

Demystifying the World of Public Health Policy

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Madeleine Solomon, MPH
TTAC
Rollins School of Public Health
Emory University

Daniel Swartzman, JD., MPH
School of Public Health
University of Illinois



How Comfortable Are You? A Taxonomy of Public Policy Change

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The Institute



Public Policy and Public Health

Using the institutions of law and policy making to effect positive change in health status within a community.



The Institutions of Law and Policy Making

- ◆ Courts (federal and state)
- ◆ Government agencies (federal, state and local)
- ◆ Legislatures (Congress, state, county and municipality)
- ◆ Political campaigns
- ◆ Public opinion/Media



Levels of Participation in Public Policy Making

- ◆ Spreading the word - public education
- ◆ Publishing your positions – reports, white papers, “broadsides,” blogs, newsletters
- ◆ Staying in touch - informal contacts with decision makers
- ◆ Shaping opinion - media campaigns
- ◆ Generating support - grass-roots lobbying
- ◆ Direct sales - lobbying
- ◆ Making them listen – litigation
- ◆ Changing the players – elections, appointments

Spreading the Word

- ◆ Targets
 - Staff
 - Partners
 - Community leaders
 - Media
 - General public
- ◆ Vehicles
 - Website(s)
 - Social media
 - Pamphlets
 - Training
 - Community meetings
- ◆ Press relations
 - Informal contacts
 - Press releases
 - Availability for expert comment
 - Feeding stories
 - Being “good copy”
- ◆ Identifying messages
 - Shape policy landscape
 - What people can do
 - Action oriented

Generating Support

- ◆ What is “grass roots lobbying?”
 - Contacting citizens and organizations to encourage them to contact their elected representatives or regulatory agencies to support your opinions on legislation or a regulatory proposal.
- ◆ “Legislation” versus “regulatory proposal” makes a difference.
 - Do tax laws apply?
 - The “substantial part” and the “expenditure” tests.
- ◆ State or local laws or policies may also limit grass roots or direct lobbying.
- ◆ The practical politics of your situation



Generating Support

- ◆ Affirmative effort to get people involved
- ◆ You contact people who contact decision makers
- ◆ Either “topic specific” or “decision specific”
- ◆ Message
 - Why you should act
 - Background you need to know
 - Who you should contact
 - When, how, what to say



Direct Sales

- ◆ Lobbying is sales
 - Have a good product
 - Package it well
 - Motivate the purchaser
- ◆ Regulatory vs. legislative
 - Stylistically different
 - Regulatory
- ◆ Often limited by policy or practical politics
- ◆ Legislative lobbying may be limited by law



Making Them Listen






- ◆ Suing will get “their” attention
- ◆ May have policy limitations
- ◆ Definitely thermonuclear
- ◆ Costly and time-consuming
- ◆ Sometimes you have to have a big stick
- ◆ Sometimes it is the only way to make the right thing happen




Changing the Players


- ◆ Absolute limit for 501(c)(3)'s on partisan campaigning
- ◆ But they can
 - Talk about issues
 - Hold “candidate nights” with all invited
 - Distribute voting records
 - Send policy documents to candidates
 - Other actions: <http://www.npaction.org/>
- ◆ State and local rules may affect this
- ◆ The limits of practical politics




Changing the Players

- ◆ Two opportunities
 - Elections
 - Appointments
- ◆ Obvious limits for elections
 - Policy
 - Law
 - Lack of expertise
 - Costly and time-consuming
- ◆ Elections are the ultimate “big stick”
- ◆ Appointments are powerful tool, greatly overlooked



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