



GRASSROOTS

Building Pharmacy's Power With America's Legislators



**Pharmacists United for
Truth & Transparency**

**American
Pharmacies**

The Pharmacy Grassroots Resource Guide is a joint venture of Pharmacists United for Truth and Transparency (PUTT) and American Pharmacies (APRx) to provide advice and practical tools to help you build an effective working relationship with your legislators. Though our primary focus is state legislators, the same principles and approach apply to building bridges with members of Congress.

We want to get as many independent pharmacies as possible to take some critical grassroots advocacy steps that will build their influence with elected leaders while helping us reach our political goals. **It's always a great time — legislators constantly seek opportunities to be seen with constituents!**

Why This is Critical

You work in one of the most heavily regulated professions. Laws that affect your patients, your ability to deliver care and your revenue are directly affected by the decisions of your elected legislators. **These lawmakers often don't understand your profession, your business model or the needs of your patients. They are heavily lobbied by the powerful, well-funded PBM and insurance industries, whose campaign contributions get their story heard. It's up to you to make sure legislators hear YOUR STORY.** If you are committed, you can achieve the ability to influence important outcomes. When enough pharmacy owners are committed, **IT CAN DRIVE WIDESPREAD CHANGE.**

All Politics is Local & YOU are a Vital Resource

And as a constituent, you can have a powerful influence on your elected leaders:

- Your vote matters!
- As a business owner, you are an important employer and taxpayer in your community.
- You have expert knowledge and experience in how pharmacy care affects your patients and community. You can educate elected leaders about the vital role that independent pharmacies play in health care.



Your Objectives

- Establish or enhance a relationship with your elected legislators.
- Effectively communicate to them the vital role of independent pharmacy in health care.
- Effectively communicate how challenges affect your ability to deliver quality care to your patients.
- If you already know your legislators, get them to visit your pharmacy.
- Become a trusted source of information and advice on pharmacy and health-care matters .

For Beginners — Taking the First Steps

If you've never met your state representative and senator, then getting acquainted with them is your first task. It's a gradual process — **it takes time to build a personal relationship that can eventually bring you the ability to influence policy and legislation.**

Initial Contact & Arrangement of Meeting

Start by calling your legislator's district office to request a meeting. You can find the number in your local telephone directory or online at your state's House or Senate website. Have more than one date for your requested meeting. Legislators are very busy people, so don't be surprised if your first request isn't available. Their schedules are also subject to frequent and sudden changes, so your meeting could be cancelled or rescheduled. It's generally more challenging to meet during legislative sessions, where they usually won't be able to give you the attention they would back home in a district office. When you do get an appointment, call again closer to the date of the meeting and confirm it.

Preparing for the Meeting

Know the issues you want to discuss and be sure that you are up to speed on them. Communicate a few key points that deliver the essence of your topics and don't cover more than 1-2 issues. **Remember that legislators are rarely pharmacy experts and they don't have the background or time for complicated discussions.**

Prepare some key data — a profile sheet — about your pharmacy. You are a valuable local business, so make sure your legislator knows your role in your community. Your profile sheet should show:

- What cities/counties your pharmacy serves;
- How many patients & scripts your pharmacy handles daily;
- The number of immunizations you typically do per week (if you immunize);
- If you do long-term care, how many nursing homes & other facilities you serve;
- Diabetes education, MTM or any other type of clinical, patient-focused work;
- Your annual sales, number of staff you employ and your annual payroll, plus the total amount you pay in business, corporate income and property taxes.



During the Meeting

Do not be surprised if you get just 15-30 minutes for your initial meeting. And don't be shocked if the legislator isn't available and you end up meeting with staff instead. During the meeting:

- Thank the legislator or staffer for his/her valuable time. Do it again before you leave.
- Be focused & specific and concise with your position/concerns. If you are addressing specific legislation, identify the bill number(s).
- Be non-partisan & positive — Don't attack the opposition. Make the case for your position instead.
- Offer solutions, not complaints — Tell your legislator what action you advocate.
- **It's about the patients** — Whether you are discussing clawbacks, underwater reimbursements or network exclusion, frame it in terms of how it affects access to care or your ability to give that care.
- Make your legislator's job easier — Leave a fact sheet or issue summary. (PUTT or APRx may be able to provide these.)

Things to Avoid

- Don't exaggerate your importance or political connections — **Your credibility may not recover.**
- Don't present a laundry list of issues — It dilutes the impact of your meeting.
- Don't aggressively press for action or commitment.
- Don't moralize or question motivations — Stick to facts and objectives.
- Don't use jargon — Few lawmakers know what "MAC" or "adjudicated" mean.
- **If you donated to the legislator's campaign, don't bring it up.** It creates the offensive impression that you expect something in return. He or she will likely know if you are a donor.

Follow-Up is CRITICAL

Congratulations! Your first meeting with your legislator is a critical first step. Now you have to start the ongoing process of nurturing your relationship. Failure to do this means that all your efforts in contacting and meeting with your legislator will largely be for naught. **LEGISLATORS MEET HUNDREDS OF CONSTITUENTS ONCE. THOSE WHO NEVER FOLLOW UP MAY SOON BE FORGOTTEN.**

Start by sending a prompt thank-you letter that reinforces your name and the main points you made. Include your business card. For more impact, send the thank-you message by email, too. Stay in frequent contact so you are known and valued as a resource on pharmacy issues. Email insightful articles on issues you discussed or send a link to a useful website. **Issue an invitation to visit your pharmacy.**

Ask for a follow-up meeting in a couple of months. Attend a campaign fund-raising event and make a contribution to the legislator. Already done that? Do it again. Invite the legislator to call you if he/she has any questions about prescription drugs, patient care, reimbursement, Medicaid, PBMs or other key issues. **Become a useful resource and you will become an influential contact.**



Don't Overlook the Staff

Stop by the district office once in a while just to say hello. Try to get to know the senior or most influential staffer there — that person's interactions with you and opinion of you can make a real difference. Treat staff with the same respect you would the legislator. Some have significant expertise and influence.

About PUTT

Pharmacists United for Truth and Transparency was founded by independent pharmacists and pharmacy owners devoted to exposing the truth about PBMs. PUTT collects evidence of PBM fraud and abuse to educate patients, lawmakers, plan sponsors and the public about how PBMs grow rich at our expense.

About American Pharmacies

American Pharmacies is a 100% member-owned independent pharmacy group with industry-leading economics and advocacy. Fiercely committed to protecting the business of independent pharmacy, we have passed 16 pro-pharmacy bills in four states and are now taking our passion and talent to the federal arena.

How to Get a Legislator to Visit Your Pharmacy

When your legislator visits your pharmacy, that lawmaker sees firsthand all the important things you do for your patients and your community. A well-planned and -executed visit will leave your legislator with a better understanding of your vital role in health care, your patients and your business. Legislators love photo opportunities, and your pharmacy provides a great backdrop for photos and news coverage that show your legislator cares about seniors, health care and small business.

Issuing the Invitation

Your invitation is best delivered in person to the legislator's district office. Bring your pharmacy profile sheet and directions to your pharmacy. If the invitation is to an event, bring a handout for it. If your invitation is an open one, provide some guidance on best days and time slots (for you) for a visit.

A Plan for a Typical Visit

- Call the legislator's office to get several possible dates of availability. Follow with a formal invitation letter (see sample) that describes your pharmacy, number of patients & employees, and service area (In campaign season, you may need to contact the legislator's campaign office).
- When the date and time are confirmed, set aside at least an hour on that day so you can fully engage.
- 5-7 days before the visit, alert local news media to the event (see sample advisory). Coordinate press coverage with the legislator's office to prevent duplication.
- Make sure your employees are fully aware of your VIP visitor and are professionally dressed. Make sure they have at least basic background info on the legislator.
- Inform patients about the visit. Promotions like free ice cream cones or tacos can boost store traffic on that day.
- **If it's campaign season, have copies of the legislator's campaign brochure in the store.**
- Conduct the tour yourself, but make sure staff are prepared to meet and speak with the legislator. Try to find 10-15 minutes of private time during the visit to build your relationship & discuss issues.
- Have an employee, friend or family member take photos during the visit. Elected officials LOVE photos of them visiting with constituent groups, especially during campaign season.
- Make sure the legislator gets a real-life view of how a prescription is dispensed and allow time for interaction with patients. If there are laws, regulations or PBM practices that create problems for patients or your work, point them out and explain. **Be mindful of HIPAA requirements!**
- When the visit wraps up, thank the legislator for coming and extend a welcome for future visits. Suggest a follow up meeting and offer to provide information on pharmacy-related issues.



APRx Board member Steve Hoffart (L) with U.S. Rep. Kevin Brady in his Magnolia, TX pharmacy.

Scheduling a Visit Around an Event

A tour of your pharmacy and introductions to your patients are great, but some situations provide a brighter spotlight for your legislator and local media. These opportunities can provide valuable news coverage of your pharmacy that improves its visibility and image in your community:

- Ribbon-cutting for a pharmacy opening or expansion;
- Pharmacist Appreciation Week (each October);
- Scholarship presentations;
- In-store health fair, classes, vaccinations or BP screenings;
- Launching of a local civic or health-care initiative;
- Anniversary celebration for your pharmacy;
- National Prescription Drug Take Back Day (each October); or
- **Offer to host an in-store campaign event for the legislator.**



Post-Visit Follow-up

Kudos! You've achieved an in-store visit by a legislator, the holy grail of pharmacy grassroots advocacy. As when you visit the legislator's office, it's important to follow up so you can keep the relationship growing:

- Send a short thank-you email right away (no later than the next day) and attach some photos and links to news coverage of the visit (if any). Be sure to copy any district office staff who accompanied the legislator or helped arrange the visit.
- Within a few days, send a more formal thank-you letter to the legislator's office. Affirm how valuable you, your staff and patients found the visit and relay any noteworthy comments from them. Suggest a follow up meeting and offer to provide any needed information on pharmacy and health-care issues.
- Post photos and a brief account of the visit to your website and social media page. **Be sure to share photos with PUTT & APRx so we can post them to our social media pages as well. We'd love to trumpet your accomplishments!**



Support & Resources

PUTT and APRx stand behind you every step of the way in your efforts to build relationships with your senator and representative. We are experienced with the legislative process and how to approach lawmakers, and are on top of the issues affecting your patients and business. We can coach you through your first meeting with a legislator and give advice and support on setting up in-store visits.

Advocacy Resources

Find Your Federal Representatives congress.gov/members/find-your-member
Look up your U.S. House & Senate members along with their contact information

Locate Your Legislator actioncenter.pharmacist.com
This page on the APhA website allows you to look up both state and federal legislators

Pharmacists United for Truth & Transparency www.truthrx.org



PUTT is a non-profit advocacy organization founded by independent pharmacists and pharmacy owners devoted to exposing the truth about the anti-competitive tactics of PBMs. American Pharmacies is a proud member and partner of PUTT and works closely with the organization on advocacy issues.

Our Independent Voice ourindependentvoice.com

AmerisourceBergen, American Pharmacies' wholesale partner, provides extensive news on federal legislation and background information on advocacy issues, as well as resources and an advocacy toolkit to support grassroots efforts.



**Our
Independent
Voice**

National Community Pharmacists Assn. www.ncpanet.org



NCPA is a major national advocate for community pharmacists on public policy issues that affect their patients and pharmacies. NCPA advocates on issues ranging from PBM abuses to pharmacists' ability to practice at their full scope. All active American Pharmacies members receive a paid membership to NCPA.

American Pharmacists Association actioncenter.pharmacist.com

APhA represents all pharmacy practitioners nationwide and has extensive advocacy resources, especially on scope-of-practice issues. The APhA Action Center offers tools for creating customized communications to your legislators



46 Brooklyn



46brooklyn.com

is an Ohio non-profit that works to improve accessibility and usability of U.S. drug pricing data. 46brooklyn takes the myriad data sources scattered across the web and stitches them together into data visualizations that can be used by pharmacists to better understand the drug supply chain. It's a great tool for comparing Medicaid/Medicare pricing across states.

Drug Channels



drugchannels.net

Some of the best industry analysis and insights available on PBMs, pharmacies, networks and the complexities of drug economics. Adam' Fein's remarks often surprise and occasionally irritate independent owners, but he's reliably factual.

PBM Watch

pbmwatch.com

Having trouble talking to your patients about PBM issues? Send them here — this valuable website is oriented toward consumers, not pharmacists, and provides extensive information on how PBM activities harm patients and raise costs.

PBM WATCH

PBM Accountability Project

pbmaccountability.org



This broad-based coalition representing healthcare, labor, business, pharmacy, and consumer/patient advocacy groups offers policy recommendations for political stakeholders as well as great infographics and collateral you can use to help educate legislators.

SAMPLE PROFILE SHEET

Rx PHARMACY PROFILE

Rx PHARMACY
423 E. Bell St.
Green Mesa, AZ 85123



HISTORY

Established: 1988 by D. Spence Moore, RPh (Retired)
Owner: Taekwon Daley, PharmD

STAFF, PAYROLL & TAXES

Staff & Payroll: 7 employees; \$326,800 annual payroll
Annual Taxes: \$41,000 in franchise & property taxes paid in 2019
\$64,000 in federal corporate income taxes paid in 2019
\$126,000 in sales taxes collected in 2019

PATIENTS & SERVICE AREA

Patient Count: 1,116 (2017, includes nursing home patients)
Service Area: Greenhill, Brownwood, Red Rock & surrounding areas; eastern Woodland County
Medicaid: 34%
Medicare Part D: 47%
Nursing Homes: 4 served under contract

PRESCRIPTION VOLUME & PATIENT SERVICES

Rx Filled Monthly: 11,000
Vaccinations: 26 monthly
Compounding: Hormone Replacement Therapy, veterinary, pain, pediatric
Education: Diabetes education, weight loss & smoking cessation
Clinical Services: Medication therapy management, diabetes management

COMMUNITY SUPPORT & ENGAGEMENT:

Founding Sponsor, Seniors Assistance League
Sponsor & participant, Greenhill Health Fair
Sponsor, Greenhill Rough Riders youth soccer team

Download editable original at:
txrcouncil.org/take-action/get-the-lege-out

SAMPLE THANK-YOU & INVITATION LETTER

Rx PHARMACY
423 E. Bell St.
Green Mesa, AZ 85123

August 19, 2022

The Honorable Bill Philer
1700 W. Washington St., #116
Phoenix, AZ 85007



Dear Sen. Philer:

Thank you very much for taking time in your busy schedule to meet with me recently in your District Office. I greatly appreciate your interest in issues that affect the quality and future of pharmacy health care.

In particular, our discussion of SB1234 was very helpful. I am pleased to know that you are committed to ensuring that Medicaid reimbursement is structured so that community pharmacies can afford to stay in the Medicaid business, and that you will be co-sponsoring this important bill.

I would like to invite you for a personal tour of my pharmacy in Green Mesa. This would provide an opportunity to meet with constituents, many of whom rely on Medicaid or Medicare for their medications, and see first-hand how my pharmacy serves our community. I look forward to following up with Justin Thyme of your staff about the possibility of scheduling a pharmacy visit at your earliest convenience.

Again, thank you for your time and interest. Please let me know if I can be of any assistance, particularly when you are next called upon to consider changes to Arizona Medicaid and how Green Mesa and other communities would be affected.

Sincerely yours,

Taekwon Daley, PharmD
Owner & Pharmacist in Charge
Rx Pharmacy | Green Mesa, AZ

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txrcouncil.org/take-action/get-the-lege-out

SAMPLE MEDIA ADVISORY

MEDIA ADVISORY



Oct. 10, 2022

CONTACT: Taekwon Daley, PharmD
Rx Pharmacy, Green Mesa, AZ (789) 654-3210 | tdaley@greenhillrx.com

EVENT: Pharmacy Visit & Tour by State Sen. Bill Philer
Sen. Philer will visit Rx pharmacy, tour the operation and meet with local patients during our free blood pressure screening event this Saturday.

WHEN: Saturday, Oct. 14, 2022 | 11 a.m. to Noon

WHO: Sen. Philer, who was born and raised in nearby Casa Grande, is chairman of the Health & Human Services Committee, which oversees health-care legislation in the Arizona Senate. He will be accompanied on his visit by his wife, Leticia, and his chief of staff, Helen Hywater.

WHERE: Rx Pharmacy | 423 E. Bell St., Green Mesa, AZ | www.greenhillrx.com

ABOUT RX PHARMACY:

Rx Pharmacy was founded in 1988 by Taekwon Daley's father-in-law, longtime Green Mesa pharmacist D. Spence Moore, who retired in 2013. Rx Pharmacy dispenses more than 300 prescriptions daily, provides compounding services and offers vaccinations for influenza, pneumococcal disease, shingles and a variety of childhood diseases. Rx Pharmacy is a founding sponsor of the Green Mesa Seniors Assistance League and was named Green Mesa's 2019 Business of the Year by the Chamber of Commerce.

Download editable original at:
txrcouncil.org/take-action/get-the-lege-out