Disclosure Statement

- I have no relevant financial relationships with the manufacturer(s) of any commercial product(s) and/or provider(s) of commercial services discussed in this CME activity. I do not intend to discuss an unapproved/investigative use of a commercial product/device in our presentation.
What is Advocacy?

**State and Federal Advocacy**

Individual Advocacy – What we do everyday when we help patients and their families

What?

Why?

Working to change public policies, laws, and rules at state or federal level with potential to create broad systemic change.

**Government**

Education

Resources

Impact

Community Advocacy – Focusing on children in your community, not just those in your practice

How?
Pediatricians are Natural Advocates

1. **Credibility:**
   Our position, reputation, experience

2. **Skill set:**
   Advocacy skills are not much different from the direct care skills you use everyday

3. **Strength in numbers:**
   We are one of many, both within our profession and within our community
Advocacy

Advocacy is central to AAP mission and one of the top reasons pediatricians join the AAP.

AAP state chapters are actively engaged in advocacy activities and serve as a source of assistance and support.

Growing number of pediatricians advocating on behalf of children’s health and well-being.
Current Priorities for Pediatrics

- Food security and childhood obesity
- Tobacco (Cigarette smoking and electronic nicotine devices)
- Immunizations
- Mental Health
- Early Childhood
- Autism diagnosis & treatment
- Child Safety (concussion education, safety helmets, etc).
- Reducing children’s risk of firearm injury
- Reducing harmful environmental exposures to children
- Access to service for children with disabilities
- Protecting minors from social media access and sexting issues
- Improving prior authorization and step therapy processes
- Medicaid reimbursements
VA AAP Survey Results

• Food security and childhood obesity
• Tobacco (Cigarette smoking and electronic nicotine devices)
• Immunizations
• Mental Health
• Early Childhood
• Autism diagnosis & treatment
• Child Safety (concussion education, safety helmets, etc).
• Reducing children’s risk of firearm injury
• Reducing harmful environmental exposures to children
• Access to service for children with disabilities
• Protecting minors from social media access and sexting issues
• Improving prior authorization and step therapy processes
• Medicaid reimbursements
The Pediatricians Story: The Foundation of Advocacy

• Our patients’ stories put a human face on broader issues that need to be changed.

• Our stories makes the issue real in a way that fact sheets and statistics alone do not.

• Our stories can capture the attention of community leaders, elected officials, the media, and the general public, and help propel your issues and concerns forward.
Getting Comfortable by Learning the Process

An overview of the state advocacy process.
State Advocacy Essentials

State legislatures are increasingly active players in the day-to-day governing of the country and are critical to the formation of public health policy.

Each state operates under a different law-making process, but many commonalities exist among states.

Legislative sessions vary from state to state and year to year.

The governor is the chief executive of a state and is responsible for the administration of the government.
Virginia General Assembly meets in Richmond in the Pocahontas Building (Committee meetings/Legislator offices) and the Capitol (House & Senate Floor sessions) once a year.

General Assembly convenes on the first Wednesday in January and adjourns 45 days later in short session (odd years) and 60 days later in long session (even years).

Legislators typically consider 3,000 bills per session. Between 800 and 1500 pass each year, resulting in new laws. *There was a 40% increase in number of bills introduced during 2020 session.
Virginia Government Basics

• Bicameral Legislature:
  • House of Delegates with 100 members, 2 year term
  • Senate with 40 members, 4 year terms

• Healthcare issues are heard most often in the House Health, Welfare & Institutions Committee and Senate Education & Health Committee. Funding issues (Medicaid reimbursements, etc.) are heard in Senate Finance and House Appropriations.

• Any citizen can make appointments to meet their legislator to discuss issues.

• Find your legislator info at: https://whosmy.virginiageneralassembly.gov
Core Advocacy Skills

Identifying the issues you care about and persuading the people who make decisions on your issues to act.
Motivating Legislators to Act

Effective advocacy involves identifying & persuading legislators to act on behalf of your issue.

• What motivates legislators:
  • What their constituents think and value
  • Their personal values and beliefs
  • Impact on state budget
  • Their political party/ caucus position

• Research the legislators:
  • Interests and commitments
  • Committee assignments
  • Voting record
Contacting Your Legislators

Legislators are influenced by personal contact:

If you are a constituent, let them know!

The more personal the better!

Be prepared, be concise, be respectful of their opinions and their time.

Include a concrete or direct “ask,” if appropriate.

Communicate more than once and follow up!
Delivering Your Message

• Strength in numbers. Visit legislative offices with others on Advocacy Day.

• Prepare: Decide who will speak and in what order. Show that you value the legislator’s time.

• Rehearse: Deliver your message to other group members and get their feedback before you go into the legislator’s office.
Delivering Your Message

- Combine your message with personal stories to illustrate the importance of your message and put a human face on issue.
- Connect your message to what is happening locally.
- Highlight solutions and inform others of how they can help bring about a solution.
Sustaining Your Efforts Over Time

- Getting legislators to act on behalf of your issue will not happen overnight
- Process of developing relationships over time
- Recognize and celebrate your progress along the way
- Our advocacy is not occurring in isolation
- Identify allies and work with them on relevant policy issues
- Work closely with Medical Society and other specialist societies
Getting More Pediatricians Involved

• The more others see they are not alone, the more they will be willing to advocate and believe that a broader solution is possible.

• More people means increased pressure on decision-makers to act.

• Opposition to your issues frequently emerges. Strength in numbers is one of the best ways to counter opposition.

• There is a critical place for residents and students- getting involved early is key and often have very clear interests in particular issues.
Virginia PAC Amounts Raised By Specialty in 2019

- Orthopedics
- Radiologists
- Nurse Practitioners
- ER Physicians
- Psychiatrists
- Family Practice
- Pediatrics

- $-
- $5,000.00
- $10,000.00
- $15,000.00
- $20,000.00
- $25,000.00
- $30,000.00
- $35,000.00

Donate to the PAC!

WWW.VIRGINIAPELLDIATRICS.ORG
2020 Legislative Highlights

• Virginia Mental Health Access Program
• Firearms Safety
• Food Security
• Immunizations
• Essential Health Benefits
• Indoor Tanning Prohibition
Questions? More Information?

Sandy L. Chung, MD
President
Virginia Chapter AAP
schung@fairfaxpeds.com

Lauren B. Schmitt
Vice President of Government Affairs
Commonwealth Strategy Group
lauren@commonwealthstrategy.net

Jane Chappell
Executive Director
Virginia Chapter AAP
jchappell@ramdocs.org