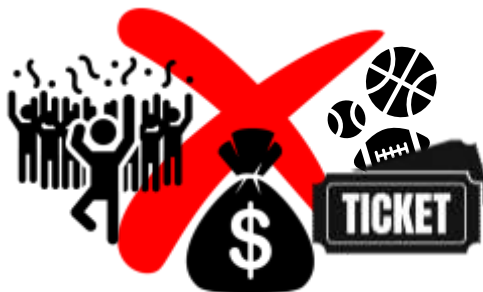
HOW TO BE A GOOD HOST

NO GIFTS ALLOWED

A lobbyist or anyone who has hired a lobbyist cannot pay for an elected or appointed official (or their staffers) food, beverage, transportation. Therefore, NCAPA cannot pay for any gifts that could be considered in a PA program visit. Many PA programs are also not eligible to provide gifts, because they are a lobbyist principal (a client who has hired a lobbyist). **Always check with NCAPA first!**







Coffee, water, and a folder with handouts on your PA program and the profession are not “gifts” and are okay to have at your event!



Throwing a party, giving money, and sports tickets are a few examples of things that would certainly be considered gifts and not permissible.

COMPONENTS OF A GOOD VISIT

-  **1 STUDENT-LED TOUR OF PROGRAM**
Go beyond the classroom and show-off OSCE suites, simulation centers, or any other unique learning equipment. Let this be a time to demonstrate the quality of medical education your classmates undergo.
-  **2 STUDENT PRESENTATION ABOUT PROGRAM**
Explain what a PA is, how a PA is trained, and what some of your alumni have done after graduation. Be creative. If you are able to make your presentation interactive, it will leave a lasting impression.
-  **3 OPPORTUNITY FOR LEGISLATOR TO SPEAK**
Your legislator may be prepared to discuss certain bills that affect PAs or PA education. Allow the legislator time to discuss these or their overall visit and understanding of PAs.
-  **4 Q&A SESSION FOR ATTENDING STUDENTS AND FACULTY**
It is not a bad idea to have some of your classmates prepared with questions, this can help make a comfortable environment for other students and faculty to become engaged in the conversation.

QUESTIONS?

CONTACT EMILY.ADAMS@NCAPA.ORG



