



# ADVOCACY IN ACTION

A Toolkit for Public  
Health Professionals

Fourth Edition

**Acknowledgments**

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**Written by**

Melissa Stoneham  
Abbie-Clare Vidler  
Melinda Edmunds

To obtain further copies of this publication,  
you can contact the following:

**PHAIWA**

GPO Box U1987  
Perth WA 6845  
Website: [www.phaiwa.org.au](http://www.phaiwa.org.au)  
Email: [phaiwa@curtin.edu.au](mailto:phaiwa@curtin.edu.au)

Note the Toolkit may be accessed electronically from:  
[www.phaiwa.org.au](http://www.phaiwa.org.au)

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Depending on your advocacy needs, this Toolkit can be used in a number of ways. Whether it be planning your advocacy work from start to finish, gaining a better understanding how advocacy is used, or learning what to include in a letter to your local politician, the Advocacy in Action Toolkit can help you achieve your advocacy goal.

This toolkit has been developed as a guide, and in no way represents every possible application of advocacy. Rather, it highlights the work that has been done and provides a resource which you can refer to along your advocacy journey.

The Advocacy in Action Toolkit has been broken down in to three parts. These are:

Within **PART 1** we discuss why advocacy is important, and summarise some of the key components. This section provides you with an understanding of how advocacy works and the key components you should consider before jumping in to your advocacy program.

**PART 2** has been broken down into chapters that reflect each stage of the Advocacy Framework. These stages include:

- What is the issue?
- What is the evidence?
- What is the ask?
- Who is the opposition?
- Who are you influencing?
- Who will you work with?
- Which advocacy strategies will you use?
- How will you measure the outcome?

Each chapter within Part 2 provides you with a summary of the key steps in the Advocacy Framework, the importance of each component

when undertaking advocacy and the ways in which these steps can be practically applied.

Finally, **PART 3** provides you with practical tips and tools to guide your advocacy program.

Throughout the Toolkit you will find case studies which exemplify just how advocacy can be used. Key advocacy components within these case studies will be **emphasised** to highlight just how advocacy played a role in this work, and contributed to the author's success.

Additionally, throughout the Toolkit, tips, additional resources and links appear in orange boxes. These will provide further support if needed. Examples relating to the text will also be provided and can be easily identified by their orange outlined box like the example below.

If you would like to share PHAIWA's Advocacy in Action Toolkit, you can find the electronic version at the link below: <https://www.phaiwa.org.au/the-advocacy-toolkit/>

#### EXAMPLE

Twitter can be a particularly useful tool in sharing your advocacy message, as can be seen using the link below  
<https://twitter.com/PHAIWA>



# 1

## Advocacy: an introduction

# Advocacy: an introduction

## Why is this Toolkit important?

Reflect for a moment on your professional and personal interests. What causes, issues or areas of public health need really matter to you? What can you truly say floats your boat? What positive outcomes in public health and the communities you work with do you want to help advance? Are there populations who you feel don't have a voice? What do you want to advocate for? What knowledge and expertise do you need to be effective in your advocacy?

These are all valid questions to ask yourself when contemplating how advocacy can value add to your work. We hope that by working through this Toolkit you will find the answers to these questions, and that you are brave enough to have a go at developing, or getting involved with advocacy to advance public health. It can be a hard slog, but it is almost always rewarding and a lot of fun.

This Toolkit is a concise guide to public health advocacy and the ways in which it can be practically applied using a number of strategies in a variety of settings. By exploring practical advocacy examples and templates, this Toolkit provides the guidance needed to get started as an advocate, or to enhance your existing advocacy efforts. Even the most experienced advocate will be able to refine their skills and increase their influence by incorporating the advice in this Toolkit. Whether you are in an organisation with a dedicated advocacy team, juggling multiple advocacy responsibilities in your role, or a member of the community seeking to create change, this Toolkit will provide you with the resources and knowledge to engage in effective advocacy.

Parts 1 and 2 of this Toolkit discuss much of the theory behind advocacy, in quite natural ways. These sections contain lots of hints, case studies and suggestions.

Advocacy tips and tools are presented in Part 3 of the Toolkit. The tools are displayed as templates to enable tailoring. The advocacy tool templates address the following techniques:

- letters to politicians
- meeting with a politician

- media releases
- letter to the editor
- media interviews: radio and television
- blogs
- and a guide to Twitter.

## What is advocacy?



Figure 1. Advocacy, let the fun begin!<sup>1</sup>

John Daly described advocacy as “*persuading people who matter to care about your issue. It’s about getting listened to, being at the table when decisions are made, being heard by people who make decisions. It’s about facing and overcoming resistance. It is about speaking and writing in compelling ways that make decision makers want to adopt your ideas.*”<sup>2</sup>

The word ‘advocate’ has been in use since ancient times and comes from the Latin word ‘advocare’ meaning ‘to be called to stand beside’.<sup>4</sup> To advocate for another person is to speak up for them, to give them a voice.<sup>3</sup> Advocacy is the active support of a cause. Today, public health advocacy encompasses a number of strategies, including communication, negotiation, argumentation, consensus and debate to advance public policies, initiatives and services in the pursuit of improved health and wellbeing. Onyx<sup>4</sup> and colleagues agree, describing advocacy as the process of undertaking certain actions with the explicit goal of influencing policy. By bringing attention to issues and persuading those in power to make changes, while also establishing partnerships and working against the opposition that emerges, it is possible to advocate and affect change.

*"[Advocacy is the] deliberate attempt to influence decision makers and other stakeholders to support or implement policies that contribute to improving health equity using evidence."*

Linden Farrer, Claudia Marinetti, Yoline Kuipers Cavaco, and Caroline Costongs<sup>5</sup>

Although advocacy can take on many forms, always at its core is the aim to influence policy to better the lives of individuals and communities. By clearly defining the issue it is possible for advocates to develop partnerships and strategies which inform, create and influence legislation, and develop an environment where optimal health and wellbeing is possible. To achieve these outcomes, strategies including media, grassroots efforts and partnerships can help in building support for your advocacy goal. This Toolkit will discuss all of these strategies, providing case studies to demonstrate how advocacy works in the real world.

It is important to note that there is not one consistent approach to advocacy – the strategies you use and the partners you select will depend on your advocacy issue and goal. As advocacy means different things to different people, it is important to discuss some of the ways advocacy can be described to clear up any ambiguity.

- Advocacy involves actions that lead to a selected goal or policy.
- Advocacy is one of many possible strategies, or ways to address an issue.
- Advocacy can be used as part of a holistic initiative, nested in with other components.
- Advocacy is not a direct service.
- Advocacy does not necessarily involve confrontation or conflict.
- Advocacy may involve working against established or entrenched values, structures and customs, and therefore may need to be independent of service providers and authorities.
- The effects of advocacy can be immense and far reaching. It allows people to have a voice and be heard on issues that affect them and the people around them.

Advocacy has no prescribed or clearly determined method. What constitutes advocacy will differ in different circumstances and according to the skills and needs of the individual or group. In this Toolkit, we propose a framework to guide your advocacy goals (see Part 2: Planning your Advocacy Journey).

A classic example of advocacy is in the area of tobacco control. In Australia, many advocates worked hard to minimise the harms of smoking through a myriad of strategies including new taxes and regulations such as smoke free cars and new campaigns to target those most vulnerable. They faced opposition from the tobacco industry and government. Yet their efforts resulted in millions of lives and tax-payer dollars being saved, all because a group of dedicated health professionals were brave and passionate enough to speak up against the opposition and convince policy makers that their solutions were in the community's best interests.



Figure 2. Australian tobacco plain packaging.<sup>6</sup>

*"Advocates are unabashed tellers of truth to power (who) operate outside of conventional, political (or other) establishments ... They may often be irritating and difficult, but they churn up our collective conscience and annoy us in to action."*

Michael Pertschuk<sup>7</sup>

Professor Simon Chapman, who is one of Australia's best known public health advocates, describes advocacy as seeking to change upstream factors like laws, regulations, policies and institutional practices, prices, and product standards that influence the personal health choices of often millions of individuals, and the environments in which these are made.<sup>9</sup> He states that advocacy shares strategies with public relations, but differs in that it invariably involves contested definitions of what is at issue.<sup>8</sup> Advocates therefore often find themselves engaged in public conflict with sometimes powerful interest groups or governments determined to resist change.<sup>8</sup>

A prime example of advocates taking on such powers is the Gurkha Justice Campaign, which won the right for Gurkha veterans, who had fought

for the British in the Falklands war, the right to settle in Britain. The campaign driven by a peculiar assortment of advocates including a road haulage boss, the well-known actress Joanna Lumley, and three persistent Irish lawyers had a particularly apt saying “Some people say that a small group of committed people can change the world. In reality that’s all that ever does.”<sup>9</sup>

Advocacy is many things, but it is important to remember that advocacy is not a direct service. For example, you join a group that helps build houses for the poor – that’s wonderful, but it’s not advocacy (it’s a service). You organise and agitate to get a proportion of apartments in a new development designated as low to moderate income housing—that’s advocacy.



Figure 3. Western Australian Parliament.<sup>10</sup>

## What is policy?

As the goal of any advocacy program is to influence policy, whether it be new laws, Codes, additional funding or major organisational changes, it is important to understand what policy actually is.

Policy can be a solution, an opportunity, a chance to problem-solve, make change, or create a framework.

Policy is a planned course of action, which links problems to solutions; and advocacy is all about generating solutions. The aim of policy is to provide a guide which informs people of how something should be carried out, and the expected result. Policy can be used by government, industry, communities and individuals.<sup>11</sup> Although we may not notice it, policy affects most aspects of our lives, as it often

guides the actions we take.<sup>11</sup> When you drink water out of the tap in Australia, you may not realise, but what you are drinking is a result of policy. How the water is transported, the treatment it has undergone and the cost per litre, are all factors which are affected by policy.

There are a number of factors which influence the development of policy. Some include:

- Who currently has the power and influence (government and lobbyists).<sup>11</sup>
- Timing.<sup>11</sup>
- The resources available.<sup>11</sup>
- The current social climate, and public opinion regarding the issue.<sup>11</sup>

Policy is not one thing, rather it can take many forms.<sup>11</sup> Official statements or documents, spending patterns, the government budget, activities embedded in corporate structure, or how campaigns are implemented are all a result of policy taking shape.<sup>11</sup> These can all be influenced through good advocacy efforts.<sup>11</sup>

Policy change through advocacy is required for a number of reasons, though the most common are:

- Because basic needs are not being met.<sup>11</sup>
- People are not being treated fairly.<sup>11</sup>
- The policies or laws currently in place are not being enforced, or are not being effective.<sup>11</sup>
- The policies are outdated and not reflective of contemporary public health risks.<sup>11</sup>
- An existing or emerging condition poses a threat to public health, safety, education or the wellbeing of the community or population as a whole.<sup>11</sup>

A great example of health policy is the WA Governments 2019 Sustainable Health Review (see Figure 4), which reorients public health services to be patient-focused, high-quality and economically sustainable. You can read more about this policy document at the link below: <https://ww2.health.wa.gov.au/Improving-WA-Health/Sustainable-health-review>

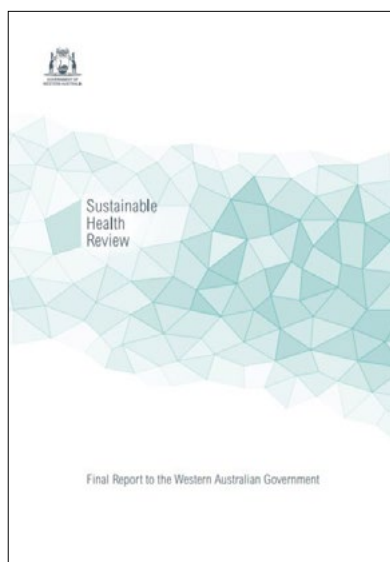


## Why and when should you choose advocacy?

Advocacy can be complex. Knowing when exactly to employ policy change through advocacy can be tricky to determine, so it is important to be clear on when advocacy may be the most appropriate strategy.

Advocacy is best used when you want to:

- Promote public health objectives.
- Overcome barriers that restrict public health opportunities.
- Promote the importance and relevance of prevention, including increases in funding.
- Create a coalition of like-minded partners to progress a public health issue.
- Protect human rights.
- Ensure a better quality of life.
- Be responsive to needs, but be balanced with providing innovative proactive strategies.
- Be oriented towards outcomes for public health.
- Aim for empowerment of disadvantaged individuals and groups.
- Challenge stereotypes and stigma.



**Figure 4.** The Western Australian Government's 2019 Sustainable Health Review Policy Document.<sup>12</sup>

Some caution should be applied before launching yourselves (or your group) as advocates, because it is more effective if there is not too much of it around. Imagine a city where there were public demonstrations every day, where Parliament House

was besieged constantly by groups with special petitions, resolutions and assorted agitations. The community would quickly develop advocacy fatigue, as would the advocates. Advocacy is a great tool but you have to carefully consider when it can achieve the best results.

## What are the benefits of public health advocacy?

Advocacy can bring about positive results when used to achieve the following:

- Produce positive changes to legislation, policies, practices, service delivery and developments, community behaviour and attitudes.
- Promote wellness and resilience in communities in conjunction with healthy behaviour.
- Raise awareness of the significant impact on population health and wellbeing of broader social and environmental factors (such as housing, education, employment, cultural identity, transport, etc.) enabling public health advocacy to facilitate systematic change in these areas.
- Empower public health professionals to become more actively involved in decision-making and broader health policy and initiatives.



**Figure 5.** The launch of the 10th Indigenous Storybook. (Left to right) Narrelle Parker, Thomas Dimer, Nicole Bowser, Joey Williams, Melissa Stoneham, Brianna Williams, Dellas Bennell, Korrine Bennell and Lera Bennell.

## Advocacy challenges and myths

In this section of the toolkit we will dispel some of the common preconceptions about advocacy, and highlight just how some of the challenges involved in advocacy are actually strengths that will help get you over the line.

### Challenges

#### The Three Ps – Passion, persistence and patience

*“You might win some, you might lose some. But you go in, you challenge yourself, you become a better man, a better individual, a better fighter.”*

Conor McGregor<sup>13</sup>

Advocacy is challenging! You will not always achieve your advocacy goals in the timeframe you expect. Sometimes, it may take a decade or two to see policy change. Other times, you will have to swallow your pride and accept defeat only to start advocating again on the same issues at a later time. Other times you may be required to work with partners whose philosophy differs from yours. Often you will work with people whose perceptions or misperceptions about what advocacy can achieve are misguided.

Advocates need to be **passionate, persistent and patient**. As an advocate, you need to commit to your issue for the long haul. Understanding some of the more common challenges is part of this process but do not be deterred by these challenges – instead try to embrace them! Advocacy challenges that await you may include:

- Achieving great things with small budgets.
- Not leaving room for complacency.
- Staying the course – advocates need to be vigilant and in it for the long haul.
- Waiting for the right opportunity to act.
- Waiting for and being able to measure an advocacy outcome.
- Achieving consensus among stakeholders.
- Creating and maintaining a high profile.
- Avoiding exhaustion.
- Maintaining strong partnerships.
- Staying politically neutral and being truly bipartisan.
- Working with the ever changing political environment including changes of governments.
- Working with people and organisations that see advocacy as a conflict of interest.
- Understanding the role of the media and your relationship with the media.
- Knowing when to stop advocating.

With each of these challenges, it is important to remember that they can be managed. And remember that these difficulties, though sometimes confronting and tiring, lead to exceptionally rewarding outcomes. Your hard work and persistence should all pay off in the end!

If you would like to read a short editorial that discusses some of these advocacy challenges, you can click on this link <https://doi.org/10.1111/1753-6405.12880> and read “Enable, mediate...but don’t advocate” by Melissa Stoneham and Julia Symons.

### Advocacy myths

*“To become advocates, I think people need a sort of levelheadedness around how long it takes for things to change, how much resistance there can be and what it feels like to repeatedly fail. And that, in fact, you may not see the change you’re seeking in your lifetime, but that your contribution nonetheless matters. That you are picking up the baton from someone before you and, ideally, you have a good enough baton to pass on to someone else.”*

Joumanah El Matrah, CEO Australian Muslim Women’s Centre for Human Rights<sup>14</sup>

It is important to remember that your contribution does, in fact, matter. Some of the barriers faced when engaging in advocacy may not actually be barriers at all. Sometimes these barriers can actually be opportunities. Ten of the most common myths associated with advocacy in an attempt to break down any misconceptions are discussed here.

### 1. It is all about politics

Busted! While it is true utilising politics plays a big role in advocacy, it is not all there is to it. Advocacy can take many forms, and involve a whole range of people. Even though the overall aim of advocacy should be policy change, and it is important to understand the political system in which you are working, the community you build around your advocacy effort is equally important. Your community can be partners, members of the public, the media or bureaucrats. So remember, political efforts may only be a minor strategy in a larger plan.



**Figure 6.** Forging relationships with politicians is important. This photo shows the 2019 Women in Health Parliamentary lunch. (Left to right, top to bottom) Dr Katherine Noonan, Melissa Ledger, Julia Stafford, Stephanie Enkel, Gemma Crawford, Jodie Holbrook, Melinda Edmunds, The Hon. Roger Cook, Dr Melissa Stoneham, Deborah Costello, Associate Professor Fiona Farrington, Dr Abbey Potter.

### 2. We don't have a big budget!

Busted! Many advocacy strategies are effective with limited funding and are a great option for public health organisations with tight operating budgets. Although it is important to spend some time considering and planning how to secure different resources that may influence the success of your advocacy strategy, it is also important to remember that it is not always financial resources that are required. Intangibles such as knowledge, time, partners and even reputation and credibility are all valued resources that money can't buy.

### CASE STUDY

#### What a community can achieve without a big budget



**Figure 7.** Community action taken in Guildford to protest the development of a new McDonald's.<sup>15</sup>

"Guildford is all about tourism, not a McDonald's." Andrew Kiely, Guildford Association spokesperson stated the above following McDonalds announced application to build a new store behind the historic Guildford Hotel.<sup>16</sup> With the planned development set to be just 100 metres from the local Primary School, and the potential to tarnish the sheen of Guildford's heritage precinct, outrage quickly spread through the community following the announcement.<sup>16</sup>

Concerned locals **took action** by establishing the "Say No to McDonald's" group, which was associated with a vocal **Facebook page** keeping residents up to date with news, and various ways to **get involved**. Concerned **health groups and politicians** also lent their support to the issue, warning that a fast food outlet could do little good for the community.<sup>17</sup>







The efforts of the Guildford community led to residents **gathering to protest** the development, **attracting media attention** and furthering **community support**, with the local Member of Parliament showing up to give her voice to the issue.<sup>18</sup> The group was also able to garner more than **7,000 signatures on a petition** opposing the development.<sup>19</sup>

Ultimately their efforts paid off, and Guildford said no to McDonald's. Despite plans to fight the decision the junk-food chain finally backed down from the fight, leaving residents overjoyed.<sup>20</sup>

The efforts of the Guildford residents show that even **without a budget, utilising community support, media and partnership** with other concerned groups, you can still get a win over the big guys!

### 3. Advocacy is a specialised area

Busted! This Toolkit is designed to provide you with the basic skills and tools to get started in advocacy. The fact is that not all public health organisations have access to a dedicated advocate, communications manager or health promotion specialist. However, that does not preclude you from engaging in effective advocacy. The tools in this resource give you a starting point. Ongoing support is available from organisations such as the Public Health Advocacy Institute of WA (PHAIWA), who offer regular professional development opportunities, skills based workshops and an e-advocacy mentoring program.

For more information on the professional development PHAIWA has available, visit our website at [www.phaiwa.org.au](http://www.phaiwa.org.au).

### 4. Advocacy is all about asking for money

Busted! Although money can be (very) helpful, advocacy is a solutions focused approach. Those solutions should be durable enough to not rely on funding. By attaining policy change, or ensuring the ideals of what you are trying to achieve are firmly engrained in your community and partnerships, you will ensure lasting change.

### 5. I am just one person, no one is going to listen to me

Busted! Many public health issues are almost overwhelmingly complex and you may feel that as an individual, you are too small to have a significant impact on them. But advocacy has to start somewhere. It is important to have a detailed understanding of the issue being addressed and make advocacy decisions based on this, as your knowledge can make a difference.<sup>21</sup> The old "think global, act local" adage may be helpful in gaining perspective about how much of the problem you can realistically tackle and where to start. Setting goals and objectives (which are realistic and broadly achievable) and having at least an informal plan outlining action, may overcome the scale of an issue.



Figure 8. Michael Moore AM.<sup>22</sup>

A great example is Michael Moore AM (pictured), former CEO of the Public Health Association of Australia; Former President of the World Federation of Public Health Associations; previous independent member of the ACT Legislative Assembly; and devoted public health advocate has worked tirelessly to improve health,

working across issues such as drug law reforms and the Australian Health Star Rating system.

If you would like to learn more about how one person can make a difference, read the case study by Samantha Menezes regarding her work in getting Secondary Supply laws introduced in WA, or the piece by Dr Melissa Stoneham detailing the continued efforts of advocacy rock star Emeritus Professor Mike Daube AO.

### 6. Advocacy is hard

Busted! Advocacy can be hard, yes, however the difficulty you face will be easily surpassed by all that you gain when you finally achieve success. If you consider the advocacy efforts that were undertaken to introduce gay marriage in a number of countries around the world, you will see it was a long, hard process which commenced in the 1970s and even earlier in a number of countries.<sup>23</sup> Although there is still a long way to go to gain global marriage equality,

and it remains a difficult journey, plenty of the hard work has been done, and the result is benefiting the health and wellbeing of people in many countries. Definitely worth all of the hard work!

### **7. Advocacy is not my job. I don't have time to do advocacy**

Busted! Advocacy is definitely your job! And it doesn't need to take a lot of time. If you are passionate about an issue or a group of people, it doesn't take long to write a Letter to the Editor, create a poll or send out a tweet. Remember too, advocacy is not something you do alone. You will likely be able to find partners who can help you share the load. Finally, be prepared to keep at it for a period of time, even if you get some knock-backs – change doesn't happen overnight! A good quote to remember is that of Margaret Mead who said *"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."*<sup>24</sup>

### **8. I can't do advocacy at work. It puts my job on the line**

Busted! There is no doubt that sometimes it can be difficult to undertake advocacy, especially if you work in an environment that may not be used to this way of working, or that might perceive advocacy to be a conflict of interest. In other cases, if you are aiming to change a policy within your organisation, it is more than likely that you will be confronted with some opposition. Some advocates also have issues when they want to outline a position that may be at odds with funders. Although it can be daunting, there are a number of strategies you can use to participate in advocacy without jeopardising your job. In the section on Internal Advocacy you will pick up some strategies and tools to help you manage these situations.

### **9. Advocacy is just about using the media**

Busted! It is a common misconception that advocacy is simply the use of the media to convince the public and politicians that policy change is needed. In reality, using the media is a useful advocacy strategy, but it needs to be used in conjunction with a number of other advocacy strategies. Using media, whether it be print or social media, can boost the reach of your message and get your issues on the agendas of people who may not have been exposed to it. However if you just rely simply on media, you may not have the momentum needed to push your advocacy goal over the line – because we all know that increasing awareness in isolation is not enough to change behaviour or policy.

To read an interesting article on how media assisted with the incredibly important policy decision to have plain packaged cigarettes, read Simon Chapman and colleagues' piece *'Reaching "An Audience That You Would Never Dream of Speaking To": Influential Public Health Researchers' Views on the Role of News Media in Influencing Policy and Public Understanding'* at <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/10810730.2013.811327>

### **10. Advocacy is not evidence based**

Busted! A common gripe against advocacy is the perception that it is somehow not based on evidence, or perhaps that it is not objective.<sup>25</sup> It is a given that for any advocacy campaign program to be successful, it needs to be evidence based. In advocacy we need to be bold, but always evidence based.<sup>25</sup> Evidence need not be boring either – using "killer facts" that really stick in people's minds is a great way to create a conversation.<sup>26</sup> When trying to persuade people about your issue or combat opposition, evidence is needed to support your argument.<sup>25</sup> As we will show in the upcoming section titled 'What is the evidence?', without a strong theoretical framework it becomes difficult for advocacy to progress.<sup>25</sup>

Objectivity is also crucial to advocacy. Without clearly defined goals and the ability to evaluate our progress, it is difficult to know if our advocacy is having an effect. By knowing how to clearly identify what the advocacy ask for the policy outcome is, and how you will measure the outcome, you can be reassured that you are on track to reaching the intended goals and your advocacy strategies are grounded in evidence.<sup>27</sup>



**Figure 9.** Advocacy-related articles authored by members of the PHAIWA team to help build evidence which can inform further advocacy efforts.<sup>28-30</sup>

The following extract from the text *Change!* was written by Prof Simon Chapman.<sup>27</sup> He is talking about the plain packaging advocacy movement within Australia. We have included it because it is a great precis of a lot of the strategies, tools and ideas contained within this Advocacy in Action Toolkit.

*Policy adoption is not simply a matter of presenting the best facts and evidence to policy makers and sitting back to watch evidence triumph over other considerations. With rare exceptions, policy entrepreneurs and advocates need to engage in serious, extended and highly strategic efforts to ensure that evidence is communicated in ways that make it publicly and politically compelling, so that inaction is not an option.*

*Policy solutions need to be framed in ways that make their rejection problematic. 'Killer facts' (Bowen et al. 2009) need to be mined from eye-glazing data; memorable sound bites (averaging 7.2 seconds) (Chapman et al. 2009) constructed and rehearsed; analogies forged with other*

*issues known to have widespread support; and instinctive understanding developed of the importance of subtext and values referencing in effective communication (Chapman 2007).*

To read more about the journey to plain packaging, you can read Simon Chapman's chapter 'Media Advocacy for Public Health' in the book *Change! Combining Analytic Approaches with Street Wisdom* at <http://press-files.anu.edu.au/downloads/press/p319221/pdf/ch072.pdf>

## So you want to be an advocate?

You are still reading the Toolkit. That is fantastic news! It means you must be keen to be an advocate, so here are some attributes that will help:

As an advocate you are effectively going in to bat for an issue on behalf of a group of people. You may be required to speak in front of an agency or Parliamentary Enquiry, make phone calls on others' behalf, write letters, media statements or blogs, campaign or lobby ... the list goes on. To be an effective public health advocate, the following skills will be helpful.

### A good communicator

Advocates are effective communicators. They are often called on to present a case in front of a panel or organisation on behalf of a group of people or an issue. Advocates must be able to speak clearly and forcefully, while maintaining a friendly, positive and approachable demeanour. Your key messages must be short, sharp, memorable and repeatable.

### Knowledgeable

Advocates need to understand the evidence that supports their advocacy ask or issue. They take time to research the history of the cause and what others have done in the past – what has worked and what has not. Qualities like patience and being organised allow advocates to present a clear and precise argument without wasting time and effort.

### A good networker

Advocacy rarely works without partners or a coalition. Power is achieved when many stand together and 'sing from the same hymn sheet.' Advocates need to be committed to providing information, ideas, advice and evidence to stakeholder groups to build support for your advocacy ask or proposed policy change. Recognising the importance of building networks and alliances, and valuing their input and experiences is essential.

### Tenacious

When advocating, it is inevitable that you will be subject to some negativity. Being tenacious enough to cope with the negative responses is important. Receiving negative feedback and sometimes even personal criticism can be common. This doesn't mean you will never accomplish your goals, but it does mean you will need to recover from a negative response to continue to advocate for your issues.



**Figure 10.** Professionals trying to develop consensus based advocacy targets at PHAIWA's Obesity Advocacy Targets Forum 2019.

One of the anecdotes advocates use is the scream test – which means that if you take action, suggest an idea or take away a service, and the opposition complains loudly and lobbies all the politicians it can find, then you know that you are winning. An example of this is all the public health advocates championing a sugar tax.

### Clever with words, facts and anecdotes

In advocacy, key messages are paramount. There are many ways to deliver your key messages. A well-told story is an extremely compelling way to convey your message, and it generally lingers longer in the mind of the listener when compared to a fact. Powerful stories may not create resonance—but they can compel action.

Words are important in advocacy – select them carefully and craft them to be memorable. For example, one medical doctor when arguing for healthy sponsors, asked 'Would you have Heineken sponsor your liver donor units?'

Data are in the eye of the beholder. Some people may even say that data can be dull. Data is a cluster of information that can communicate a concept and be very powerful in advocacy if perfectly arranged. But on





**Figure 11.** Participants engaging in discussion at PHAIWA's Obesity Advocacy Targets Forum 2019.

its own, data does not have a voice. It is just points of information that are rarely memorable. Yet it can be made interesting and engaging.

Here are some hints:

- Never use too much data and instead of percentages like 29.8%, instead say 'almost a third'. People are more likely to remember that fact.
- Try to think about one aspect of the data that touches the real-world experience of your readers. This will create relevance.
- Data writing is typically dense and often appeals only to people with a background in the field written about. In advocacy key messages are important, so explain your data in short and concise sentences.
- Infographics are a great way to attract readers and get your message across. They are friendly, eye catching and can tell a story.

### **Be passionate and persistent**

Working in public health advocacy can be positively challenging! So often the solutions need to be the responsibility of many people and outcomes are not always immediately visible. It is important to have the passion and persistence to overcome entrenched attitudes that may exist toward public health and community problems, and the potential public or industry resistance to change.

Passion lends energy to your movement. It can help sway undecided people to your viewpoint, and help place a focus on your advocacy goals.

Persistence keeps your issues in the public eye, helps you follow through on commitments and keeps your opponents struggling to keep up with your level of dedication.

### **CASE STUDY**

#### **But, be patient too**



**Figure 12.** The WA Health Act's 100th Birthday cake. Image courtesy of our partners at Nirrumbuk Aboriginal Corporation, Broome.

Advocacy can be a long journey. That is why it is important to **recognise the achievements and milestones** which have been achieved along the way. However, sometimes no matter how hard you work things still take a while. So it's vital to recognise this and **use it to your advantage**. Let's take an example. The year 2011 marked the 100th anniversary of the 1911 Western Australian Health Act, which presented a prime opportunity to **draw attention to the need for a long overdue update**. To do this, a group of passionate public health advocates decided to throw a 100th birthday celebration simultaneously in Perth and Broome, to celebrate the antique legislation's birthday. This was primarily a **media stunt**. Over 130 guests were invited (including the Queen who read out the 100th birthday notice), something which **grabbed the attention of the media and the government**, and helped put the issue of needing contemporary legislation **back on the agenda**. Other attention grabbers included attendees dressing in fashion dated the same era as the original Act (1911), 100th birthday cake, and a number of **high profile speakers**.





These events resulted in the Health Minister at the time making a **commitment to reforming the policy**, together with **plenty of media and a raised profile for PHAIWA** who helped organise the event. Eventually, in 2016, Western Australia finally endorsed a new Public Health Act. This example illustrates how important it is, despite the frustration you might be feeling, to **be patient and passionate – while having fun along the way**.



**Figure 13.** Assorted pictures from the WA Health Act's 100th Birthday.

## Planning your Advocacy Journey

Often the advocacy you do will be part of a larger coordinated plan for addressing the issue at hand, with strategies and stakeholders in place. Within this however, it is necessary to make sure that as things change your advocacy can change with it, that you can be reactionary and seize opportunities to achieve your ultimate policy goals. In these proactive cases you can harness the partnerships and strategies you have in place to argue your case as the issue evolves within your larger plan.

### What is your advocacy plan?

*"A journey of a thousand miles starts with the first step."*  
Lao Tzu<sup>31</sup>

At the beginning of every advocacy journey, an important step is the creation of a plan for how you will achieve your proposed policy change. Not only does this provide you with a guide on how you will make change, it also gives you a way to measure progress. An advocacy framework has been developed by PHAIWA as a guide to support the development of local public health advocacy programs or campaigns, and we will discuss this in greater detail in the following section. Before we talk about each of the Framework components, here are a couple of hints to remember as you plan your advocacy journey. These general principles include:

- Plan for short term gains as well as more strategic, longer term advocacy goals.
- Don't forget to try and make your advocacy measurable.
- Accentuate the positive side of advocacy.
- Be mindful about the timing.
- Look for windows of opportunity and take advantage of them.

### Plan and promote small wins, and long-term gains

As you plan your advocacy ask, remember that we all like to see results, no matter how small. Sometimes, significant progress on a particular issue is slow. Think how long it took to ban solariums, or to get tobacco control introduced in Australia! These policy changes took between 10 and 40 years of hard work, and clearly show why we need to keep ourselves and our partners motivated.

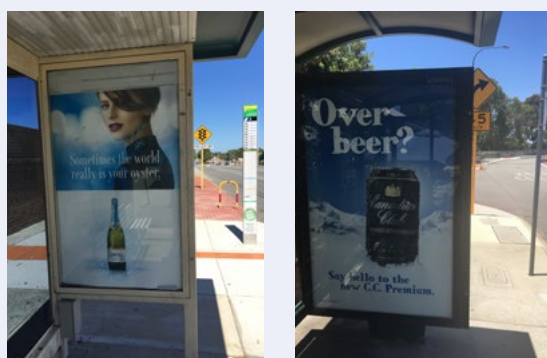
Don't wait for the major breakthroughs to celebrate. Plan for and try to achieve some short-term, visible outputs so you can celebrate small wins. A good way of integrating success as a critical component of your advocacy is to create room for the following:

- Create debate on your issue.
- Deliver the key messages to as many people, organisations and media outlets as possible.
- Provide potential to the advocacy issue.
- Showcase the evidence and what has worked in other jurisdictions or countries.
- Use a variety of advocacy strategies, some of which will grab the attention of the media and politicians.

#### CASE STUDY

### End of the line for alcohol ads on public transport

Written by Hannah Pierce, Alcohol Programs Team (PHAIWA)



**Figure 14.** Photos of alcohol ads near WA schools, taken as part of PHAIWA's research in to unhealthy bus stop advertising.<sup>28</sup>

Vodka ads outside primary schools and beer promotions on school buses. It may seem unbelievable, but these are real examples of alcohol marketing in Australia.

Australian children are regularly exposed to alcohol marketing through a wide range of media. **Evidence shows** exposure to alcohol marketing impacts on the drinking attitudes and behaviours of young people.



Leading **health organisations recommend legislated restrictions** on alcohol marketing as an essential part of the comprehensive approach needed to reduce alcohol-related harm. Unfortunately, Australia continues to rely on the alcohol and advertising industries to regulate their own marketing.

There are many **health and community groups advocating** for stronger restrictions on alcohol marketing in Australia. In 2012, the Alcohol Programs Team at the Public Health Advocacy Institute of WA and Cancer Council Western Australia developed the Alcohol Advertising Review Board (AARB), a **world-first advocacy initiative** that reviews complaints from the Australian community about alcohol advertising. The AARB uses **media and other advocacy strategies** to highlight the limitations of self-regulation and **emphasise the need for legislated controls on alcohol advertising**.

The Australian Government has overarching responsibility for advertising regulation, and **health groups, researchers, and advocates have called for action for many years**. However, there has been little movement to strengthen regulation, so the AARB team looked for other opportunities for action.

State, territory, and local governments control some aspects of alcohol advertising regulation, including placement of advertising on public transport-related sites. After noticing that a substantial number of complaints to the AARB related to alcohol ads placed on public transport, the AARB team **released a report in March 2016 outlining the case for removing alcohol ads from public transport-related sites and why action was needed now**.

The report was **sent to all state and territory governments and local government associations in Australia**, calling on them to remove alcohol advertising from public transport and transit stops.







The **call to action** was also **included in other advocacy activities**, including in **submissions to state and territory liquor act reviews** and in **state election platforms**. All of these activities allowed the AARB team to **attract regular media coverage** and frequently **engage with decision makers on the issue**.

In mid-2016, the South Australian Government announced that following an independent review of their liquor act, they would remove alcohol advertising from buses, trains and trams from mid-2017. Unfortunately, while there were some people within government championing the change, strong opposition from industry meant the policy was amended to only cover price point advertising.

The **AARB team communicated with the Western Australian Government on this issue** for some time, and in 2017 the WA Labor Party announced a pre-election commitment to take action. **Following further communication to encourage progress**, the WA Government announced in June 2018 that they would remove alcohol advertising from buses, trains, and train stations.



**These were exciting wins, and it was important to celebrate them!** Celebrating allowed us to **acknowledge the efforts of governments** that took action, and to **encourage other jurisdictions to follow suit**. The small wins also provide **motivation to continue advocating** for further restrictions on alcohol marketing.

If you would like to read more about the Alcohol Advertising Review Board you can visit the programs website at <https://www.alcoholadreview.com.au/> or you can read an article about the initiative by Pierce, Stafford and Daube (2017) titled "Developing an alternative alcohol advertising complaint review system: Lessons from a world-first public health advocacy initiative" found at the following link <http://www.phrp.com.au/issues/july-2017-volume-27-issue-3/developing-an-alternative-alcohol-advertising-complaint-review-system-lessons-from-a-world-first-public-health-advocacy-initiative/>.



**Figure 15.** Labour's announcement to remove alcohol ads on public transport.<sup>32</sup>



PHAIWA has also conducted research in to the number of unhealthy bus stop advertisements located near schools, to find out more you can read the article by Parnell, Edmunds, Pierce and Stoneham (2018) titled 'The volume and type of unhealthy bus shelter advertising around school in Perth, Western Australia: Results from an explorative study' found at the following link <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/hpja>.

## Accentuate the positive!

Keep your eyes open for positive events that happen in and around your advocacy issue. When you notice something great happening, even if it's something small, recognise it publicly.

If another organisation is fighting the same fight, thank them for their efforts. Pay them public compliments. Tweet or retweet their contributions. This will help motivate people to contribute in the future, knowing that you appreciate their contributions!

Being conscientious about thanking people will also help set you apart from other groups that only complain.

### CASE STUDY

## Children's Environment & Health Local Government Policy Awards



Figure 16. PHAIWA's Policy Awards Showcases.

PHAIWA's Children's Environment & Health Local Government Policy Awards are a great example of **publicly recognising the great work people are doing**. The project which has been running since 2011, allows local governments in Western Australia to submit **work they have done in their communities to improve policy which affects the health and wellbeing of children**.

This project **helps put health policy on the agenda for local governments, and ensure that children's health is a priority**.



The Awards cover 11 categories, each of which address **health priority areas**, and can highlight the work from a variety of local government departments. Once submissions have been conducted, a showcase is held to **present awards** to local governments who have come out on top in each category. As at the heart of advocacy is the need to **change policy**, this program helps **motivate local governments to make changes to policy and improve long term health outcomes** in their communities.



Figure 17. 2019 Overall Metropolitan Winner City of Swan (top), and 2019 Overall Regional Winner City of Busselton (above).

To find out more follow the link below:  
<https://www.phaiwa.org.au/local-government-report-card-project/>

## Timing is key

Timing is everything when it comes to advocacy, particularly proactive advocacy. Making sure you are up to speed with the media surrounding your issue, or the latest peer-reviewed evidence, or media surrounding your issue is important. That is why PHAIWA's daily MediaWatch service should reach you no later than 11am each weekday morning, allowing you to be aware and react, if necessary, to any press relating to your advocacy issue. Likewise, our weekly E-News provides a summary of upcoming events, conferences, campaigns, news and media relevant to the public health advocacy field. These services are free and can be accessed by subscribing on the Mediawatch or E-News page on PHAIWA's website, found under the services tab.

Some tips to remember about timing are:

- Plan well so your advocacy goal or strategies are ready to be implemented should opportunities arise that will promote or showcase your issue. This means being prepared with evidence to support your policy ask, and ensuring your key message is ready to go.
- Engage in lobbying well before elections. Political parties must be aware of your issue and solutions early to allow them to be included or considered in policy statements. Develop your manifesto and provide it to the politicians at least eight weeks before an election. Remember to make 'your asks' clear, consistent and evidence and solution based.
- To impact on budget development, submissions must be made well in advance. Check with the jurisdiction to ascertain their timing – but information is often needed months in advance.
- Politicians are not likely to be receptive to your issue during times of crisis or during election campaigns, unless your solutions can really help them during these times. So be careful not to push too hard when people are already under pressure.
- If there is a visiting expert who could promote or integrate your advocacy ask, contact them and ask if they would be willing to support you. This could be by hosting a seminar or having them provide a quote for a media statement.
- Know the important deadlines. For media and journalists, politicians and elected members, managers and CEOs. (equally important internally as externally) – you need to understand processes before you can influence them (e.g. sitting times etc. which can be accessed through the Parliamentary website at [www.parliament.wa.gov.au](http://www.parliament.wa.gov.au)).

If you are planning some reactive advocacy strategies, consider planning your advocacy activities to occur just before key decisions are made or before an important event.

You will not always have the luxury of time to develop and refine an advocacy plan for reactive advocacy. In some situations you may need to respond within minutes or a matter of hours. Be prepared for these situations. Having the latest evidence and a clear advocacy ask will assist.

## Be open to windows of opportunity!

Winning the hearts and minds of others takes time and effort. Organisations and policy makers are more likely to respond and support changes in policies, services, funding or priorities if you are aware of their organisations' processes and structures. There will be times, when opportunity rears its head and you will be able to align your priorities with others, gaining a united commitment. For example, you will more likely be able to influence if:

- Your proposed changes will help the organisation meet their goals.
- Your proposed changes are consistent with the organisation's values.
- Your solutions are feasible and realistic.

In other cases:

- Advocacy will be opportunistic, so you need to be prepared and confident to act on an opportunity for advocacy relevant to your larger aim in a timely and appropriate manner.
- Keep up to date with the media – get up early to read the newspaper and listen to the radio so that you can identify windows of opportunity. Are we starting to sound like a broken record yet?

The following example demonstrates how advocacy can be used in a reactive, yet planned way when windows of opportunity arise.

## EXAMPLE

PHAIWA works extensively in monitoring unhealthy sponsorship in sport, so when the Grand Final for the Australian Football League (AFL) or National Rugby League (NRL) come around it is a great opportunity for implementing additional advocacy strategies to highlight the issue of unhealthy sponsorship in sport. By publishing an annual sponsorship table (ladder) we are able to highlight the number and type of unhealthy sponsors for each team, and increase awareness of the potential harm caused to young viewers through constantly seeing these unhealthy brands and associating them with their favourite sport. Using targeted tweets, media, blogs and presentations, PHAIWA can consistently state that unhealthy sponsorship has no place in sport and should be ceased.

To read more about PHAIWA's work in sport sponsorship click on the following link.

Unhealthy sponsorship in sport: A case study of the AFL by Sartori, Stoneham & Edmunds (2018)  
<https://bit.ly/2CJSjJc>

### AFL SPONSORSHIP LADDER 2018

RANK	CLUB	SPONSORS				UNIFORM				POINTS TOTAL
		R	A	G	O	R	A	G	O	
1	Adelaide Crows	7	2	0	28	0	0	0	3	8
2	West Coast Eagles	6	1	0	16	1	0	0	3	7.5
3	Brisbane Lions	5	2	0	23	1	0	0	3	7
4	Fremantle	6	1	1	23	0	0	0	4	6.5
5	Geelong Cats	6	0	1	19	0	0	0	3	6
6=	Hawthorn	5	0	1	25	0	0	0	3	5
6=	Port Adelaide	4	0	0	21	1	0	0	2	5
7=	Melbourne	4	1	2	21	0	0	0	4	4.5
7=	St Kilda	3	1	1	19	1	0	0	3	4.5
7=	Western Bulldogs	3	1	2	19	1	0	0	4	4.5
8=	Sydney Swans	4	0	0	24	0	0	0	4	4
8=	Collingwood	3	2	1	22	0	0	0	3	4
9	Carlton	3	1	1	15	0	0	0	4	3.5
10	GWS Giants	3	0	0	32	0	0	0	4	3
11=	Essendon	2	1	1	21	0	0	0	4	2.5
11=	Gold Coast Suns	2	1	1	9	0	0	0	4	2.5
12	North Melbourne	2	0	2	16	0	0	0	3	2
13	Richmond	0	0	3	17	0	0	0	4	0

**LEGEND**  
**SPONSORS:** Total number of team sponsors listed on website.  
**UNIFORM:** Total number of sponsors displayed on teams' uniforms.  
**R:** Red sponsors (Companies selling foods high in saturated fat, sugar and/or salt, low in fibre, alcohol, and gambling).  
**A:** Includes wagering companies and venues specifically promoting a casino.  
**G:** Green sponsors (Companies selling foods moderate in saturated fat, sugar and/or salt, low in fibre. The foods may provide some nutritional benefits).  
**O:** Other sponsors (e.g. Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation).  
**Total:** Total Red sponsors (1 point per sponsor), total Amber sponsors (0.5 points per sponsor).

**PUBLIC HEADLINE**  
 ADVOCACY INSTITUTE OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

**LIVELIGHTER**



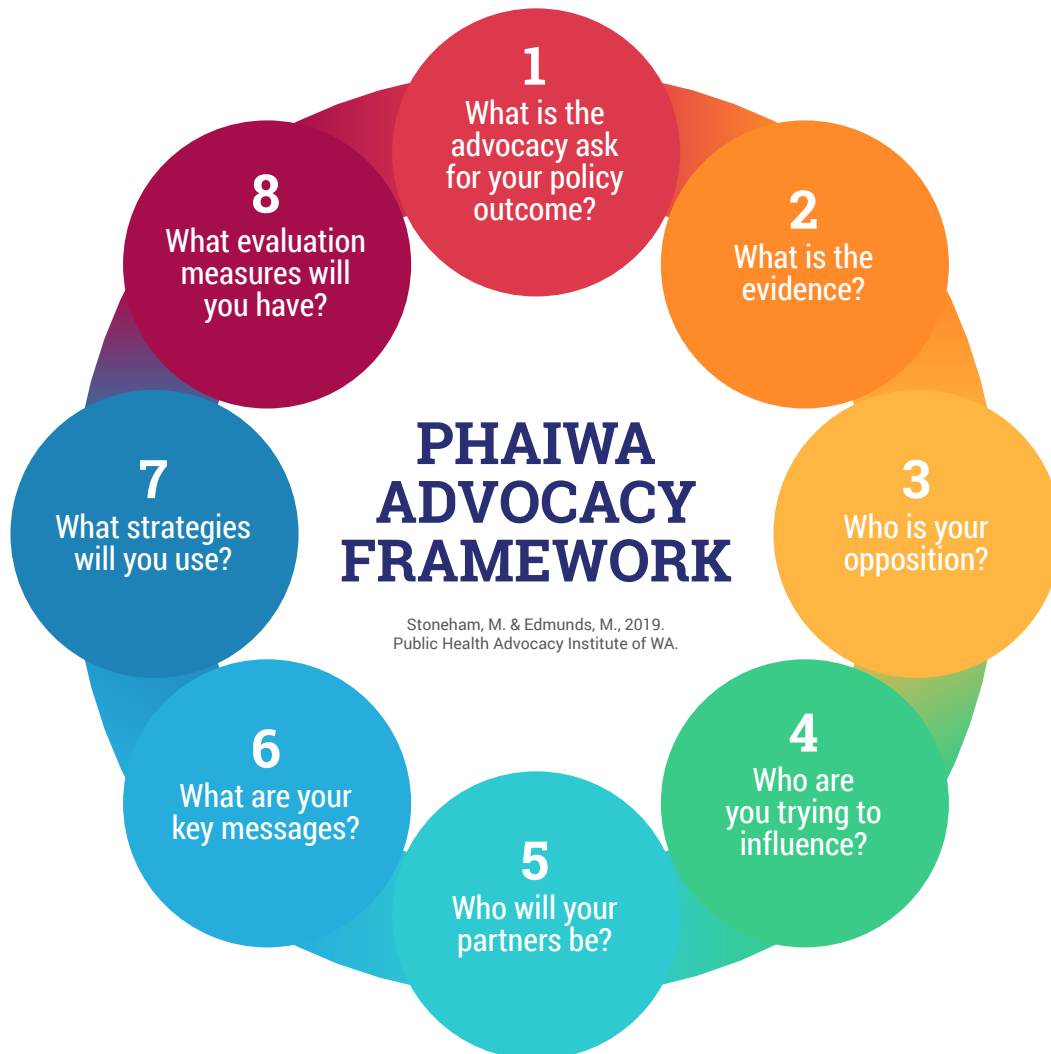
**Figure 18.** One of PHAIWA's State of the Origin tweets highlighting unhealthy sponsorship and the 2018 sponsorship ladder.

# 2

## Planning your advocacy journey



# Components of the Advocacy Framework



**Figure 19.** The PHAIWA Advocacy Framework (Stoneham, M. & Edmunds, M.).

There are a number of questions that you need to answer before embarking on an advocacy project. PHAIWA has developed an Advocacy Framework, as shown above, which will guide you through your advocacy journey. Advice on how best to use the Framework will be discussed throughout Part 2. This will include links to case studies, tools and tips.

Key elements of the Advocacy Framework answer the following questions:

- What is the issue or 'advocacy ask', in a clearly stated way, which you hope to solve through policy change?
- What evidence is needed and how robust is it?
- Who or what is the opposition?
- Who are you seeking to influence?
- Who will be your coalition?
- What is your key message? At the end of the advocacy journey, what is the one question you want answered?
- Which advocacy strategies are best suited to achieve your 'ask'?
- How will you measure how or if your advocacy program has achieved 'the ask' or policy change?

The following case study highlights how the different elements of the Framework can be used in practice.

### CASE STUDY – BRINGING THE FRAMEWORK TOGETHER

#### That goosebump moment – the journey to folate fortification

Contributed by the Telethon Kids Institute Awards



**Figure 20.** Professor Carol Bower (left) and Professor Fiona Stanley (right) with Kim Robbins a young boy with Spina Bifida.<sup>33</sup>

Working hard as researchers at the University of WA, Professors Carol Bower and Fiona Stanley hoped their work would prevent death and disability. Little did they know they were on the way to pioneering one of the greatest medical advances of the 20th century.

Although advocacy often starts with **identifying an issue**, and then determining the **evidence that supports it**, in this instance the duos advocacy journey started in an unexpected place. In the case of these two hard working and determined researchers it first began with them identifying the link between dietary folate and neural tube defects – something which created advocates out of the duo.

The researchers knew they were on to something when the results of their case-control study came back indicating there was **potential for lives to be saved and disability prevented** through folate supplementation. The simple addition of enough folate to a mother's diet prior to conception had the potential to prevent any disruptions to the neural tube closing, something which would in turn prevent significant long-term health issues and heartache. This realisation was one which left the researchers with goosebumps.



Following **continued international research**, the pair were struck by just how big of an impact folate could have. They were eager to get the message out. As part of the newly-formed Telethon Kids Institute the two researchers helped **launch** a WA Health Department **public health campaign** asking women who were contemplating starting a family, to take folic acid supplements and eat folate-rich foods. It was a world first. The pair also began **lobbying government and the food industry**, which eventually resulted in companies beginning to voluntarily add folate to their products.

A few years later a startling 30% drop in neural tube defects had already been recorded in WA. These included spina bifida and anencephaly, a fatal condition where the skull and underlying brain does not develop.

Professors Bower and Stanley weren't happy with this though, instead they were worried about the 40% of WA mothers whose pregnancies were unplanned, as well as low-income and Aboriginal groups not using supplements. These realities spurred the researchers to once again use advocacy to disseminate key messages. **Using the evidence to support their advocacy**, the researchers spent the next decade **continuing to conduct research**, and **using their findings to convince naysayers** that the mandatory folate fortification of bread products was essential.

By September 2009, their hard work finally paid off, and after **years of research and advocacy**, mandatory folate fortification was introduced across Australia. The continued dedicated efforts of Professors Bower and Stanley illustrate the **importance of using evidence to inform advocacy**, and the role evidence can play in getting an issue recognised and across the line. The pairs unrelenting efforts since their discovery, also demonstrates the need for **passion and patience** when undertaking advocacy, and just how these qualities can help ensure success.







## 1.0 What is the advocacy ask for your policy outcome?

One of the key elements of advocacy is to repeat, repeat, repeat! So bearing that in mind, we will reinforce that the goal of public health advocacy is always to achieve policy change. This can take the form of laws, guidelines or regulations, which can affect official documents, government spending or public health programs.

Before you begin your advocacy journey, it is essential that you clearly define the policy change you are hoping to achieve. Ask yourself - at the end of your advocacy journey, what is the one thing you want changed?

Be specific about your issue. Do not make it too big as it will get overwhelming. For example, stating that you want better food within a school environment is too big an issue. There are too many possibilities and this ambiguity will make it difficult to gain consensus or develop a key message or ask. Alternatively, the issue could be that you aim to have 75% green foods available at the school canteen or tuckshop. This issue is still specific enough to ensure policy change is the outcome.

Having a clearly defined issue will also make it easy for those you are trying to influence, to understand the change you are advocating for.

### 1.1 Community advocacy

In some circumstances, the community might approach you with an issue. There are many advantages with this approach, so think seriously

about supporting their advocacy efforts. The key advantage is that grass roots issues with local support, and which resonate at a local level, will greatly increase your chances of broader public support and political interest. With the community standing beside you, taking on your opponents can feel less daunting.

Community generated advocacy can build from a variety of places, whether it be through a passionate individual, a community-led organisation or even the local government. Building on the strengths and existing networks within a community, will allow the utilisation of resources that you may not have previously had available. A hint though – when working with the community, it is important to plan for short-term wins to bolster passion and ongoing commitment. Always remind the community of the long-term outcomes, reminding them that persistence, patience, passion and a willingness to work within a coalition will be essential for an advocacy win.



**Figure 21.** Protesters who paddled out on a chilly South Australian morning to protest under sea drilling in the Great Australian Bight.<sup>34</sup>

The above photo shows the strength of community advocacy. These people power protests are generally well covered in the media and can increase the reach of your campaign. In this case, the community banded together to tell a deep sea drilling company they were going to “fight for the bight” – a memorable key message!<sup>34</sup> Their objections were based on fears that drilling in the area could lead to a catastrophic oil spill along Australia’s pristine coastline.<sup>34</sup> By working together, it was possible to bring attention to the issue, and help bolster community support.



## 2.0 What is the evidence?

*“Highly credible scientific evidence can persuade policy makers and withstand attack from those whose interest are threatened.”*

Issacs & Schroeder<sup>35</sup>

Once you have clearly identified your advocacy ask, it is important that you review all related evidence which supports your cause. You need to understand your issue inside and out. You need to be able to use the evidence to influence your partners. This involves being able to quote information or a reliable statistic publicly. Facts and evidence should always guide your actions and public statements. If you are caught with inaccurate information or documentation, you could seriously damage your organisation’s reputation and take attention away from important issue at hand. To help avoid this, follow these steps.

- Document your claims. For example, if you claim that alcohol producers have targeted children for advertising campaigns, count and write down the location and content of the alcohol-related billboards and posters you find near schools or sporting grounds with junior members.
- Collect data. Obtain accurate, high quality information from experts or those who are most likely to have current facts and figures about the issues and options you present.
- Verify your information. Use as many peer reviewed sources as possible. The more people who can say, ‘Yes, that’s right’, the more back-up you will have if someone challenges your arguments.
- Practice using those facts and figures to explain why your advocacy issue is an urgent ask. Be able to point to the source of your information. Most



**Figure 22.** The 23rd IUHPE World Conference on Health Promotion, held in Rotorua, New Zealand 2019, (Left to right) Trevor Shilton, Sir Michael Marmot and Harry Rutter.<sup>36</sup>

importantly, express information clearly, showing that you have done more than just swallow a bunch of facts – you understand them.

- Have solid documentation that will protect you from counter-attacks from your opponents, and improve your reputation in the sector and the community.
- Build credible partnerships on the issues to present a united front.

Establishing the evidence around your issue will ensure your credibility and provide support to your argument. When trying to change or influence policy it is also particularly helpful in persuading policymakers, researchers, NGOs, academics and all other parties who may input into the policy formulation process.

#### EXAMPLE

##### **NEVER, EVER make up an answer**

Never wing it in advocacy. “I don’t know” is a perfectly acceptable answer. “I’ll find out and get back to you” is even better. If you are asked a question and you are not sure of the answer – be honest and say so. If you find out later that you made a mistake or things have changed and something you said is not quite accurate, call and admit your mistake. Once an advocate misleads someone, you have damaged your reputation, sometimes forever. Policy makers rely on the information they are given. This is all about creating relationships – you want to be a trusted source.

A great way to stay informed of the evidence in your field is to attend relevant conferences. In public health, events held by the International Union for Health Promotion and Education (IUHPE), the Australian Health Promotion Association (AHPA), and the Public Health Association of Australia to name a few, are a great way to learn more about the latest work being done in health and current research relevant to your work.



### 3.0 Who is the opposition?

*“If you believe you can make a difference, not just in politics, in public service, in advocacy around all these important issues, then you have to be prepared to accept that you are not going to get 100 percent approval.”*

Hillary Clinton<sup>37</sup>

Advocates have successfully gone head-to-head with some pretty powerful people, including politicians, CEOs of well-known businesses, national lobbying organisations and advertisers. Facing such influential opponents can be daunting, especially when they will most likely have greater name recognition and resources to oppose you.

Any advocacy issue you address will have allies and opponents. As you develop up your Advocacy Framework, you need to identify who your opposition might be. By knowing who you are up against you will be able to anticipate the type and degree of pushback you might receive from your opponents. Similarly, you can pre-emptively allocate resources to combat any opposition and increase your chances of progressing your advocacy goal.

To determine who your opposition might be, it is helpful to ask yourself who would care about the issue and who would be affected by a policy change? Essentially, who might lose something as a result of your success? Identifying these people or groups allows you to consider how best to combat their claims with evidence or how to use advocacy strategies to identify their underlying philosophies (for example, how would you argue that a resource poor researcher should not take funding from Coca-Cola?).

If you are successful in your advocacy program, your opposition may stand to lose money, time, staff or public opinion, and they may be prepared to fight hard to keep what they have.

Understanding the mechanisms that your opposition may use will enable you to counter their efforts. It is also important to know who funds your opposition.

Below are some tactics your opposition may employ – so spend some time thinking about how you might overcome them.

### Ten Ds of opposition tactics

1. **Deflection** – diverting attention away from the issue at hand, or subversion by industry.<sup>38</sup>
2. **Delays** – they may make it seem things are being done, but in reality no change is being made.<sup>39</sup>
3. **Denials** – denying and invalidating the issue or your proposed solutions will prevent them having to take action.<sup>38</sup>
4. **Discounting** – minimising the problem and calling in to question your legitimacy.<sup>38</sup>
5. **Deception** – they may lead you to believe change is being made when in fact it is not.<sup>26</sup>
6. **Dividing** – within your group they may<sup>39</sup> attempt to divide and conquer.<sup>38</sup>

#### EXAMPLE

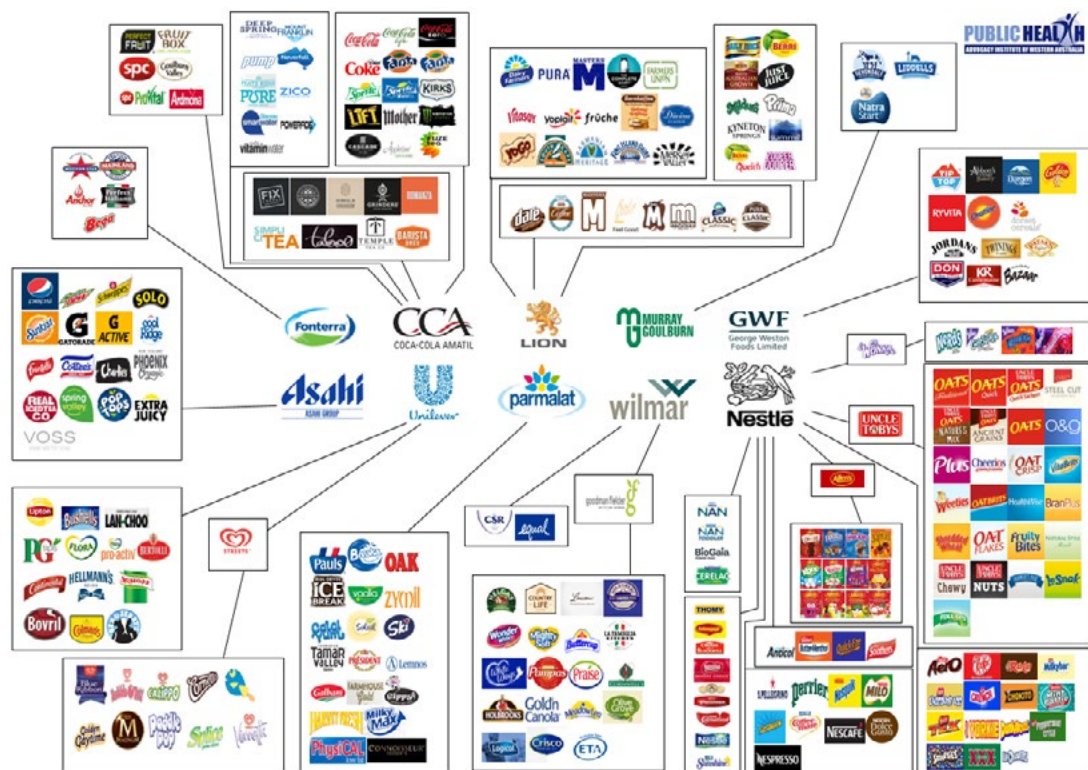


Figure 23. 2018 Map of the top 10 food companies operating in Australia and their associated brands.

If you are working to combat the food industry, a helpful resource in understanding your enemy is PHAIWA's map of the top ten food companies operating in Australia, and the family brands each company owns. To read more about the map you can click on this link <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/1753-6405.12828> and read "The illusion of choice: an exploratory study looking at the top 10 food companies in Australia and their brand connections" by Vidler, Stoneham, Edmunds & Sartori, 2018.



7. **Dulcifying, or appeasing** – by winning over those who perhaps aren't convinced they can lessen their opposition.<sup>38</sup>
8. **Discrediting** – by casting doubt on your motive, your opposition will attempt to minimise your credibility.<sup>38</sup>
9. **Destroy** – your opponents may attempt to stop you by using legal, economic or scare tactics, hold strong!<sup>38</sup>
10. **Deal** – they may make a deal and attempt to find a mutually beneficial solution.<sup>38</sup>

If your opposition is part of a particular industry, subscribing to industry publications can be a good way to understand their perspective, keep up-to-date with industry news and react to developments in a timely manner. Some industry publications relevant to public health include:

- *B&T* (advertising, marketing)  
<http://www.bandt.com.au/>
- *Retail World* (advertising, nutrition, obesity)  
<https://www.retailworldmagazine.com.au/>
- *Convenience World* (advertising, nutrition, obesity)  
<https://www.convenienceworldmagazine.com.au/>
- *Australian Food News* (advertising, nutrition, obesity)  
<http://www.ausfoodnews.com.au/>

And don't forget PHIAWA's MediaWatch service that reports on the public health issues and industry tactics that are in the media each day. To sign up, follow this link: <https://www.phaiwa.org.au/get-involved/>



## 4.0 Who are you influencing?

*"Persuading decision makers of the need for change through identifying desired public health outcomes and effective and feasible methods of achieving that change."*

Michael Moore, Heather Yeatman & Christina Pollard<sup>38</sup>

Deciding and identifying who you are trying to influence in advocacy can be one of the most crucial components, and is a step sometimes overlooked. It is easy to think that if you are passionate about an issue, you can just go directly to the person in charge, have a conversation, and that is enough to generate a policy change. But this is rarely the case.

There may be multiple people, organisations or sectors you might want to influence. Sometimes it might be just one bureaucrat. In some cases, the people you are attempting to influence may very well be your own employer. If that is the case, you should read the section on internal advocacy in this Toolkit. Other times, it might be difficult to identify who you are trying to influence. Taking the time to identify who you really want to influence will allow you to tailor your advocacy strategies and efforts.

For example, if you are planning to undertake political advocacy, your local Minister may be the person to present the proposed policy change in Parliament. However, it will likely be their Advisors who are the people you need to influence. A Minister's Advisor sifts through numerous requests, and will be unable to present something to their Minister unless they are really convinced that the issue or policy has merit.

It is important to also recognise that along your advocacy journey, the people you need to influence

may change as you see success, or as you slowly bring additional partners on board. Remember to do a quick check as you progress through the advocacy program, to make sure you are still influencing the right groups or people for the policy change you seek.

This all may seem overwhelming, but the following section will help you figure out the best person (or persons) to influence.

### CASE STUDY – THE IMPORTANCE OF KNOWING WHO YOU ARE INFLUENCING

#### Find Cancer Early

Written by Cassandra Clayforth,  
Cancer Council WA



Figure 24. Campaign materials and media for Find Cancer Early.<sup>40</sup>

In 2009, research was undertaken in WA to identify why regional people with cancer have 20-30% poorer survival outcomes, when compared to people living in metropolitan areas. **The research identified issues at both the community level and provider level** which were contributing to the disparity. At the community level, regional people were taking longer to identify symptoms and were postponing seeking help. At the provider level, when diagnosing patients, some bottlenecks were identified in the process.

In 2011, community and GP interventions were trialled to **address the issue**. The community intervention was the Find Cancer Early **campaign**, delivered locally by regional staff to a few select regions, with the hopes of improving people's ability and motivation



to identify symptoms of cancer and seek help. Towards the end of the trial, Ministers of Parliament (MPs) from regional seats where the program was operating were briefed on Find Cancer Early, and informed there would be a gap in funding. This is the point at which Cancer Council WA's (CCWA) political advocacy began. They could clearly see the programs potential to improve health outcomes and needed to secure government support to sustain it.

As the results from the campaign's **evaluation** came in, CCWA were confident this program could save lives. With feedback showing that awareness of the campaign was high, and that among those who were aware of the campaign almost half had thought about doing something, and more than a third had done something after seeing the initiative – with a visit to the doctors the most common response. These promising results illustrated the need for the program to continue, and for the **message to be spread further**. To do this, CCWA committed donor money to fund a television advertisement to reach more Western Australians, and strengthened their efforts to **persuade policy makers** of the programs clear benefits.

Leading up to the 2017 WA election, Cancer Council WA **advocated** for government investment to continue the Find Cancer Early campaign (as well as a few other cancer priorities), and **asked the WA community to help lobby the next state government by signing a petition** at the Cancer Council website: [unitedagainstcancer.com.au](http://unitedagainstcancer.com.au). After signing the petition, there were prompts to **share the campaign** with friends and family via **social media or email**.

The **advocacy campaign** and #unitedagainstcancer website were promoted through various channels. It was **launched on World Cancer Day** and the media launch was **broadcast on Cancer Council WA's Facebook page**. Interviews were **broadcast on ABC and 6PR radio**, and advertisements were placed on

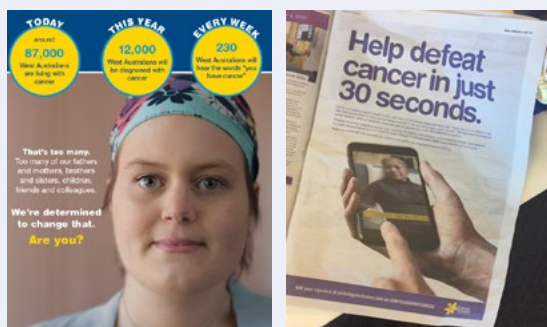




**Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, The West's World Cancer Day liftout, as well as some community newspapers.** An email was sent to all people on the Cancer Council WA's database and the CEO emailed the **Premier, Leader of the Opposition, Minister and Shadow Minister for Health** to inform them how many people had signed the petition.

The use of the **community to build support** for this issue and the **political advocacy**, resulted in **success for CCWA** and the Find Cancer Early program. Before the 2017 election, the Labor government committed to continuing and expanding the Find Cancer Early campaign to more regional areas of WA. After gaining power, their promise was kept, and the program received a further four years of funding.

By having a **clear vision of who needed to be influenced** and their priorities, CCWA was able to establish the **evidence** and **community support** needed to influence the relevant politicians. Each of the **strategies** they used also targeted the priorities of two governments attempting to be elected, and the ability for **community opinion** to influence them. By following the advocacy framework as CCWA has done, they were able to create a strong **understanding of their issue**, which allowed them to create an **advocacy campaign centred on influencing the right people and generating a positive outcome**.



**Figure 25.** Campaign materials and media for Find Cancer Early.<sup>40</sup>

#### 4.1 So who should I influence, and how?

A good starting point for figuring out who you need to influence in your advocacy campaign is to map out what you know about your opposition. Specifically, what is their philosophy and organisational objectives? Who dictates how they operate – a Board, shareholders, an interagency committee? What legislation and regulations are they required to adhere to? Who funds them or where do they generate income? Who do they work with and how is their organisation structured? What services do they provide or who do they donate to? From this information you should be able to identify who you will need to influence.

The following questions reiterate what we have just discussed. In relation to your potential influencing audience:

- Who is your opposition and what are their objectives and interests?
- What solutions can you offer and who would be interested in them?
- If your issues is already on the agenda, who is discussing it and what phase in the decision-making process are they at?
- What are the procedures for decision-making? What level of hierarchy should I target?

Once you have answered the above questions you may be left with a number of potential decision-makers who you may want to influence. These may include:

- politicians/policy makers
- organisations
- industry
- your Director
- researchers
- funding bodies
- your members
- your peers
- media
- community
- possibly even your opposition!

The following section discusses strategies for influencing each of these different types of decision-makers, and provides insight into the systems in which they work, and how to go about positively influencing them.



## 4.2 Political influence

Navigating the political system can be tricky. If you are contemplating political advocacy, you need a sound understanding of how the political system works. If you are in Australia, the Parliamentary Education Office is a great resource for refreshing your knowledge of the Parliamentary ins-and-outs.

Once you have a basic knowledge of how the political system works, it becomes clearer how to influence those in control of the area you are trying to change.

If you are engaging in political advocacy at the community level, it may be necessary to attempt to influence Local Government staff, the Elected Member for the jurisdiction, or even the Mayor or Shire President.

At the State and Territory level you will need to identify the most appropriate Member of Parliament within either the Legislative Assembly or the Legislative Council, though there may be some variation in the Parliamentary structure between regions.<sup>41</sup>

At the Federal level, identifying the right Member of the House of Representatives, Senator, Assistant Minister, Minister, President of the House or even the Prime Minister is key to making change at a national level.<sup>41</sup> No matter the level of government you are trying to work with, never forget to put political Advisors on the list of people to influence, as they hold a lot of power and can persuade their politician to listen to your cause.

Once you have identified the most appropriate politician, there are a number of ways to ensure you are prepared prior to engaging with them. The following sections will detail how to engage politicians and get your message across, along with the do's and don'ts of contacting and meeting with politicians. To get you started, if you are trying to influence politicians the following points are important to keep in mind:

- Be prepared, informed, articulate, focused and solutions oriented.
- Try thinking like a politician. Read their maiden speech. It will provide invaluable insight into that politician's motivation and values.
- Remember politicians are elected by the people, so make your issue is relevant to that politician's jurisdiction wherever possible.
- Make sure you demonstrate how your issue or advocacy ask aligns with their policies or

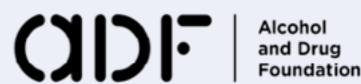
portfolio. For example, the Minister for Regional Services probably will not be interested in a metropolitan health issue.

- Visibility leads to credibility. If the politician can see there is a larger interest at heart, they may be more willing to help.

### CASE STUDY – POLITICAL INFLUENCE

#### Standard Lottery Permits – Liquor as a Prize

Written by Samantha Menezes,  
Alcohol and Drug Foundation



PREVENTING HARM IN AUSTRALIA

Figure 26. Alcohol and Drug Foundation.

The Alcohol and Drug Foundation's Community Development officers work with sporting clubs across Australia in the Good Sports program. This program aims to help clubs change their behaviours around risky alcohol consumption in the club environment, by ensuring club members who serve alcohol are adhering to Responsible Service of Alcohol, Liquor Licensing conditions and other strategies around alcohol management, such as not drinking alcohol whilst serving behind the bar, ensuring food is available, and that non-alcohol products are priced lower than alcohol products.

Part of my role in WA is **engaging** with State Sporting Organisations, Sporting Associations and Leagues and working with them to ensure their clubs are on the right path around responsible service of alcohol. I also work alongside many other **community stakeholders**, often involved in Alcohol and Other Drug Management Groups (AODMG).

#### The issue

A member of the public, from a regional area contacted me to let me know that a local sporting club was raffling a very large alcohol prize (40 cartons of beer to the value of \$1800).





This club was not a Good Sports club, but we were working very closely with the relevant sporting Association, and have a **good relationship** with the State Sporting organisation. I called the President of the club and we **spoke at length about the issues**, and I encouraged him to cancel the raffle and consider an alternate prize. Unfortunately, I wasn't successful.

Instead, I didn't give up! Realising I may not be successful in stopping this raffle, I hoped I could prevent future excessive raffle prizes, and **influence a change in the Standard Lottery Permit – Liquor as a Prize** application process. Around this time, I was **heavily engaging with the clubs Association** and helping them navigate the difficult conversation they needed to have with the club. Very quickly word got around the town and the **AODMG came on board, encouraging its members to write to the club** around why, as a community, they felt this raffle could cause harm to individuals, and ripple out to their family and friends.

I worked with my manager and we developed a **letter to go to Minister for Sport and Recreation Hon Mick Murray, The Minister for Racing and Gaming Hon Paul Papalia, and our Deputy Premier and Minister for Health Hon Roger Cook**. This letter **outlined our concerns for the community** around alcohol related harms and provided some statistics around alcohol related violence in that community. We discussed that in the current Standard Lottery Permit Conditions there was no provision for public interest. We received communication from Minister Papalia that assured us the correspondence had been referred to the Gaming and Wagering Commission of WA to consider the concerns.

The outcome from this was that the **Commission adopted the Queensland model for regulating liquor as a prize in lottery permits**. It resolved to prohibit liquor as a prize in a standard lottery permit where the retail value of the liquor exceeds \$1,000 per prize. This has removed the ability of anyone applying for such a permit to have an unlimited value of alcohol as a prize, and is a real win for our community!

### 4.3 Organisational influence

Outside of the political sphere, it may be necessary to influence different organisations, both within and outside your field of expertise. This type of influence can be necessary if they have similar priorities and you feel they can help in getting your advocacy campaign over the line... or maybe they are undertaking a certain activity you think conflicts with your advocacy goals.

Public health advocacy will often require you to work with organisations or sectors whose core function is not public health. For example, if you were trying to achieve policy change to create safer playgrounds, to influence decision makers you may need to engage with play equipment manufacturers, landscape architects and land use planners. Creating new and comprehensive partnerships will usually result in better advocacy outcomes.

As can be seen in the case study 'Nothing Super About It', the best way to figure out who in the organisation is influential, or who works within the area relevant to your interests. By getting to know who's who, you can connect with a few key people in the organisation making it easier to then partner with the organisation as a whole. As with any collaboration, you will have those who are not interested in making changes, so focus on the people you can influence and eventually you should be able to make big changes as your influence spreads.

#### CASE STUDY – ORGANISATIONAL INFLUENCE

##### Nothing super about it – Breaking the ties between Superannuation and the Tobacco Industry

Contributed by the Australian Council on Smoking and Health (ACOSH)

As a junior doctor, Dr Bronwyn King spent three months working in a lung-cancer ward.<sup>42</sup> While there she saw firsthand just how tobacco could ravage the body, with numerous patients suffering unimaginable pain as cancer spread to their brain and bones.<sup>42</sup> For Dr King however, it was the loss that struck her most.<sup>42</sup> The graduations, weddings and births these patients would miss because of smoking





cigarettes, and the pain that would radiate through their families because of it.<sup>42</sup>

Years later during a conversation with a representative from her superannuation fund, Bronwyn, now an oncologist, inquired about where exactly her money was being invested.<sup>42</sup> To her surprise, she came to find out that as with most Australian policies, a portion of her money was being invested in tobacco, with a majority of the superannuation funds international shares being in tobacco.<sup>42</sup>

This discovery hit Bronwyn and her colleagues at the Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre, a dedicated cancer hospital, understandably quite hard.<sup>42</sup> With a team of dedicated cancer researchers and health practitioners unknowingly investing in tobacco it was not something Bronwyn was going to let fly.<sup>42</sup>

She began **researching** and came to learn that Australian super funds had about \$10 billion invested in tobacco, which prompted her to **take this issue to the people in charge**.<sup>42</sup> Over a number of months Bronwyn began **educating** financial institutions about just how harmful tobacco is, **meeting with key figures** at coffee shops or boardrooms, and sending **emails** and making **phone calls** to everyone who would listen.<sup>42</sup>

By **using the evidence**, Bronwyn was able to inform Australia's leading financial institutions of the harms tobacco was causing.<sup>42</sup> Sharing with them that as one of the most addictive substances known to man, people across the world were leading shorter lives, with those in the poorest communities the most affected.<sup>42</sup>

Rather than approach these organisations as the opposition, Bronwyn went to them as **potential partners in the fight against tobacco**.<sup>42</sup> In doing so she found many financial leaders willing to help, given their own experiences losing family as a result of tobacco.<sup>42</sup>



Dr King also understood that despite their sympathies towards the issue, as companies they needed to make money, so it was important to find **common ground and present the issue as one which could be of benefit to the company**.<sup>42</sup> To do this she appealed to the companies need to be good corporate citizens, and the possibility for them to be industry leaders by renouncing the tobacco industry.<sup>42</sup> In July 2012 she was successful.<sup>42</sup> After all her hard work, First State Super became the first Australian superannuation fund to publicly renounce tobacco, with super fund HESTA soon following suit, and more than \$1 billion of tobacco stocks being divested from Australian super funds by mid-2014.<sup>42</sup>



**Figure 27.** Celebrations in Sydney Harbour following the announcement that 1,300,000,000,000 (1.3 TRILLION!) of Australians' money in superannuation funds is now under #tobaccofree investment policies.<sup>43</sup>

#### 4.4 Internal influence

Internal advocacy occurs within an organisation or institution and aims to build organisational and political support for changes in policies, services, funding, or priorities that will benefit staff, the organisation, consumers or the wider community. Internal advocacy is sometimes known as systems advocacy.

Influencing those within your organisation can be fraught with challenges. Yet it can also be very beneficial. Often before you can even begin suggesting policy changes you need to garner the support of your 'organisational friends'. If the change you want is within your organisation, you need to be

mindful of how best to approach this. The following will provide an overview of how best to approach internal advocacy programs.

### **Can anyone be an internal advocate?**

Anyone at any level can potentially advocate for a cause with their organisation, but in doing so it is important that they take care of how they do it and are careful not to neglect their day-to-day work.

There are a number of simple rules that should be followed when engaging in 'internal advocacy'. Advocates must play within the rules and expect others to play by the rules; this involves knowing the rules and observing six rules. These rules are:

#### **Rule One: Act with integrity at all times**

Individuals who advocate for a cause from within an organisation must adhere to high professional standards. Like any form of advocacy, inappropriately done it can be counter-productive, but if well done it can be successful and rewarding.

Organisations and policymakers generally will not support causes that are clearly self-serving.

#### **Rule Two: When advocating for change it is important to consider:**

- The personal cost: do you have the time and adaptability that may be required for change?
- The organisation: be careful not to cause undue pain for your colleagues.

As with any type of advocacy, you should also consider the other elements of the Framework. Do you understand your opposition? Is the timing right to address this issue? Do you have a clear policy ask for your issue?

#### **Rule Three: Build a coalition of like-minded individuals and organisations**

Allies to an organisation can aid enormously in making the case for change. They bring expertise and influence and may be better placed to say and do certain things that you cannot. Nurturing a broad coalition of like-minded individuals will demonstrate support for the changes you seek. It is advisable to identify allies such as non-government organisations, universities, managers, and others.

#### **Rule Four: The benefit of professional organisations**

Within Australia there are a number of professional organisations who represent those working in the health field and beyond. The Australian Medical

Association (AMA) is a great advocate for the health and wellbeing of doctors, patients and Australians as a whole. Environmental Health Australia, is another leading professional organisation who represents and advocates on behalf of environmental health practitioners both nationally and internationally. Within the field of health promotion there are two main professional organisations who represent and advocate on behalf of their members and the community as a whole. The Australian Health Promotion Association (AHPA), represents those involved in the practice, policy, research and study of health promotion, in hopes of contributing to professional development and policy change, while the Public Health Association of Australia (PHAA) strives to better population health, by utilising the knowledge and expertise of their members and the health promotion principles.

From the examples discussed, professional organisations can take a number of shapes and seek to achieve a number of goals. Some can be run by paid staff, while others may be volunteer driven, neither is better or worse, it is simply important to keep in mind the way an organisation runs, and how they can help you.

#### **Rule Five: Recognise the efforts of others**

Advocacy for a cause is mostly done through and with others. Sharing the credit and recognising the specific contribution of key individuals and organisational partners builds strong coalitions for future efforts.

#### **Rule Six: Be ready to seize the moment**

The circumstances for advocacy can change quickly and unexpectedly. Advocates must be ready to respond to unfolding events. This may mean rethinking the priorities and actions which you are calling to be changed.

#### **Some "Don'ts" to remember**

- DON'T be reckless – check with your organisation's policies regarding confidentiality.
- DON'T go to war with management.
- DON'T publically criticise your organisation, Board or Minister.
- DON'T flout policies and Codes of Conduct that apply to your workplace.
- DON'T make it personal.



## CASE STUDY – INTERNAL INFLUENCE

## Government cuts to Public Health

Written by Dr Melissa Stoneham



**Figure 28.** Press following the Queensland Governments announcement to cut funding to essential health services.<sup>44</sup>

In May 2012, the government of Queensland announced they would be cutting \$2.6 million in annual funding from the State's sole HIV/ AIDS prevention and support program, a gut-wrenching blow to the LGBTQIA+ community who were also supported by this organisation.

Four months later these cuts were followed by the announcement that 2,754 jobs at the government run Queensland Health would be lost. Within these losses were 60 public health nutritionists, 20 Indigenous nutrition promotion officers and over 70 health promotion experts. These cuts sparked **outray from the health community** and resulted in a number of professional organisations, Institutions and influential individuals **taking a stand**. The Australian Medical Association (AMA), the Dieticians Association of Australia, the Queensland University of Technology, the Nurses Union and the consistently-outspoken Emeritus Professor Mike Daube AO all **partnered to take the Queensland government to task**.

Although the efforts of these groups and organisations did not prevent the cuts taking effect, when similar cuts have taken place



in other States, including South Australia and Western Australia, the efforts of these professional organisations and health representatives **have given a voice to those being affected** without placing them further in the ire of government. Although you may sometimes be unable to voice your concerns over certain issues, the **partnerships and connections within your industry** will often be able to **fight the good fight on your behalf**.

## 4.5 Media influence

The media sector is a great ally in advocacy. But to work with the media, you need to build trust. We will discuss working with the media in greater detail later, but for now here is a short discussion on how you might be able to best influence the media to support your advocacy issue or ask.

Typically, journalists receive a great deal of potential stories in the form of media releases, and they have to identify those that will appeal to their audience and sell newspapers. If you want to grab a journalist's attention, try these tips.

- Media releases with a genuine story to tell are a winner.
- Share something newsworthy that makes a difference to people's lives and will catch a journalist's eye – it has to be topical, well written, and straight to the point.
- Make sure you do your research on what issues the journalist covers and how the release may fit into a bigger story.
- Personalise your message.
- High-resolution images can seal the deal.
- Make sure those involved in the story are free to be contacted.
- Ensure that there is a clear time frame and positioning which will give the best value to your story.



## 4.6 Community influence

Influencing the community can be another incredibly useful tool to support advocacy. Not only can a passionate community help to make change at the local level, they can also assist in garnering additional support from many settings, show that your issue is of local importance, add visibility to your advocacy efforts, and add weight to your argument. Community influence can be created in a number of ways. Traditionally, grassroots advocacy efforts were often seen as people took to the streets with placards to make a point and disseminate their call to action. With the introduction of the internet and social media, it is now more common to connect people and get communities involved via social media platforms. However, a good public march will always be a highly visible strategy in any advocacy program. This is demonstrated in the case study by Dr Melissa Stoneham on page 35, which highlights how community influence put a stop to the Government's proposed closure of remote WA communities.

Another great example of utilising community influence is 'Parents' Voice', an online network of parents whose combined voices help influence more parents to get involved in advocating for improvements to food and physical activity environments in Australia. Not only is this campaign trying to increase awareness around these issues, but it also encourages parents to get involved and active in their own communities, empowering them to make changes about things they are passionate about.

To find out more about Parents' Voice you can follow this link <https://parentsvoice.org.au/>

Utilising people such as parents, when trying to create change in the community can be an incredibly valuable tool – particularly if you are trying to advocate to a very specific group in the community.

### CASE STUDY – INTERNAL INFLUENCE

#### Dublin's Children's Hospital says no to McDonald's

Written by Dr Melissa Stoneham



**Figure 29.** Dublin's Children's Hospital and a UK McDonald's protest.<sup>45, 46</sup>

When you walk into the Monash Children's Hospital in Melbourne, you will be confronted with a McDonald's retail outlet. Given that obesity in Australian children is nearing crisis point, you do have to wonder why a restaurant that sells predominantly foods high in sugar, salt and fat has such a prominent place within a hospital setting.<sup>47</sup> The Victorian Premier at the time, Daniel Andrews lampooned **calls by health experts to exclude fast food giant McDonald's** from children's hospitals, describing the idea as 'nanny state-ism'. Yet the public experts merely wanted to create a health care setting that did not make the fast food chain a 'part of the hospital', normalising fast food and giving the brand nutritional credibility with families.





Although our own public health advocates were unsuccessful in gaining a policy change for fast food retailers within children's hospitals, other countries have been more successful. One example is the construction of the Dublin Children's Hospital in Ireland. The initial proposal was for Ronald McDonald House charity to sponsor the 53 roomed parents' wing of the new children's hospital. An employee of the Health Department, advocated against this proposal stating 'it was not the right message to be sending out to have a fast food chain linked to the hospital when childhood obesity is Ireland's biggest epidemic.' With the **support of the public health sector**, an **advocacy campaign** was launched and in February 2019, the same organisation which employs the outspoken advocate changed its policy to decline giving naming rights to a McDonald's-linked charity.<sup>48</sup>

As PHAIWA has always said, if a company like McDonalds is so keen to support families of unwell children, feel free to support the development of these parents' wings by building an unbranded structure.

**Backed by evidence**, a strong **coalition**, **media** reports and the presence of a **brave champion** resulted in a win for public health.

#### CASE STUDY – COMMUNITY INFLUENCE

##### People Power Protest over the political threat to close communities in remote WA

Written by Dr Melissa Stoneham

*"I want you to stop and think about this sacred land that has been home to our people for tens of thousands of years – our land that is central to our culture...we are part of it and it is part of us."*

Dennis Eggington CEO ALSWA

During 2014, the Western Australian (WA) Government stated that without further funding, many of the Aboriginal communities would



become unsustainable, and that WA would not provide additional funding to maintain essential services. There are 274 remote communities in WA, which are home to over 12 000 Aboriginal people. The WA Premier suggested that as many as 150 of these communities would close. This **policy announcement** followed a Commonwealth funding cut for essential services to remote communities, leaving a 'parting gift' of \$90 million that would only last two to three years.

Following that announcement, **many communities expressed outrage** that there was little to **no consultation**, and no plans were put forward by the WA Government as to where people would move to once the communities were closed. The link between culture and land was simply not acknowledged.

To add fuel to the fire, the then Australian Prime Minister, Tony Abbott questioned whether taxpayers should subsidise people living in remote areas as a 'lifestyle' choice.

A **national day of action was planned** for May 1, 2015 where **protests were being organised around Australia and overseas to oppose** the closure of remote WA communities. **#SOSBLAKA AUSTRALIA was borne to organize and coordinate the protests.**

Articles appeared in many journals **urging people to fight** against this poor policy decision. PHAIWA wrote an **open letter** and **urged health professionals to sign it**. PHAIWA also urged a number of professional associations to **generate 100 signatures** from their members opposing the decision – which were **forwarded to the WA Premier**. The **media** ran with the story. Social media using the **#SOSBLAKA AUSTRALIA** spread like wildfire.

A cultural code of conduct for the marches was developed to ensure a united approach. It contained 10 mandates with some including:

- Leading with cultural integrity
- Standing together and alongside each other
- Keeping the message strong
- Be firm, yet non-violent

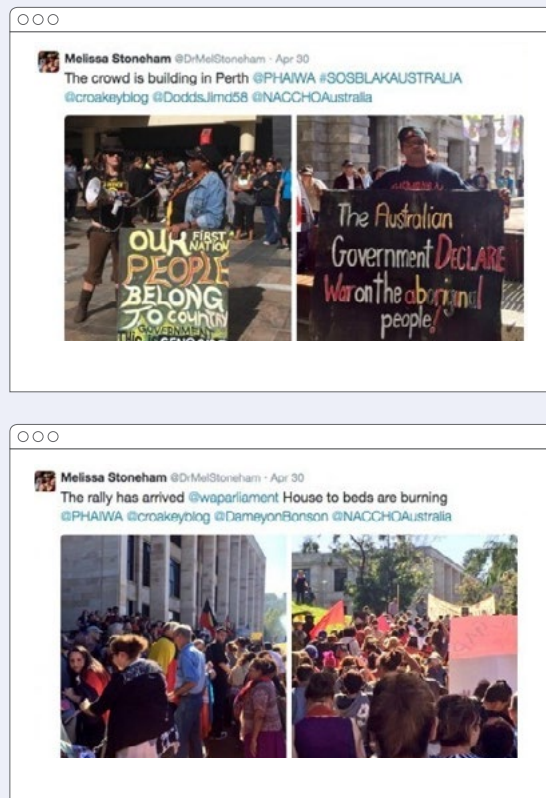




- Nurturing your organisers
- Check the facts

**Protest marches were held** in the majority of Australian capital cities, as well many regional centres throughout most Australian states. There were also marches in New Zealand, Los Angeles and Berlin. The rally in Melbourne disrupted peak hour traffic and made national and international news.

In Perth, around 800 people gathered to **peacefully march** through the CBD and ended up at the stairs at Parliament House, where **the Premier addressed the crowd**. The **power of the people** was evident that day, and **support from around the globe** helped to identify that this was, in fact poor policy that showed little to no respect for our Aboriginal people or culture.



**Figure 30.** Tweets by Dr Melissa Stoneham featuring images of the Perth rally.<sup>49</sup>

## CASE STUDY – COMMUNITY INFLUENCE

### I Immunise

Written by Cassandra Collyer, Chair of the Immunisation Alliance WA



**Figure 31.** I Immunise campaign materials.<sup>50</sup>

The *I Immunise* campaign was implemented by the Immunisation Alliance of Western Australia (IAWA) in Fremantle in 2014. The impetus to develop this campaign was Fremantle's low ranking in national vaccination coverage rates; in 2012-13 only 85-89.9% of children were fully immunized by 2 and 5 years old.<sup>51</sup> Dr Katie Atwell, a member of the IAWA, a local Fremantle resident, and mother of young children, self-identified with a parenting culture that included home-birthing, baby-wearing and breast feeding. However, **when it came to vaccination her views were vastly different to that of her community.**<sup>53</sup>

The intent behind the *I Immunise* campaign was to **engage with parent's values and identity to deliver a positive message to an alternative parenting community**. Role modelling of parenting choices familiar to this community (e.g. cloth nappies, organic foods) were displayed on **local billboards, posters, websites and in news articles, alongside an affirmation in support of immunisation by these parents.**<sup>51</sup> This allowed the campaign to appeal to the values of shared identification.<sup>52</sup> While being a local campaign, it also had an online influence with one Facebook post reaching 12,086 views.<sup>52</sup> Many of the **posters delivered to childcare centres, doctors surgeries, playgroups and local businesses remain on display.**







Parents often look to other parents or ‘self-styled experts’ on one aspect of parenting, in turn influencing broader parenting decisions within peer-groups (the phenomenon of band-wagoning).<sup>52</sup> Using local community members allowed parents to build an **advocacy platform** for their children’s health, applying a **‘bottom up’ approach**.<sup>51</sup> The campaign was supported by a grant from the Communicable Disease Control Directorate of the WA Department of Health.<sup>51</sup>

The campaign saw mixed results with some feeling more negatively afterwards however overall it was well received with positive responses by 77% of the 304 online respondents surveyed.<sup>52</sup> A third of parents who were hesitant or refused vaccines reported a **positive response to the campaign**.<sup>52</sup> The *I Immunise* campaign was a **novel approach to immunisation advocacy** as it focused on **local values** around social justice and parenting lifestyles rather than educating parents about science and the evidence of vaccine efficacy.

#### 4.7 Opposition influence

Although it may sound peculiar, sometimes your opposition can also be the people you need to influence. This form of influence will likely be used as part of a long-term strategy to obtain a small win, within a bigger battle.

A good example of this type of influence occurred in 2018 when the Sydney Opera House became a gambling billboard. Although gambling advertising promotes a lawful service for adults and is a significant source of revenue for media services, it also causes many public health and social issues.<sup>53</sup> Evidence indicates that 70% of Australians report participating in some form of gambling annually and 80% of adolescents engage in a form of gambling by the age of 18.<sup>53</sup> More specifically, in 2018, Australians spent \$26 billion on horse racing and sports betting.<sup>54</sup> So when the Australian Prime Minister offered his support to the projection of The Everest horse racing advertisement on the sails of the World Heritage listed Sydney Opera House, he was met with unbridled opposition from both the public health sector and parts of the Australian community. Stating that “This is one of the biggest events of the

year. Why not put it on the biggest billboard Sydney has?”, and calling the advocates “precious”, the Australian Prime Minister at the time, Scott Morrison, overturned the Sydney Opera House CEO Louise Herron’s decision to disallow the promotion.<sup>55</sup>

A change.org petition titled ‘Defend our Opera House: support Louise Herron’ collected over 265,000 signatures by within a few days.<sup>56</sup> A protest also took place when the projection occurred, with protesters attempting to disrupt the display with torches and mobile phone light.

This is a good example of how the opposition can unexpectedly come from within Government, and to make a policy change, the people that need influencing may be the government themselves.

#### EXAMPLE



**Figure 32.** Protests outside Sydney Opera House following approval for gambling to be advertised on the building’s sails.<sup>57</sup>

If you want to read more on this story, this Croakey blog looks at the issue a little deeper <https://croakey.org/opera-house-row-proves-sydney-is-in-thrall-to-the-gambling-industry/>



## 5.0 Who will you work with?

*"If you ever feel like you're just one person trying to change something, I promise you there are hundreds, thousands, if not millions of people out there who feel the same way as you, who want to make a difference."*  
Saira O'Mallie<sup>58</sup>

Coalitions and partners are so important in your advocacy journey. The old saying of having "everyone singing from the same hymn sheet" refers not only to having a clear and repeatable message but also ensuring you have many stating that message.

Coalitions or partnerships can be formal or less so. Some will involve a Memorandum of Understanding, others will require financial contribution and some will simply be regular meetings.<sup>59, 60</sup> Some of the more formal partnerships that are created to undertake advocacy include:

- advisory committees
- commissions
- alliances
- networks
- task forces.<sup>59, 60</sup>

This size of coalition needs to be considered. There is no definitive answer to how big a coalition should be, but the desired number of organisations and the diversity of membership is important. A coalition developing a training program on leadership may need fewer members than a coalition that is attempting to change community pool fencing regulations, because developing training is a less complex task than influencing policy.

## 5.1 Why establish partnerships?

Establishing partnerships with like-minded individuals or organisations who can support and contribute to your advocacy efforts is beneficial in that they:

- Allow the expansion and sharing of resources and capabilities.
- Present a united front on an issue which adds weight to your request of policy makers.
- Give strength in numbers and visibility.
- Show you have a diverse representation of organisations and sectors committed to the advocacy ask.
- Increase exchanges of information and other contacts, avoiding duplication of efforts and improving exchanges and shared learning among key players.
- Build a lasting base for change, so that after you unite with your partners, each groups vision of change can broaden, making it more difficult for opposition groups to disregard the coalition's efforts, or label them a special interests issue.

However, we need to remember that people are busy and may not always be able to contribute at the time that suits you best. To gain the benefits of these relationships try to remember these four points:

**Point One** – Ask the right people. People are motivated to take part in advocacy when the issue is important to them, their area of work, their community or their family. Other people will get involved if they feel they can contribute to a common cause. Seek out these people and invite them to join your coalition.

**Point Two** – Make your partners feel involved and engaged – Let your partners know that they are making a difference.<sup>63</sup> Partners want to refer to that their efforts and support are creating results, so it's important to plan out your advocacy (see 'What is your advocacy ask for your policy outcome?') and make sure you have plenty of small wins on your way to success (see [Planning your advocacy journey](#)).

**Point Three** – Don't replicate others' work. In advocacy and beyond, it is a waste of energy and resources to replicate work that has already been done, or is currently being undertaken elsewhere. By creating partnerships with key people in your field, it is possible to stay informed of any advancements, and reduce the competition for funding.<sup>60</sup> Although

your partners' involvement may vary, working collaboratively allows you to gain support in developing advocacy strategies, and gives you access to people with a range of experience and expertise regardless of how involved they may be.<sup>60</sup>

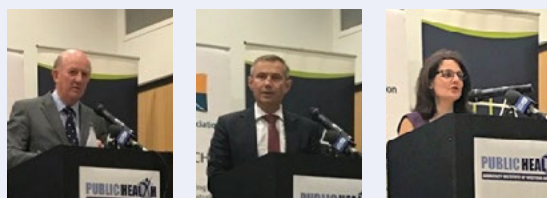
**Point Four** – Be clear about the role of the partnership or coalition. Partnerships can take on a number of forms depending on the advocacy ask, so having a clear goal will ensure that no matter how your partnership operates, everyone is on the same page.<sup>60</sup> Having clear terms of reference also helps, as does open and timely communications.

At PHAIWA, we partner with a wide-range of organisations, both nationally and internationally, to collaborate on projects that support and help us to achieve advocacy wins across each of our priority areas.

### CASE STUDY

#### For the love of politics – WA's 2017 Public Health Pre-Election Forum

Written by Melinda Edmunds



**Figure 33.** The political representatives who attended PHAIWA's Public Health Pre-Election Forum.

L-R: Minister John Day (Lib), Roger Cook MLA (ALP), Alison Xamon (Greens).

State and federal elections are an opportunity to advocate for your policy outcome by influencing politicians. Prior to the 2017 state election PHAIWA coordinated in **partnership** with 11 organisations the **2017 WA Public Health Pre-Election Forum**. The forum was held on Valentine's Day and was themed 'for the love of politics'. This forum was an opportunity for all the major parties to present their public health policies and answer questions from the public health community.



PHAIWA invited partners to be involved and contribute to the event. Benefits of the partnership included sharing of **resources** and **capabilities**, increased **promotion**, **presenting a united front** when inviting politicians to participate and it drew **media attention**.

The event was facilitated by Geoff Hutchison who at the time hosted the ABC Mornings Show. The politician's panel included the Minister for Health at the time, Hon, John Day, the Opposition Health Spokesperson and Deputy Leader, Roger Cook MLA and the Greens representative, Ms Alison Xamon. The event was attended by over 170 participants.

After the event PHAIWA Director Dr Melissa Stoneham wrote a blog for Croakey on the event and the policies discussed. An outcome of the event was Opposition Leader made an election commitment to remove alcohol advertising on state owned buses.



**Figure 34.** The Health Promotion organisations involved in PHAIWA's Public Health Pre-Election Forum, and the panel discussion conducted at the event.



## EXAMPLE – COALITIONS

Within the health space an example of a successful advocacy coalition is the Tipping the Scales report. Released in September 2017, the report is the result of 35 leading community, public health, medical and academic groups collaborating to urge the Federal Government to take action on the growing issue of obesity in Australia.

Through working together, each of the agencies involved were able to combine their knowledge and resources and develop 8 clear, practical, evidence-based actions which the Federal Government can undertake to combat the nations strained physical and economic health. If you want to learn more about the report, head to the Obesity Policy Coalition website or follow this link: [opc.org.au/tippingthescales](http://opc.org.au/tippingthescales)

**Figure 35.** Summary of the eight critical actions identified as part of Tipping the Scales.<sup>61</sup>



## 5.2 Using coalitions to reach consensus

Policy change often happens as a result of negotiations and coordination among coalitions within policy processes. As we discussed earlier, a coalition is a union of people and organisations working to influence outcomes on a specific problem. Coalitions are critical as they provide an organised sector response to your advocacy ask or issue.

Coalitions take time to develop and are sometimes messy. If you are used to straightforward power, they can be extremely frustrating. Yet the benefits of a coalition for advocacy far outweigh the disadvantages. The most important benefit of a coalition is the ability to have many people and many organisations repeating consistent advocacy asks.

Imagine if a local politician wanted to develop a policy or position statement on how to get more affordable fresh produce to remote communities. This politician might approach many NGOs in the food and public health spheres but every single organisation identifies a different priority. There is no consensus on this issue, making it difficult for the politician to progress the proposed policy.

If on the other hand, the politician contacts the NGOs and public health agencies and gets a sense that the majority suggest that the best policy solution is to focus on the pricing of foods in community stores (as an example), then there is a far greater chance of this policy being progressed.

Consensus is defined as a “decision or position reflecting the collective thinking of the team that all members participated in developing, understand fully, believe is workable, can live with, and will actively support”<sup>62</sup>. This definition highlights how consensus is not just about getting the majority vote when you make a decision, rather it is about unifying your team so they are working towards a common key message, and united advocacy ask.<sup>65</sup> A key message about consensus is the willingness of the decision makers to compromise.<sup>62</sup>

So, how do you reach a consensus? The following points by McIntire<sup>41</sup> show you just how.

1. **Make sure everyone fully understand the issue being addressed.**<sup>62</sup> Often consensus fails to be reached because those involved do not fully understand the issue or what aspect of the issue you are trying to influence.<sup>62</sup> Through providing evidence and discussing the context, it is possible to persuade most to agree on the next steps.<sup>62</sup>
2. **Determine if anyone in the coalition disagrees with what is being discussed.**<sup>62</sup> If done thoughtfully, this step will encourage those who may not fully agree with the advocacy ask to voice their opinions, and allow for any disagreements to be discussed and hopefully resolved.<sup>62</sup>
3. **Allow everyone in the coalition to visualise their position on the advocacy ask.**<sup>62</sup> Coalition members will want to feel heard and acknowledged.<sup>62</sup> There are many ways to achieve this with two suggestions offered.<sup>62</sup> The first is to ask each coalition member (preferably before you meet) to think about the advocacy ask individually and write down a short precis.<sup>62</sup> The Chair can then



assess them prior to the first meeting.<sup>62</sup> If this is done, members' opinions will not be influenced by the opinions of those around them, but they will feel more confident about their conclusions than they would in a group environment where others' opinions may be extremely different from theirs.<sup>62</sup> Another strategy is to call for a vote within the coalition using nominal group techniques, or similar, to provide a representation of where people stand.<sup>62</sup>

4. **Determine if the minority can live with majority's decision.**<sup>62</sup> This allows for those who do not agree with the advocacy ask to recognise if they are able to actively accept and support the advocacy ask.<sup>62</sup> If they cannot, then they need to leave the coalition to allow it to move forward.<sup>62</sup>
5. **Seek to convince people of the concept, then convince them of the particulars.**<sup>62</sup> If people can agree to the general advocacy ask it means they are a lot closer to agreement.<sup>62</sup> Any particulars or processes can be resolved when the coalition is in agreement.<sup>62</sup>
6. **Break down the advocacy ask and flesh out the issue.**<sup>62</sup> Sometimes an individual may be caught up on a detail.<sup>62</sup> By methodically discussing each part of the advocacy ask, it will be possible to address these details.<sup>62</sup>
7. **If consensus fails to be reached, temporarily table the decision.**<sup>62</sup> If this occurs and no consensus can be reached, discuss reservations.<sup>62</sup> If members have a valid or personal objection give them an opportunity to persuade the rest of the coalition.<sup>62</sup> If they do not have an acceptable objection, it may be necessary to insist they agree or leave the coalition.<sup>62</sup>

#### CASE STUDY – REACHING CONSENSUS

##### **Pregnancy Warning Labels – A slow burn with compromise**

Written by Dr Melissa Stoneham



**Figure 36.** Alcohol consumption by both the mother and father can affect a child, making pregnancy warning labels important.<sup>63</sup>

Pregnancy can be a very exciting time. There are many things to think about from prams, to maternity clothes, to nutrition. One of the public health sectors asks for women who are pregnant, planning pregnancy or breastfeeding, is they abstain from drinking alcohol. No amount of alcohol during pregnancy has been proven as safe.<sup>65</sup> The evidence is clear – alcohol causes birth defects. All alcohol crosses the placenta harming the baby.<sup>65</sup>

The advocacy ask from the public health sector was to have mandated alcohol warnings on all bottled alcohol.

As a compromise, in 2011, the alcohol industry was given a seven year window to voluntarily introduce these warning labels. In 2018, it was estimated that only 75% of alcohol bottles carried the warning, and the look of these warnings varied in size, position and prominence.<sup>66</sup>

In some instances, the pregnancy warning message was accompanied by contradictory information such as the message 'enjoy in moderation', which confused the advice that pregnant women should not drink alcohol.<sup>67</sup>





The public health sector had been lobbying for pregnancy warning labels to be legislated throughout this seven year period. It advocated that warning labels would increase awareness and prompt discussions about the risks of consuming alcohol during pregnancy. Research conducted throughout this period identified that only 74% of women aged 18-40 were aware of the warnings on drink labels.<sup>68</sup> An evaluation of the pregnancy warning labels and a suite of policy options were developed to guide policy development in this space. It considered issues including mandatory versus voluntary application; most appropriate pictogram; and the most appropriate, and easy to understand message to discourage drinking during pregnancy.

In 2018, the Australian and New Zealand Ministers agreed to mandate pregnancy warning labels for all bottles of alcohol.<sup>69</sup> The warning will include a pictogram and a warning statement developed by Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ).<sup>69</sup>



**Figure 37.** Infographic by the Foundation for Alcohol Research & Education (FARE) about the necessity for pregnancy warning labels.<sup>64</sup>



## 6.0 What is the key message?

*"No matter what anybody tells you, words and ideas can change the world."*

Robin Williams<sup>70</sup>

The advocacy key messages you develop will directly relate to what policy change you want to achieve. You need to have clear and simple messaging for your issue to ensure a consistent approach, and to provide something politicians or other policy makers can pick up and run with. In the tobacco space, one of the advocacy asks was for plain packaging. The 'ask' was crystal clear. The key message of advocates from all States, Territories and organisations then was consistent, stating they required tobacco packs to be 'generic' or plain, with brands undistinguishable.

In an advocacy campaign or program it is important to think about what your key message/s will be to support 'your advocacy ask for your policy outcome'. What tangible change can be made to address the issue?

A lack of consistent messaging within a partnership can lead to disastrous results. Should your coalition get the opportunity to meet with the policy maker relevant to your issue, without a clear message, they will likely walk away confused, deciding the issue is too hard to do anything about.

Having clearly identifiable and simple 'asks' and key messages will enable consensus and consistency, especially when working in a coalition; having each of your advocacy partners repeating your key

message helps prevent confusion around your issue, and ensures everyone is 'singing from the same hymn sheet'. A united voice also adding weight to your issue, showing those you are trying to influence, that this is an issue people care about.

As the Advocacy Framework has already identified, it is important to know the evidence behind your issue or 'advocacy ask' so you can advocate for change. However, when doing this, we can sometimes become bogged down in facts and figures, and lose sight of what our advocacy goal really is. To make sure you keep your eyes on the prize, it is important to develop one or more clear key messages that everyone from politicians to community members can understand, and immediately recognise what it is you want changed.

The type of key messages you develop may be vastly different in the same advocacy campaign. To win politicians over you may need to come up with a 'cost neutral' ask which can help get the ball rolling, and isn't too strenuous for them to pass through government. It is also important to think about short term wins that can keep people engaged, on the road to achieving larger policy asks.

## 6.1 Developing your message

Messaging simply means, 'telling your story.' Effective messaging involves careful consideration of your advocacy campaign's purpose, goals and audience – factors that you've already researched.

So how do you boil down your issue and ask in key messages? The following three points will assist:

- **What is the problem?**  
At its core, what is the issue that is causing a problem?
- **What is the effect?**  
How does the issue effect the individual, community or country as a whole?
- **What is the policy solution?**  
What can be changed to prevent or limit the effects of the problem?

When putting together your key message, it is important to be **clear, concise, compelling and consistent**.

- Being **clear** means keeping your message free of jargon or technical language. You may be an expert

on your issue, but you need to keep in mind that not everyone will be able to understand, or be interested in the technical details you are so familiar with.

- Keeping things **concise** means that you can deliver your message quickly. Often you will only have a limited opportunity to present your message, such as when meeting with politicians or talking to the media, so it's important you can deliver your message while you have the chance. Use sound bites – 7 to 12 seconds is perfect.
- **Compelling** – Ask, 'Why should my audience care about this? How can I make them care?' You need a key message that will collectively define both the problem and the solution.
- **Consistency** means making sure your message is repeatable. When presenting your topic it is important that you saturate your audience with the key message so they will remember it.

### TIP

#### Something to try – The Elevator pitch

When developing your key messages keep in mind how you would convince a policy maker or politician if you only had 30 seconds with them. This is where the elevator pitch can be helpful. If you were in an elevator with the Member of Parliament or policy maker relevant to your issue, how would you convince them while you had them as a captive audience? What would you say? Which key points would you use to really drive home your message?

When developing this pitch remember to be clear, concise and consistent. Practice your pitch on team members to see if you can shorten your message to 30 seconds without excluding any really important points.

## 6.2 Framing your message

Framing is everything when it comes to getting your message across in the way that you intended. The frame you build around your key messages, shapes and defines your story for the audience.

Framing your message effectively reinforces consensus. Always keep your framing consistent with your overall advocacy goal.

If you think about framing literally, this concept becomes easier to understand. A frame focuses attention on the painting it surrounds. Different frames draw out different aspects of the work. Putting a painting in a red frame brings out the red in the work; putting the same painting in a blue frame brings out the blue. How someone frames an issue influences how others see it, and focuses their attention on particular aspects of it. When developing a message, no matter how wonderful you think it is, you always need to consider the various lenses through which your audience will interpret your message, as well as the lenses through which your media contacts will likely view the story.

Framing is the essence of targeting a communication to a specific audience.

When you are framing a message, make sure you consider who your target audience is. This is discussed in greater detail in the section who are you influencing, but for now make sure you consider if the message is appropriate to the people you are trying to convince. If you were trying to convince the general public you would not present a technically heavy message full of jargon, you would make it simple and straight-forward, and something someone with any level of experience could understand.



Figure 38. An example of just how framing something can improve the outlook.<sup>71</sup>

### 6.3 Things to consider when deciding on your key message

When considering how best to deliver your message, you might want to consider using a community champion. This strategy allows you to convey the personal impact of an issue, and how someone in the community has been personally affected and begun to work towards a solution. Similarly,

using a celebrity champion can provide credibility to a message. If people see someone they admire suggesting a course of action, they will be more likely to take notice. Champions put a face to the issue, and motivate and inspire people who may not have been engaged otherwise.

Present your message simplistically. If you are able to, using numbers and figures which represent the effect of the issue can convey significance. If you choose to use numbers, make sure you use them carefully so they help tell your story. If you overload, the message may be difficult to remember. So fewer numbers is better. For example, if you were discussing the number of new cases of breast cancer, you would not say 18,235 people were diagnosed in 2018, but rather say 13% of new cancer diagnoses were breast cancer.<sup>72</sup>

If you choose to visually represent your message using an infographic, map or graph, ensure it can simplify the data, and makes it easier to understand. This strategy is especially useful if there is an abundance of evidence for your issue. Time poor policy makers will not read large swags of information, so an image that conveys the key points will do a far better job at convincing them. Although they are primarily a public health mass-media campaign, LiveLighter® has conveyed complex nutrition information in easy to understand infographics, enabling health professionals and members of the public to easily digest the key messages. The WA Department of Health also uses infographics to easily convey key messages in reports and simplify statistics (as shown in Figure 40). An example of infographics used by each organisation is provided below.

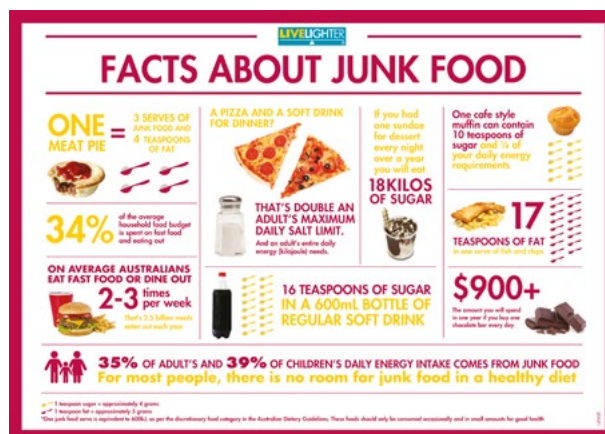


Figure 39. LiveLighter's® 'Facts About Junk Food' Infographic. Courtesy of the WA Department of Health.<sup>73</sup>



## Smoking and Secondary Students in Australia 2017

Figure 40. Smoking and Secondary Students in Australia 2017.<sup>73</sup>

## CASE STUDY – FRAMING YOUR MESSAGE

## Confectionery Free Checkouts

Written by Dr Melissa Stoneham

Pester power ... most parents have experienced this. Confectionery positioned at supermarket check outs just encourages impulse buying. Supermarkets deliberately position junk foods at eye height and within arm's reach of young children at the checkout, making parents and children a captive audience at this point in their shopping trip.

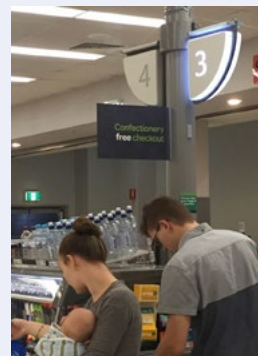
Parents' Voice which is an online network of parents who are interested in improving the food and activity environments of Australian children wanted change. They wanted to see the end of confectionery at checkouts.

A survey of parents was conducted with 72% of parents responding to the survey saying they would consider changing from their usual supermarket if a rival supermarket implemented a 50% confectionery free checkout policy.<sup>75</sup>



When formulating the advocacy ask, Parents' Voice knew they wanted to replace confectionery with healthy foods and non-food items at the checkouts. Yet the advocacy ask was more specific than that and was 'For 50% of checkouts and their immediate vicinity to be free from the sale of all junk food and unhealthy beverages'.

If you are interested in some of the advocacy strategies within this campaign you can visit the Parent's Voice website at <https://parentsvoice.org.au/our-work/healthy-checkouts/>

Figure 41. Checkouts laden with confectionaries and the confectionery-free alternatives.<sup>76-78</sup>



## 7.0 Which advocacy strategies will you use?

Now the fun begins! All the hard yards have been achieved – you have your advocacy ask, the evidence and the key messages, a working coalition and you have identified who you are influencing and opposing. It is now time to decide exactly what advocacy strategies you will use to influence the broader sector and increase awareness for your advocacy ask.

Deciding what advocacy strategies to use and the method of delivery will really depend on the nature of the advocacy ask and key messages, your collective resources and available time.

Effective strategies are driven by insights into the factors that will secure influence. This section of the Toolkit showcases common advocacy tools and techniques that you could use to achieve your advocacy ask.

The tools and techniques to be discussed include:

- letter writing
- letter to the Editor and opinion pieces
- manifesto and submissions
- engaging politicians
- consensus issue papers
- engaging media
  - traditional
  - online
- celebrating success
- community champion
- advocacy launch
- branding/campaigns
- mobilising groups

- opinion polling
- rallies.

To get started, the following case study details the End Alcohol Advertising in Sport campaign, to demonstrate how the campaign uses numerous advocacy strategies in their efforts to limit alcohol industry influence in Australian sport.

### CASE STUDY

#### How different advocacy approaches are needed to support an 'advocacy ask' – End Alcohol Advertising in Sport

Written by Jemima Turner, Foundation for Alcohol Research & Education



**Figure 42.** End Alcohol Advertising In Sport campaign images.<sup>79</sup>

#### The Issue and Evidence

Professional sport in Australia is saturated with alcohol branding, advertising and player endorsements, which have a powerful and lasting influence in popular culture. The major sporting codes – the NRL, AFL and Cricket Australia rely heavily on the revenue from alcohol sponsorship deals.





For more than 40 years, alcohol marketers have profited from an exemption in Australia's advertising rules that allows them to run alcohol ads and sponsorships during children's viewing hours on free-to-air television when sport is televised.

Young Australians are especially vulnerable to the relentless marketing tactics used by the alcohol industry to attract the next generation of drinkers. The deliberate association drawn between alcohol and sporting success through advertising encourages young people to start drinking earlier and to drink more often.

Backed by this research and recent polling showing strong support from the majority of Australian adults, key health and public interest groups launched the End Alcohol Advertising in Sport (EAAiS) campaign in October 2018. The campaign's long-term goal is to spearhead the phasing out of all alcohol advertising in sport, and in February 2019 Baseball Australia became the first national code to join the campaign.

#### The Advocacy Ask and the Campaign

The EAAiS campaign's first campaign asked "to end the sports exemption in the Commercial Television Industry Code of Practice (The Code)." To raise awareness of the need to remove the exemption and to build support for change, a special digital campaign was developed and put into field in January 2019.

The NO ALCOHOL ADVERTISING TO KIDS. NO EXCEPTION. (#NoException) was developed to increase supporter sign-ups through targeted social media posts and to build grass roots momentum for the campaign. This was done before mobilising supporter numbers to call for action on 'the ask'.

EAAiS partners generated pressure on the sporting codes and key political decision-makers to remove the exemption and to eradicate alcohol sponsorship from professional sporting codes.



Advocacy tactics in the first phase of the campaign are in the diagram below. Specific campaign elements included:

- External qualitative testing of campaign messaging, materials and branding prior to roll-out.
- Official website, social media pages and accompanying collateral.
- Acquisition of and endorsements by official Campaign Champions (ambassadors).
- Official campaign launch, unveiling campaign branding and objectives and introducing Campaign Champions and campaign collateral, including high quality creative and campaign video.
- Media release and editorials picked up by mainstream and marketing media outlets.
- Continually utilising and optimising free/mass media opportunities throughout the campaign through planned events and opportunistic positioning.
- Social and digital media campaigning.
- Stakeholder engagement with third-party/supporter organisations in relevant sectors.
- Partnering with sporting codes to go alcohol-free.
- Campaign/PR stunts to elevate the campaign.
- Identifying and educating key audiences.
- Political advocacy and lobbying key policymakers.



**Figure 43.** Summary of the strategies used by the End Alcohol Advertising in Sport campaign.

## ADVOCACY STRATEGY 1 – LETTER WRITING

Writing a letter is an art. Although a traditional advocacy strategy, there is still plenty of opportunities to write a letter of influence. Choosing to write a letter may influence a specific action or outcome on an issue (e.g. no unhealthy sponsorship in kids' sport), or may discourage a specific action or outcome (e.g. not having shaded seats available at a sports venue for spectators). A letter may also prove useful when you want to remind government official of policy requirements, if they are not being met (e.g. removing junk foods in vending machines at hospitals). Of course, if you want to congratulate or praise actions taken, then that is also a reason to write a letter.

To learn more about how to write a letter for your advocacy work, go to the [Advocacy Tips and Tools](#) section of this Toolkit.

## ADVOCACY STRATEGY 2 – LETTERS TO THE EDITOR AND OPINION PIECES

Getting published in the media will increase your reach, and in some cases generate conversations around your advocacy issue or ask. Politicians do read the newspapers and take note of what is published.

A letter to the Editor provides you with the opportunity to succinctly share your opinion about an issue you feel strongly about in the media. Given the limited word count they can be put together quickly and easily, allowing you to promptly respond to news and other letters published in reply. Opinion pieces allow you to discuss an issue in greater detail, giving you ample opportunity to elaborate on your advocacy topic in a conversational way. Often published as an article, you will need to work with your local paper to see how best to present your message.

There is a skill in getting published. As an advocate, always remember to keep it short, place your key messages in clear view, use evidence to make your points, and include a call to action.

### EXAMPLE

**Opinion Piece to promote a sugar tax**  
Cancer Council WA are a successful example of an organisation using Opinion Pieces support their advocacy. By gauging community support for a sugar tax in Australia, the organisation was able to bring further attention to their issue, and create a good media grab.



Figure 44. Tweet by Cancer Council WA about the release of their opinion piece.<sup>80</sup>

To read the opinion piece follow the link below:  
<https://thewest.com.au/news/health/kids-lives-cut-short-without-sugar-tax-warn-experts-ng-b881044087z>



**EXAMPLE****Letters to the Editor about minimum alcohol pricing cutting alcohol harm**

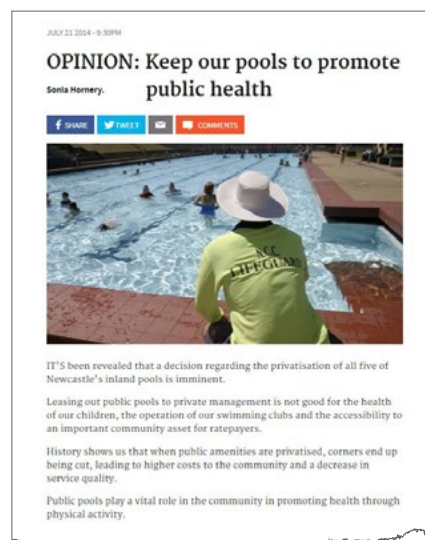
**Figure 45.** Letter to the Editor by Research Fellow Julia Stafford regarding the benefits of minimum pricing.<sup>81</sup>

**EXAMPLE****Letter to the Editor about footy stars using their influence to promote junk food**

**Figure 46.** Letter to the editor by Ashleigh Parnell regarding the responsibility of footy players in what they choose to promote.<sup>81</sup>

**EXAMPLE****Opinion Piece to keep public pools open**

The City of Newcastle was set to privatise their 5 inland swimming pools. The letter argued that with the low levels of physical activity and rising obesity rates, there is a real need for swimming lessons and a venue for sport. A link to the NSW Water Safety Strategy was used.



**Figure 47.** Keep our pools to promote public health opinion piece by Sonia Hornery.<sup>82</sup>

To read the Opinion Piece click here <https://www.theherald.com.au/story/2431849/opinion-keep-our-pools-to-promote-public-health/>

**ADVOCACY STRATEGY 3 – MANIFESTO AND SUBMISSIONS**

Manifestos can be a useful advocacy strategy to provide politicians and policy makers with your key asks. Manifestos include the key priority areas, supporting evidence and clear asks. Commonly manifestos are used by organisations in the lead up to state and federal elections. It is also useful to provide a manifesto from a coalition of partners to add strength to the call for action.

Submissions are a way for individual advocates and organisations to have a say on changes to policy. State and federal governments regularly have inquiries that are open for submission or call

for submissions on documents they are developing. Commonly submissions have set requirements on how responses must be received or responded to. In some cases you may be required to provide comment on a series of questions. In other cases you can provide an open response with your position on the issue. Public submission responses may be made available on the relevant government website.

To see an example of a manifesto PHAIWA created for the 2017 election, use the following link: <https://www.phaiwa.org.au/public-health-expenditure/>

The Inquiry on Personal Choice and Community Safety is also another great example of submissions, which you can find here: [http://www.parliament.wa.gov.au/Parliament/commit.nsf/\(EvidenceOnly\)/7CD5D225E7FF118C482582F80027F2B7?opendocument#Details](http://www.parliament.wa.gov.au/Parliament/commit.nsf/(EvidenceOnly)/7CD5D225E7FF118C482582F80027F2B7?opendocument#Details)

#### ADVOCACY STRATEGY 4 – ENGAGING POLITICIANS

It is important to identify the level of government that holds responsibility for your issue and the proposed solutions. Always remember that each level of government has its own policy development and legislative processes.

Public health issues frequently cross portfolio boundaries, so it may be relevant to raise issues with all the appropriate portfolios, and describe how their activities impact on the health and wellbeing of the community.

Talk to all sides of government and minor parties. Remember that today's opposition is tomorrow's government and today's backbencher is tomorrow's Cabinet Minister (or Prime Minister). By building networks of political contacts in each of the major political parties, you can ensure that your issue has more long-term support.

Relevant tools for engaging with politicians:

- **media release** (attracting media that will influence politicians)
- **letters to politicians**
- **meetings with politicians** (or with Ministers or their staff).

#### CASE STUDY – ENGAGING POLITICIANS

##### The political champion who took on Big Alcohol

Written by Lisa Baker, Member of the Legislative Assembly of WA for the seat of Maylands (2008-Present)



**Figure 48.** Lisa Baker and supporters protesting the proposed Dan Murphy's development.

During my first term as a Member of Parliament (2008-2012), I was contacted by residents opposed to the plan by a multinational supermarket to build a destination liquor outlet in Maylands with over 1000m<sup>2</sup> of cheap alcohol.

The fight against First Choice was a long and active campaign that ran over three years and engaged many residents in **door knocking**, **gathering signatures** from those opposed, and **publicising the issue**. My office spent many hours **preparing and disseminating information**, and garnered support from local associations, such as the Maylands Residents and Ratepayers, along with concerned citizens and local businesses.

It was imperative that we **engaged with the many service providers** that worked with the street present people and those affected by alcohol and drugs. There were more than 9 services within a one kilometre radius of the proposed liquor warehouse. At that time there were 16 businesses retailing alcohol within a one kilometre radius of the site.

I had great **support from local and state media** that played the 'community versus





big business' card. They also wrote about the interaction between discounted alcohol, over-consumption, street drinking/anti-social behaviour and violence.

I had to gain an **understanding of the complex legal process** that surround an application for a liquor licence. I am very grateful that experienced friends from the industry gave me good advice.

I contacted the **stakeholders** who were concerned about the proposed liquor store to let them know that they could make a submission to the WA Liquor Commission, and also register as parties to the process. I **appeared at the Hearings with my community**, and **gave evidence** on their behalf. The WA Liquor Commission rejected Coles' application for their liquor retailing license at that site. Coles appealed to the Supreme Court and lost. The community won the day.

In my second Term of Office (2012-2016), I was dismayed when Woolworths applied to the City of Bayswater for planning permission to build a 1200m<sup>2</sup> Dan Murphy's in a residential area. Woolworths was seeking an extension to their existing liquor license at the Peninsula Tavern from the WA Liquor Commission, in hopes they would allow the very small existing venue to be developed in to a 1200m<sup>2</sup> Dan Murphy's take away liquor warehouse. My community was opposed to this plan and we started on the second fight against a destination liquor outlet. This time, I knew what I needed to do!

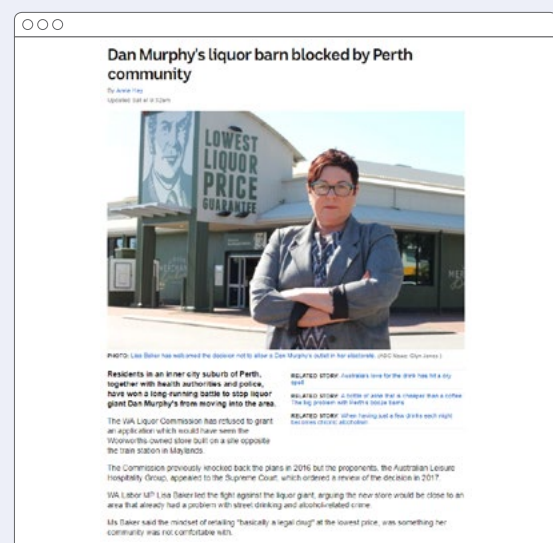
The site for the Big Box Liquor outlet had a residential border with the Maylands town site. I drafted new petitions that were carefully worded to be neutral and not favour or oppose the planned Dan Murphy's. I arranged **public meetings** with residents on site to hear their views. **My community embarked on this second journey with me in confidence that their concerns would be heard.**

**Planning was key.** I approached the City of Bayswater seeking to amend their Town



Planning Scheme to exclude bottle shops over 350m<sup>2</sup> from being approved in the town precinct and after two attempts, this **amendment was accepted**. However, the Planning Application for Woolworths pre-dated the amendment so it was unable to be stopped. Once Woolworths secured their Planning Approval they moved to the WA Liquor Commission to seek an extension to their existing liquor retail license. The Commission rejected their application and Woolworths appealed to the Supreme Court. The Court accepted their appeal and sent the application back to the Commission to be reconsidered on a number of technical grounds. The Commission reviewed the application and their decision. It was again rejected. We hope that this is the end of that fight.

Between 2008 and 2016 the **WA Parliament heard from me many times** as I called for **better legislation** to address the rapid expansion of these outlets. When the McGowan Government was elected in 2017, we moved quickly to amend the WA Liquor Act to improve tourism and reduce red tape. Most importantly, we **amended the laws** to stop the proliferation of these huge destination liquor outlets and better manage the sites where they can be built.



**Figure 49.** Article about the efforts of Lisa Baker and her community.<sup>82</sup>

## ADVOCACY STRATEGY 5 – CONSENSUS ISSUE PAPERS

A consensus issue paper provides a way for current evidence-informed thinking on an issue to be shared. This enables potential coalition members and others to be kept up-to-date on your issue and can be used to influence them particularly if the issue has some uncertainty surrounding it.

When used for advocacy, this strategy disseminates evidence to support the advocacy issue, the key priority areas, and potential solutions.

Let's take climate change as an example. Policy-makers and the media frequently assert that climate science is highly uncertain. In 2019, the former Australian Deputy Liberal leader Julie Bishop stated "Our party is divided on the issue of climate change and whether, or how we respond. Interestingly the opinion polls consistently show strong community support for action on climate change."<sup>84</sup> This statement clearly indicates a lack of political consensus. It follows the release of a consensus paper in the form of an open letter in the Lancet that was signed by 22 prominent Australian scientists and health professionals. This consensus issues paper criticised the Australian government for dismissing the findings of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's recent 1.5C report.<sup>85</sup> The paper used all available evidence to demand the Australian Government take climate change much more seriously, for the sake of the health of our children, and future generations of Australians. Very powerful indeed!

To read the 'Australian health professionals' statement on climate change and health' consensus paper by Arabena et al., you can use the following link [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(18\)32610-2/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(18)32610-2/fulltext)

## ADVOCACY STRATEGY 6 – MEDIA

### Traditional media

Media advocacy is the strategic use of news making through traditional avenues such as television, radio and newspapers, and through social media avenues

including Twitter, Facebook and Instagram. Media can be used to promote public debate, and generate support for changes in community norms and policies.

In advocacy you can use many different types of media to get your point across. Media can be paid (e.g. advertising) or unpaid (through editorial, letters to the Editor, radio and television coverage).

Your ability to generate unpaid media will depend on how effective your relationship is with journalists and producers. The strength of your relationships will enhance your ability to get your story out there. Journalists and producers rely, to an extent, on being sold good stories. People are often nervous when approaching journalists, worrying that the journalist will have their own agenda. However, you are in the best position to sell your story or issue effectively. With time and practice at writing media releases and talking to media professionals, your relationship will develop and you will get greater media coverage.

If you want to learn more about how to best operate in front of a TV camera, register your interest with PHAIWA for the 'Getting Your Message Across on Television & Radio' courses we offer, by sending an email to: [phaiwa@curtin.edu.au](mailto:phaiwa@curtin.edu.au).

Working with journalists and radio announcers requires different skills. You will usually contact the media (newspapers and radio) with a media release. An example of a media release and tips for writing media releases are presented in the Tips and Tools section of this Toolkit. However promotional methods for radio differ in how they are presented. Radio grabs are often written so they can be read directly by presenters (see the information about radio grabs in the Tips & Tools section of this Toolkit).

It is important to familiarise yourself with the way health and social issues are written up in the media by regularly reading local, state and national newspapers. Relevant tools to use when working with the media:

- [media release \(and knowledge of media\)](#)
- [media alert](#)
- [radio grab](#)
- [media contact information](#)
- [letter to the Editor](#).



## Online media

Creating and maintaining websites, Facebook pages, Twitter and Instagram accounts, and other social media sites with up-to date, credible information help to easily convey information and educate the public and decision makers on your advocacy issue, also providing a call to action. Increasingly, websites are being used effectively to conduct online polling to gauge public opinion on an issue.

Harnessing online media will assist in disseminating information about your advocacy strategies or issues, and should integrate some interactive features to allow people to provide comments or ideas. Examples include online polls, online petitions and blogging.

The following tips from PHAIWA will help you engage with the media:

1. Have a 'story' to sell.
2. Have at least 3 strong points on the issue. Stick to them. Limit jargon and statistics.
3. Identify key 'sound bites' that make your story interesting.
4. Be clean and assertive about your story.
5. Make it clear if it is a general release vs an 'exclusive'.
6. Time it right.
7. Ensure those quoted can be contacted.
8. Think visual.
9. Size does matter – keep it concise.
10. Get to know your media but avoid pestering. Find out how the media like to receive information.

### EXAMPLE

#### Examples of traditional and online media



Figure 50. Newspaper article highlighting the winners of the Local Government Policy Awards.<sup>86</sup>

### EXAMPLE

#### Examples of traditional and online media



Figure 51. Dr Melissa Stoneham appearing on Channel 9 News to discuss kids increased junk food exposure during Halloween.

## EXAMPLE

### Examples of traditional and online media



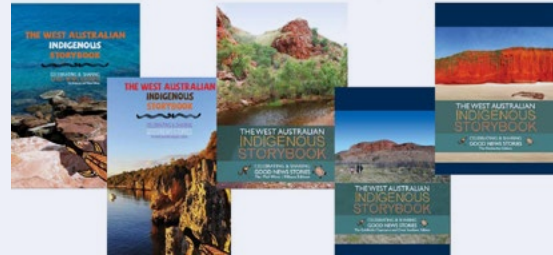
**Figure 52.** Blog written by Dr Melissa Stoneham about the benefits of sport.<sup>87</sup>

## ADVOCACY STRATEGY 7 – CELEBRATING SUCCESS

As with any work you do, it is always important to celebrate the success you have. Doing this ensures you and your team stay motivated, and helps to spread the word about the great work you are doing.

## CASE STUDY

### The West Australian Indigenous Storybook



**Figure 53.** The West Australian Indigenous Storybook.

PHAIWA's West Australian Indigenous Storybook is a wonderful advocacy resource, which helps disseminate the incredible work Aboriginal people are doing throughout the state to improve their communities. This resource also helps to present positive stories about Aboriginal people that are so often not represented in the media.

By highlighting the work that is already being done and the successes being had, the stories recorded in the Storybook highlight just how communities hold the key to their own transformation, and help to empower Aboriginal leaders and advocates to make changes and speak up about the great work they do.



**Figure 53.** Stories from the West Australian Indigenous Storybook.

To find out more about the Storybook click here <https://www.phaiwa.org.au/indigenous-storybook/>

## ADVOCACY STRATEGY 8 – COMMUNITY CHAMPION

*“A champion is a charismatic advocate of a belief, practice, program, policy and/or technology.”*  
Rabin, Brownson, Haire-Joshu, Kreuter and Weaver<sup>88</sup>

As the Toolkit has already highlighted there are a number of ways advocacy can take shape. Sometimes it can be a team effort. Other times it may be better to highlight the work of an individual ‘champion’ to showcase the issue and reinforce the advocacy ask. Advocacy champions provide inspiration, and can motivate others to take part in your advocacy program.

Most often, a public health advocacy champion is an influential political leader, public health practitioner or researcher, or another authority figure who uses his or her expertise and professional contacts to facilitate a policy or program. The level or type of change a champion creates will vary depending on their sphere of influence. In some advocacy programs, a number of champions are used to increase the reach.

### CASE STUDY – ADVOCACY CHAMPION

#### An Advocacy Rock Star – Emeritus Professor Mike Daube AO

Written by Dr Melissa Stoneham



**Figure 55.** Emeritus Professor Mike Daube AO.

“You can’t be wrong if you are right.”

Mike Daube describes himself as a driven public health campaigner. But he is much more than this. He is a public health advocacy rock star.



As a child, Mike was surrounded by smart people. His parents were refugees from Nazi Germany; his father went on to be Regius Professor of Civil Law at Oxford; and he describes his mother as very bright, speaking perfect, accent-less English – except for the way she described the fuchsias in her garden. One of his brothers entered university at 15 years of age and went on to be a college president in the US; the other was a talented musician who became a television producer in Canada.

When Mike left his native Britain for Perth 35 years ago as a refugee from Thatcherism, he was described in a BMJ editorial as “probably Britain’s pre-eminent health campaigner”, and he has since been credited with helping to save millions of lives.

After a short stint in a managerial position, Mike joined SHELTER, the national campaign for the homeless. In 1973 he became the first full-time Director of Action on Smoking and Health (ASH), and this is where Mike’s passion emerged. He knew there was a massive problem – but as Mike puts it, “everyone was sitting on their hands”. In the early 70s, it was Mike who changed the face of anti-smoking campaigning. He took on the big tobacco companies, and consequently changed how we approach tobacco and public health campaigning. He partnered with the powerful medical profession and attacked the big tobacco companies. Using strategies such as buying a single share in a tobacco company, which gave him the right to sit in on shareholder meetings and ask questions at the AGMs - like how many deaths were the company’s products responsible for in the last year – the Chairman of Rothmans offered him generous funding to work on any campaign of his choice other than tobacco. He also played a role in starting major international tobacco control programs.

On an early speaking tour to Australia, the headline from his first interview in the *Canberra Times* read, “Mild Messiah of the world’s lungs”.





In 1984, Mike was poached by the WA Health Department for senior roles overseeing first health promotion, then public health. Mike has proved to be a formidable force both in tobacco control and other public health issues, developing health policy, changing public perceptions, overseeing innovative programs, and as an active campaigner for prevention and public health advocacy.

He has held many positions, including Director General of the Health Department of Western Australia and Chair of the National Public Health Partnership; in 2005 becoming Professor of Health Policy at Curtin University, and Director of the Public Health Advocacy Institute of WA. He has been chair of many boards and committees, including President of the Public Health Association of Australia, President of the Australian Council on Smoking and Health, and Co-chair of the National Alliance for Action on Alcohol. He was Chair of the Australian Government's Tobacco Expert Committee that recommended and advocated for tobacco plain packaging – a world first – also working for WHO and the governments and health organisations in more than 40 countries.

Among Mike's many awards are Officer in the Order of Australia (AO), the American Cancer Society's Luther Terry Distinguished Career Award, the World Federation of Public Health Associations' Leavell Award for Outstanding Global Health Leadership, two WHO medals, and Western Australian of the Year in 2018.

When asked what his major achievement is, Mike says that over time he has been successful in drawing attention to smoking, and has been one piece of the jigsaw that has pieced together comprehensive approaches to reducing smoking rates, and preventing deaths associated with smoking, having been privileged to work with some wonderful people and organisations along the way. He is very modest!

Yet Mike has copped his fair share of criticism. He was targeted by one of our national



newspapers as being Australia's 'wowsler in chief', he has been followed, spied on, unsuccessfully sued, offered funding not to work on tobacco, and had many personal threats. As Mike says - if you want to make change you have to run the risk of being criticized.

In recent years, Mike's gorgeous dog Ollie, aka Dr Olivia Doll, has partnered with Mike as a ploy to show up dodgy "predatory" medical journals. She succeeded in being appointed to seven editorial boards, has had two spoof papers published, and has her own [Twitter account](#).

As Emeritus Professor at Curtin University, Mike continues to inspire many advocates both experienced and emerging and is very genuine and generous with his time and advice.

He likes to quote the late Rob Riley – "You can't be wrong if you're right. Just keep fighting".

#### CASE STUDY – ADVOCACY CHAMPION

##### **Samantha Menezes – the Perth mum who took on WA's Secondary Supply Laws**

Written by Samantha Menezes



**Figure 56.** Samantha Menezes.<sup>89</sup>

After her son was offered alcohol at a party, determined mother-of-four Samantha Menezes realised that WA was falling behind most states and territories in protecting young people from alcohol. Sam discovered that no 'secondary







supply laws' were in place in WA, meaning minors could be supplied with alcohol on private premises without parental permission.

### Overview

- There was significant concern about alcohol and young people.
- Various organisations (including the PHAIWA Alcohol Programs Team, formerly the McCusker Centre) were calling for action on alcohol and young people, including secondary supply laws.
- Sam created a petition in March 2013 to urge the WA Government to introduce secondary supply laws.
- The petition quickly gained momentum and attracted significant media coverage.
- Peter Abetz MLA tabled the petition in Parliament in July 2013.
- The WA Government was reviewing liquor laws at the time, creating an ideal opportunity for changes to be put forward. Following significant community concern, submissions, and representations from and discussions with concerned organisations in health and law enforcement, the Independent Review Committee recommended that secondary supply laws be introduced in WA.
- The WA Government supported the recommendation and the Liquor Legislation Amendment Bill 2015 (which included secondary supply laws) was successfully debated and passed through the Parliament.
- Secondary supply laws came into effect in WA on 20 November 2015. They were accompanied by an education campaign associated with the Mental Health Commission's *Alcohol. Think Again* campaign

### Actions

- Online petition on Change.org
- Media interviews
- Social media
- Meeting with Politicians and key influencers
- Ask for advice from experts
- Write letters, emails and submissions
- Write Opinion Pieces, or letters to the Editor
- Public Speaking Opportunities



Key factors contributing to Sam's success

- Being passionate and persistent
- Being open to windows of opportunity
- Reactive advocacy
- Creating and maintaining partnerships
- Working with the media
- Community voice
- One person can make a difference

### The win

The Bill containing secondary supply laws was introduced to the WA Parliament on 19 August 2015. It was debated and, being strongly supported by both sides of the Parliament, was passed. The laws came into effect on 20 November 2015, just 3 days before the official 2015 Leavers event. This was a great result. Sam was recognised for her campaign with three awards: the Injury Control Council's Outstanding Achievement Award in 2013, the McCusker Centre for Action on Alcohol and Youth Community in Action Award in 2013, and the Public Health Association of Australia (WA Branch) President's Award in 2015.

### Ongoing work

- Regional Community Development Manager at the Alcohol and Drug Foundation
- Opportunities for advocacy within this role
- Secondary Supply Laws high on the agenda in community as a result of this campaign
- Feature in Alcohol and Other Drug Management Plans in many WA Communities

If you would like to read more about Sam's work on getting 'secondary supply laws' introduced in WA, you can read an extended case study by PHAIWA's Alcohol Programs Team at the following link: <https://alcohol.phaiwa.org.au/assets/publications/factsheets/Community-Campaign-for-Secondary-Supply-Laws-in-WA.pdf>

## ADVOCACY STRATEGY 9 – ADVOCACY LAUNCH

Traditional press conferences have been replaced by new formats and experiences to create awareness. Holding a launch to kick start an advocacy campaign or to promote an advocacy goal is a great way to generate interest. A launch has a creative component. Launches need to be interesting, and they need to be newsworthy so you get media coverage. Often launches include a celebrity, a special activity or some type of memorable media stunt.

### CASE STUDY – ADVOCACY LAUNCH

#### The Launch of Squeaky Clean Kids

Written by Dr Melissa Stoneham



Figure 57. The launch of Squeaky Clean Kids in Kalgoorlie.

The Squeaky Clean Kids program that aimed to reduce trachoma incidence in remote Aboriginal communities, was officially **launched** at the East Kalgoorlie Primary School in June 2017. This school was selected because it had a high number of Aboriginal students. The **'celebrity'** was the Minister for Health Hon Roger Cook MLA. The Minister not only brought his own **media** but also **attracted local Goldfields media**. The launch was **attended by a number of local politicians and community members**. The **special activity at the launch** involved an education session with the students about how to wash your hands using soap and the Mr Germ resource, followed by the **Minister washing his hands with the school**



**students.** Of course, we positioned a sign in a very visible position so the Minister would see it as he entered the school – never miss an opportunity! This launch highlights the **importance of taking the opportunities when they arise**. Having a Minister for Health present allowed for **conversations on policy change** in the area of trachoma and Aboriginal Health, beyond that of the program being launched. This launch achieved the goal of **launching** a serious program whilst integrating an element of fun.

For more information on the Squeaky Clean Kids program and the work PHAIWA is doing to reduce trachoma click on the following link: <https://www.phaiwa.org.au/indigenous-health/>



Figure 58. The launch of Squeaky Clean Kids in Kalgoorlie.

### ADVOCACY STRATEGY 10 – BRANDING

Almost everyone has heard of “Close the Gap”, “LiveLighter” or “BreastScreen”. These are all great brands, but they are not advocacy (though they do some work in this area). Given the clutter of brands and their messages in a saturated health consumer market, uptake and sustained use of actual advocacy campaigns needs alternative pathways to keep consumers interested and engaged. Branding can meet this need.

A great example of an advocacy campaign is Our Climate Our Health which you can find here: <https://www.ourclimate-ourhealth.org.au/>

### ADVOCACY STRATEGY 11 – MOBILISING GROUPS

Mobilising the community or a professional group does not just mean protest marches down the main street, or demonstrations outside Government offices. Most grass root community mobilisation strategies are much less spectacular – yet still very effective. In advocacy, social mobilisation engages a broad range of actors so that they become involved in driving change, raising awareness, and creating the demand for better policies, services and accountability.

Some of the more common ways to mobilise groups, including community members are:

- petitions: either online or hard copy
- rallies
- social media
- letter writing
- public meetings.

### ADVOCACY STRATEGY 12 – OPINION POLLING

Polling allows you to gauge community support, and identify which policies or interventions that address your issue are most supported by the community. This information can then be used as the basis of your next press release, or letter to your Local Member or Minister.

Long-time followers of PHAIWA will remember the weekly opinion polls that were shared in our E-News service each Wednesday and posted on our website. These polls were used as a method of engaging fellow advocates, but they also allowed PHAIWA to gauge the attitudes of those working in the public health community on topics such as raising the legal alcohol purchase age, support for a sugar tax and even whether health promotion should keep its name. The data collected was used to advocate for change or to provide evidence towards policy change.

Polling can be conducted by professional companies, or simply done by posting a poll on twitter, sending out a link via an email or creating a page on your organisation’s website.

#### CASE STUDY – MOBILISING GROUPS

##### Addressing alcohol in the community – Mandurah’s Local Drug Action Team

Contributed by the City of Mandurah



Figure 59. Safer Mandurah logo.

Alcohol consumption in Australia is common, with a large proportion of the population drinking at levels which put themselves, their families, and their communities at risk.<sup>90</sup> Estimates have placed the social cost of alcohol misuse as \$14 billion, due to lost productivity, traffic incidents, crime and the cost of health care.<sup>91</sup> The population most affected by alcohol is young people, who tend to consume these products at far greater quantities than is recommended, and are more likely to be victims of alcohol-related incidents, such as verbal or physical abuse, intimidation, or injury resulting in hospitalisation.<sup>92</sup>

Within the local government area of Mandurah, located on the southwest coast of Western Australia, the issue of young people’s alcohol use was identified as a particular concern.





To tackle this problem **a number of key community groups** were invited to provide their perspective on the harm alcohol was causing young people in their community, with an **eagerness to prevent this harm identified**. These groups then united to address alcohol-related issues, with the focus being to implement a **whole-of-community strategy**.<sup>93</sup> **Mobilising the skills and resources of a variety of individuals and organisations**, such as the Department of Education, the City of Mandurah and the South Metropolitan Population Health Unit, the Mandurah Local Drug Action Team (LDAT) was established, and began to address alcohol issues in the community.<sup>91</sup> Educating parents on the harms of alcohol, increasing awareness of the penalties of supplying alcohol to underage persons, and promoting messages to the community to encourage harm reduction were the strategies identified by the LDAT. By mobilising different groups with a range of experience, it has been possible for the LDAT to begin addressing these issues through **policy change**, and targeting different factors which contribute to underage drinking.

The Mandurah LDAT, and groups such as these operating throughout Australia highlight the importance of **harnessing the abilities of a range of people to drive change in the community**. This work also shows the importance of **establishing partnerships**, and **uniting to address a common goal**.

### ADVOCACY STRATEGY 13 – RALLIES

Public demonstrations or rallies, involve organising groups of people to come together at a specific place and time to call attention to a specific issue. Although we often think of rallies as negative or against “something,” they can also be positive, supporting particular policies, politicians and their ideas, specific initiatives or existing programs. They are usually meant to influence the way things are done, or the way people think. Whether they are aimed at politicians, bureaucrats, corporations or the general public, they can take many forms. These ‘street theatre’ events are a very visible way of getting your advocacy asks or specific calls to action across to those in power.



Figure 60. School Strike for Climate.<sup>94</sup>

#### EXAMPLE

Within Australia there have been a number of examples of rallies which have gained momentum, and in turn brought attention to issues being advocated for. In late 2018, school students from across Australia took the day off from the classroom to rally in different capital cities about their frustration over the government’s lack of action on climate change.<sup>95</sup>

In 2003, Australia made it in to the Guinness Book of Records, with the largest ever worldwide protest being recorded, with half a million people in Sydney, 200,000 people in Melbourne and 100,000 in Adelaide and Brisbane, taking to the streets to voice their opposition to the United States invasion of Iraq.<sup>96</sup>

The decision to plan a rally will depend on the history of your advocacy efforts, the timing of particular events, who you want to reach, and what specifically, you hope to accomplish. They are often used when other advocacy strategies have not created the amount of attention you had planned.

Throughout history, rallies and protests have been used to energise advocates, call attention and create a public impact on issues from civil rights, political overhaul, opposition to war and climate change. All of these moments in history included everyday people standing up for what they believed in, but rallies do not happen on their own.



Rallies must be well planned; some of the things to consider include:

- You will have to get approval from the local government where you will be meeting and marching. Depending on the size of the rally, you may also need to notify the Police.
- Give the rally a clear name and a clear goal – this will ensure those that turn up are singing from the same hymn sheet. Decide on what specific things you want to happen – and not happen – at the rally. The logistics of a rally are vital. Ask yourself: How do people get to the space where the rally will be held? How easily can they leave? How do you want them to behave while they are there? What is your plan if something goes wrong or a protestor creates havoc? Will you be having speeches and if so who will speak and where? Do you need toilets or water, a sound system or stage?
- Make sure you notify the media and advise them there will be plenty of photo opportunities.
- Getting the message out that you are having a rally is important. You have to reach people through methods or avenues they will connect with, language they are comfortable with. If possible, it's best to get the message out many times in different ways, and to reach as many people as possible. Social media is great for reach but do not rely on it as your sole promotion. Other methods might include flyers, posters, phone calls, mailings, ads in newspapers and newsletters, or public service announcements on local radio and TV.



Figure 61. Image from the 2013 Yes to Renewables rally.<sup>97</sup>



## 8.0 How will you measure the outcome?

Advocacy can be both an exciting and exhausting journey and therefore it is important to look at where you have travelled from and how far you still have to go. This is why evaluating your advocacy activities is important.

We are often asked how we know if our advocacy strategies have worked. This can sometimes be a difficult question to answer. Efforts to influence political decision making or changes in legislation can occur over years or even decades. The number of partners you have worked with could total in the hundreds. When evaluating your advocacy efforts, it is important to remember that it is not only the things that can be comprehensively and unambiguously counted that matter in advocacy – many of your successes are told in qualitative ways through storytelling or case studies.

Your evaluation approach will need to recognise the unique, collaborative and complex nature of advocacy strategies such as changing a system, increasing funding for a policy or program or changing a policy. These are often difficult to measure.

## 8.1 Why evaluate?

The reasons for evaluation will determine the techniques that should be applied. Three common reasons for evaluation are:

- To demonstrate the difference your advocacy strategies have made.
- To demonstrate outcomes to funding bodies and partners.
- To learn from experience.

## 8.2 How to measure progress

You can evaluate your advocacy efforts by answering three key questions:

- **What do I want to do?**  
What is your aim, advocacy asks and proposed outcomes?
- **How am I going to do it?**  
What strategies will you use to achieve what it is you want to do?
- **How do I measure success?**  
What indicators will you have in place to determine if you have succeeded?

To develop the best evaluation for your advocacy project, it is recommended you think about these questions when planning your advocacy rather than just at the end. This will allow you to plan your methods and capture the most relevant data and information to demonstrate the difference that the advocacy project has made.

Many advocacy strategies fail. That is okay. You can learn much from failed programs. Do not be afraid of failing, but rather embrace it and learn from it.

Some of the more common evaluation tools for advocacy include:

- **Surveys or interviews.** Print, telephone, or online questioning that gathers advocacy stakeholder perspectives or feedback.
- **Document review.** Review of existing internal or external documents. Documents may be hard copy or electronic and may include reports, funding proposals, meeting minutes, newsletters, evidence briefs and marketing materials.

- **Observation.** Participation in advocacy meetings or events to gain firsthand experience and data.
- **Polling.** Interviews with a random sample of advocacy stakeholders to gather data on their knowledge, attitudes, or behaviours.
- **Focus or discussion groups.** Facilitated discussions with advocacy stakeholders to obtain their reactions, opinions, or ideas.
- **Case studies.** Detailed descriptions and analyses (often qualitative), of individual advocacy strategies and results.
- **Media tracking.** Analysing media over time to track changes in positions, and the reach being achieved.
- **Policy tracking.** Analysing policy over time to track changes in positions, philosophies and content.

The table below is designed as a guide to assist you when you are planning your evaluation. It outlines the three key questions listed above, and can help you match the strategies you are using with ways to measure the changes that have occurred. This list is a guide only and is by no means exhaustive.

There are many ways to measure desired changes. Think laterally and be innovative in your evaluation design. Often you will use a combination of qualitative techniques (e.g. case studies, interviews, photographs, stories etc.) and quantitative methods (e.g. polls, results, surveys and statistical data). Combining methods of gathering data will provide you with the most robust evaluation.

**Table 1:** A guide for evaluating

What do I want to do?	How am I going to do it?	How do I measure progress?
<b>Changes in policy</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improving policy to better support/promote health and discourage unhealthy behaviours</li> </ul>	Influencing policy, branding/campaign, lobbying politicians, developing partnerships, opinion polling, letter writing, mobilising community, traditional and online media.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Media count on policy issues.</li> <li>Positive public opinions and feedback.</li> <li>Social media metrics.</li> <li>Improved partnerships.</li> <li>Evidence of policy change.</li> <li>Number of submissions to parliamentary committees, hearing or reviews.</li> <li>Amount of correspondence and meetings with politicians.</li> </ul>
<b>Social change</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Long-term changes in social and physical lives and conditions.<sup>98</sup></li> <li>Changing knowledge, attitudes, values and behaviour that compromise the issue.</li> </ul>	Community education, lobbying politicians, developing partnerships, community awareness, influencing policy, branding/campaign, champions, community education, opinion polling, community awareness, influencing policy, creating debate, e-advocacy, traditional and online media, rallies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Media monitoring; social media metrics, media coverage, ratio of positive to negative coverage.</li> <li>Public opinions (polls/survey results).</li> <li>Monitor public attitudes regarding the issue.</li> <li>Keep track of website traffic.</li> <li>Surveys, interviews, and focus groups.</li> <li>Public attitudes regarding the issue.</li> <li>Evidence of policy change.</li> <li>Positive public opinions and feedback.</li> <li>Population based data on behaviour, knowledge, attitudes and beliefs.</li> </ul>
<b>Build agency profile</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Build skill sets and increase staffing, finances, and capacity for advocacy<sup>98</sup></li> </ul>	Champions, branding/campaign, developing partnerships, framing your issue, social media profiles, consensus papers, traditional and online media, launch.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Media monitoring; social media metrics, organisational media coverage.</li> <li>Increase in partnerships.</li> <li>Improved funding.</li> <li>More staff involved in advocacy projects.</li> <li>Increased public enquiries regarding the campaign/issue.</li> <li>Increased number of requests for assistance or information on the issues. e.g. Your agency has become a first port of call on the issue.</li> </ul>
<b>Build partnerships</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cause structural change in community and institutional relationships; this is imperative to present a common message, achieve common goals and 'sing the same song'.<sup>98</sup></li> </ul>	Champions, developing partnerships, social media engagement, consensus papers, traditional and online media, launch.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Further partnerships and contacts for external stakeholders.</li> <li>Media monitoring; social media metrics, media coverage.</li> <li>Increased evidence of collaborative efforts of yours and partnering agencies.</li> <li>Increased funding sourced from partners.</li> <li>Evidence of the achievement of common goals shared between your agency and your partners.</li> </ul>
<b>Strengthened base of support</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase the breadth, depth, and influence of support amongst the general public, partners, and opinion leaders.<sup>98</sup></li> </ul>	Influencing policy, branding/campaign, lobbying politicians, developing partnerships, opinion polling, letter writing, mobilising community, traditional and online media.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Media count on policy issues.</li> <li>Positive public opinions and feedback.</li> <li>Social media metrics.</li> <li>Improved partnerships.</li> <li>Evidence of policy change.</li> <li>Number of submissions to parliamentary committees, hearing or reviews.</li> <li>Amount of correspondence and meeting with politicians.</li> </ul>

### 8.3 Tips for evaluating advocacy

- It is important to be clear about what you want to achieve.
- Never try to achieve more than your budget will allow you to.
- Remember to continually collect evidence to track your advocacy progress.
- Continue to monitor media and public opinion throughout the project.
- Be sure to record all advocacy activities, including media and opportunistic advocacy.
- Endeavour to build on partnerships and create new ones to help your cause.
- Think laterally about evaluation methods. Evaluation can take many different forms, like rich pictures, a group discussion or even video.
- Think beyond traditional evaluation methods, like surveys, but be sure to plan your evaluation to match your project and your skills.



# 3

## Advocacy Tips & Tools

# Advocacy Tips & Tools



Figure 62. Now go forth and advocate.<sup>99</sup>

This section of the Toolkit will guide you in implementing different advocacy tools, and provide examples to help you make sure you are on the right track.

The tools found in this section include the following, listed in no preferential order.

- letters to politicians
- meeting with a politician
- media release
- letter to the Editor
- media interviews
  - radio
  - television
- blogs
- twitter.

## Letters to Politicians

Writing informed and personal letters to Members of Parliament can have a significant impact on government policy.

### Structuring your letter

Include your return address in the letter.

#### The first paragraph:

- Include the topic of your letter. For example, "I am writing to express/voice my concern/disappointment (provide details)..."
- If you are writing to your own Member of Parliament, state that you reside in their electorate early on in the letter.

#### Choose three important points to focus on:

- Flesh out the most persuasive points likely to gain support for your position.
- Address a new point in each paragraph.
- Writing three short letters to individual people is more effective than writing one long letter.
- Ensure your facts are accurate and credible.
- Acknowledge opposing arguments and evidence.

#### Personalise the issue:

- Explain how the issue affects you, your family or your community.
- A personalised letter may be more persuasive and have more impact.

#### Personalise your relationship:

- Indicate if you have ever voted for them, met them, supported their election campaign etc.
- The letter may be more effective if the politician feels closer to you.

#### Be cautious in relation to their views:

- If you are unsure of the views of the politician or political party on the issue, research it, ask them, or explain why they should support your views.
- Avoid making assumptions about their views, and comments that could be construed as critical towards them or their party.

#### Be courteous:

- Do not offend needlessly. We all respond better to a pleasant, friendly and courteous approach, than to rudeness or abuse.

#### Call for action:

- Ask them to act on the issue (e.g. "increase funding in the budget for..." or "publicly commit to...").

#### Ask for a reply:

- End the letter with a statement encouraging a reply (e.g. "I look forward to your response on this matter").
- Write back if you do not receive a suitable response within a reasonable timeframe.

### Where to send letters

Parliament websites hold lists of Members' contact details for their electorate office and Parliament House. Though keep in mind you have a better chance of hearing back if you send letters to electorate offices, rather than Parliament House.

Members contact details are available in various formats, including mailing labels, and can be downloaded from the URLs below.

- Parliament of Western Australia Members of the Legislative Assembly and Members of the Legislative Council electorate office mailing labels <http://www.parliament.wa.gov.au/WebCMS/WebCMS.nsf/content/members-mailing-labels---current-members-of-parliament>
- Federal Parliament House of Representatives Members' mailing labels [https://www.aph.gov.au/Senators\\_and\\_Members/Guidelines\\_for\\_Contacting\\_Senators\\_and\\_Members/Address\\_labels\\_and\\_CSV\\_files](https://www.aph.gov.au/Senators_and_Members/Guidelines_for_Contacting_Senators_and_Members/Address_labels_and_CSV_files)
- Federal Parliament Senate Members' mailing labels [http://www.aph.gov.au/Senators\\_and\\_Members/Guidelines\\_for\\_Contacting\\_Senators\\_and\\_Members](http://www.aph.gov.au/Senators_and_Members/Guidelines_for_Contacting_Senators_and_Members)

For an example of a letter written to a politician see below.



Curtin University School of Public Health  
GPO Box U1987 PERTH WA 6845  
Tel: +61 9266 9078 / Fax: +61 9266 9244

23 July 2019

Hon. Martin Aldridge, MLC  
Member for Agricultural  
21 Binda Place  
BINDOON WA 6502

Dear Mr Aldridge,

We write to you to express our concern regarding provisions of the *TAB (Disposal) Bill 2019* (the Bill). If the Bill is passed in its current form, the Bill will allow for TABs to have simulated racing machines in their premises. We seek your support to amend the Bill to stop the introduction of these machines.

The Public Health Advocacy Institute of WA (PHAIWA) aims to influence policy by promoting, supporting and implementing public health advocacy on local, state, national and international levels. Gambling is a priority area of PHAIWA's and we advocate for reducing and regulating the availability of gambling products, developing health promotion strategies to counteract the pervasive marketing techniques of the gambling industry, and the ongoing implementation of harm minimisation strategies and treatment accessibility. We have attached our position statement on gambling for further information.

Gambling causes harm to the physical, social and mental health of communities, families and individuals. Moderate to severe problem gambling results in suicide, relationship breakdown, financial difficulty, mental health problems such as anxiety and depression, and crime.<sup>1,2</sup> Gambling particularly affects vulnerable groups in the community such as people from low socioeconomic backgrounds.<sup>1,2</sup>

Western Australia is a leader in the area of gambling as it has strong restrictions on disallowing simulated racing machines and poker machines outside of the casino. We want this leadership to continue. We have concerns that any expansion of electronic gaming is likely to increase gambling harm in WA as it provides another avenue for gambling.

We are aware that the Bill will be before the Legislative Council on return of Parliament in August and ask for your support to amend the Bill to stop the introduction of simulated racing in Western Australia.

We thank you for your time. We would be happy to discuss this further with you and look forward to receiving your reply.

Yours sincerely,

1. Productivity Commission. Gambling, Report No. 50. Volumes 1 & 2. Canberra: Productivity Commission; 2010.

2. Billi R, Stone CA, Marden P, Yeung K. The Victorian Gambling Study: A longitudinal study of gambling and health in Victoria 2008-2012. Victoria, Australia: Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation; 2014.



## Meeting with a Politician

### Before the meeting

- It is difficult to get time with a politician, particularly Ministers. You will need to be accommodating and flexible when scheduling the meeting to make it as easy as possible for them to meet with you.
- Get organised. Prepare a one page briefing document on your issue and organisation. State the purpose of your meeting by providing a brief summary of the evidence about your issue, and giving examples of the effects the issue is having. In addition, demonstrate how you are working in partnership with other organisations concerned about the issue. Demonstrate a united front, but also make it clear who is the central contact person to be available to discuss the issue anytime.
- Research the politician. Look up their website to find information on current policy statements, and if your issue is on their agenda. Also, read their inaugural speech – it will tell you a lot about the politician's priorities.
- Be prepared to localise the issue and explain how it affects the politician's local district.
- Be very clear about what you want – both the themes and the specifics of what you are asking for. Clearly outline the long and short term benefits for the politician and their political party – what's in it for them? If possible and appropriate, outline how they can sell your priorities to their colleagues, the opposition and others.
- If you do not have the answer to a question, offer to find out after the meeting. This gives an opportunity to follow up the meeting with a letter.
- Do not assume the politician is familiar with your issue/s. Be prepared to explain details clearly and concisely.
- It is always useful to go in to a meeting with suggestions on how your organisation can assist to progress the issue.
- Avoid using technical terms or acronyms unless you are certain the politician is familiar with them.
- When concluding, ask how you can be of assistance to him/her.
- Thank him/her for their time.

### After the meeting

- Send a thank you note and follow up with any information promised during the meeting.
- Keep in touch on relevant issues.

### On the day

- Be punctual. Allow time to find parking, navigate the grounds and sign in if necessary.
- Be patient if they are late.
- If they have said you have 10 minutes that is all you may get. Have your key points clear in your mind and be able to state them articulately.

### At the meeting

- Briefly introduce your organisation (unless they already know you well), covering who you are, the role of your organisation and why you have met with them. Leave the briefing document with them.
- You may want to advise the politician that the outcomes from the discussion will not be made public so they feel they can speak openly.
- Be wary of criticising (or being overly critical of) the politician or government for their record on your issue.

#### TIP

#### Say thank you

Even nice people forget to say thank you. It only takes a minute. You can send a note, an email, or make a call – just do something. Don't only thank the policymaker or politician you met with, but also the staff member who set up the meeting or gave you a heads up that your issue was in trouble. Staff rarely get thanked, so when they do they really appreciate it.

## Writing a media release

- Ensure the release has an attention grabbing headline.
- The first line is the most important, make sure it draws the reader in.
- Always cover who, what, when, where and why. These should be in the first two paragraphs.
- Be concise – generally not more than one page for the main body of the release. If the reporter needs more information they can contact you.
- Use short paragraphs.
- Use punchy facts and statistics to highlight what you are talking about.
- Put the most important information early in the release – all important points should be in the first two paragraphs.
- Stick to the facts – don't oversell your story.
- Place your story in context.
- Use quotes that add clarity or can sum up your release in a concise, lively manner. Using quotes makes the release more human and also more relevant. Quotes help put a face to your organisation.
- Try to personalise the story if possible.
- Use clear, simple and economical language. Avoid jargon, phrases, technical words or acronyms.
- Avoid describing research or statistics as 'recent' – they are often not recent in the context of the news.

## Ending the media release

- Finish the media release with “– Ends –”.
- Include a contact name and number at the bottom of a release, and ensure the person listed is available and willing to talk to the media.
- Ensure you have a 'boiler plate' at the end, this should detail the background information on the organisation, product, or event you are promoting.

## Attachments

- Attach a page of background information on the issue if necessary.
- Attach good quality pictures to the release if appropriate.
- Ensure the photo is labelled and all individuals in the picture have provided consent for its' usage.

## Editing and approvals

- Proof read your release for spelling, grammar, paragraph order, etc. Read it aloud then have a friend or colleague do the same.
- Get your media release approved by a senior staff member of your organisation before sending it to media organisations.
- If they are otherwise unaware, inform your colleagues or relevant stakeholders of the content of the media release prior to sending it out as a courtesy so they don't have to find out about developments regarding their organisation through the media.

## Sending the media release

- Send the release early in the morning by email.

After you've sent the release:

- Ensure those quoted in the release (or other spokespeople) are willing and available to be contacted. Provide contact details and a window of time they will be available to be contacted if necessary.
- Be observant and prepared to act on follow up opportunities if your release creates interest.
- Don't take it personally if your release is not taken up by a journalist.

## Who to send it to

Wherever you are, the best person to send your media release to is the editor of your local paper or news site. If you are in WA, the details for the relevant media are listed below:

- **The West Australian**  
Medical Editor  
Health & Wellbeing
- **The Sunday Times/Perth Now**  
Health Reporter
- **Community Newspapers**  
If you are contacting an independent community newspaper get in contact with their editor.

The Community Newspaper Group own a number of papers, so they are a great contact if you wish for the story to be published in multiple areas. They can be contacted via the following link:  
<https://www.communitynews.com.au/contact-us/>

- **ABC TV and Radio**

Given the ABC is nationwide and has multiple metropolitan and regional radio stations, its best you identify which area you want your story shared in and contact the relevant office. You can find a list of ABC offices at the following link: <https://about.abc.net.au/talk-to-the-abc/>

- **Regional or FM radio stations**

There are a number of radio stations across the country, with most providing their contact details on their website. You can find a list of Australian radio stations at the below link: <http://www.radioau.net/>

A list of regional and metropolitan media contacts for either Western Australia or another state or territory is also available at the following website [http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/marketing/marketing\\_article.jsp?articleId=1423](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/marketing/marketing_article.jsp?articleId=1423)

Ensure that media releases seeking broad coverage are also sent to Chiefs of Staff.

## Types of media releases

### 1. Media alert

Use the media alert format to announce an event. This will alert the media to the time, date and location of the event and give them the option to send a journalist to attend the event. A media alert will also provide background information on the event for journalists to draw upon when writing future media articles.

### 2. Media release – outcome of event

A media release may be used to announce the outcome of an event. The key information to include is:

- aims of the event
- details of who attended
- quotes from key people about the significance of the event or its outcomes
- future/follow-up plans.

### 3. Media release – announcing a report

A media release may be used to announce the launch of a report or significant document. The key information to include is:

- key findings of the report
- significance of the report finding
- quotes from relevant spokespeople
- future/follow-up plans and aims.

### 4. Media release – in response to an event or announcement

A media release may be prepared in response to an event or an announcement. The key information to include is:

- outline the issue or event
- outline your organisations views (your response or reaction)
- quotes from relevant spokespeople
- future/follow-up plans (what to do about it).

Many health organisations, including the [Cancer Council of WA](#), the [National Heart Foundation](#), the [Australian Medical Association](#) and the [Department of Health](#) provide an archive of their past media releases on their website.

Browse these to learn about different styles of writing media releases and ways you can tailor them to your needs.

PHAIWA lists its top 10 tips for media advocacy on our website located at <https://www.phaiwa.org.au/the-advocacy-toolkit/>

Organisation logo

Catchy title

High impact first paragraph

Date for release



24 July 2017  
EMBARGOED...  
/2017

## MEDIA RELEASE

### Book tells positive Indigenous health stories

The Public Health Advocacy Institute of WA (PHAIWA) at Curtin University will launch the Goldfields edition of the West Australian Indigenous Storybook, focusing on positive health stories involving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Ben Wyatt MLA will officially launch the Storybook at 10am on Tuesday 25 July at the Goldfields Arts, 35 Cheetham St, Kalgoorlie with featured storytellers from the health, education, sports and recreation and arts sectors. The East Kalgoorlie Primary School choir will also perform.

Dr Melissa Stoneham, PHAIWA's Director, said the book described positive initiatives and illustrated how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and projects make a difference to the lives of the people and their communities.

"In this project, Indigenous practitioners' stories are shaped by their personal history, biography, gender, social class, location and those of the people in the setting/story," Dr Stoneham said.

"These stories will hopefully encourage a change in how public health projects are planned, delivered and disseminated.

"Stories are drawn from health, preventive health, education, employment, cultural tourism, environment, media, sport and music. They also showcase community based programs that could be replicated in other communities to improve or influence the many social determinants of health."

The West Australian Indigenous Storybook will be launched Tuesday 25 July from 10am-11am at the Goldfields Arts Centre.

– Ends –

#### Media Contacts:

Media Contact  
Media Relations Consultant  
Curtin University  
Tel: (08) 9266 1111  
Mob: 0401 123 456;  
Email: [media.contact@curtin.edu.au](mailto:media.contact@curtin.edu.au)  
Web: <http://news.curtin.edu.au/media-centre>  
Twitter: @CurtinMedia

Media Contact  
Media Consultant  
Curtin University  
Tel: (08) 9266 2222  
Mobile: 0478 123 456  
Email: [media.contact@curtin.edu.au](mailto:media.contact@curtin.edu.au)  
Web: <http://news.curtin.edu.au/media-centre/>  
Twitter: @CurtinMedia

Finish of media release

Contact details for follow-up





Day/Month/Year

## MEDIA RELEASE

### AFL TEAMS PLAGUED BY MORE UNHEALTHY SPONSORS

The Adelaide Crows top the ladder for being the team with the highest number of unhealthy sponsors, with our Western Australian teams West Coast Eagles and the Fremantle Dockers sitting in 2nd and 4th position respectively, according to a review of AFL sponsorship conducted by the Public Health Advocacy Institute of Western Australia, Curtin University.

Sponsors were classed as red or amber depending on how much fat, sugar and salt was included in the product. "Junk foods contain excessive amounts of saturated fat, sodium and sugar and consumption of these foods is linked to increased risk of obesity and chronic diseases such as cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes and some cancers," Ainslie Sartori, PHAIWA's Nutrition Expert said. Red sponsors also included alcohol companies, sports betting companies and venues that promoted a casino.

The review found that 17 of the 18 AFL teams were sponsored by at least one red sponsor. Five of the teams have unhealthy sponsors on their uniform, increasing their exposure. Richmond is the benchmark for all clubs as they were the only club with zero red or amber sponsors.

"In 2018 more clubs were sponsored by alcohol, fast food and sugary drinks than in 2017. This trend should not continue. We know that children are able to recall brands and this level of unhealthy sponsorship is likely to influence children's attitude towards a product," PHAIWA's Director Dr Melissa Stoneham said.

Healthy sponsors, which included companies such as the Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation and Fernwood Fitness were also included in the scorecard.

"Although it is positive to see some teams have healthy sponsors, the widespread nature of the unhealthy sponsorship is concerning," Dr Stoneham said.

"AFL teams should not be sponsored by unhealthy brands, particularly when children are watching."

### ENDS

Interview opportunities are available.  
For further information contact [Media Contact]:  
Email: [media.contact]@curtin.edu.au  
Phone: (08) 9266 0000 or 0000 111 222

For further examples of media releases you can go to the Curtin website and read the release titled 'Unhealthy sponsorship promotion still prevalent across AFL' or follow the link below:  
<https://news.curtin.edu.au/media-releases/unhealthy-sponsorship-promotion-still-prevalent-across-afl/>

## Letters to the Editor

Writing a 'letter to the Editor' in a newspaper is another way you can exploit windows of opportunity. Letters allow you to respond to recently published articles or letters to express your view and that of your organisation.

The letter to the Editor section of a newspaper can be one of the most read sections – competition to publish letters can also be high. This advocacy tool works towards the advocacy strategies of creating and generating debate.

Editors may select letters written by 'ordinary citizens' over ones written by lobby groups. Therefore there may be times when you write under your own name as a concerned citizen and other times when showing your credentials and the organisation you represent is necessary.

Consider targeting different audiences by choosing the most appropriate newspaper to write to. Your options are:

- A local community newspaper (e.g. *Community News*).
- A state newspaper (e.g. *The West Australian*, *The Sunday Times*).
- A national newspaper (e.g. *The Australian*).

One way to build support for the way your organisation frames an issue is to coordinate a letter writing campaign. This involves arranging with your colleagues or partners to strategically submit letters around the same time. This is a reactive strategy that will need a very quick action as your issue could easily be out of the spotlight in 24 hours.

Any letter writing campaign you conduct needs to be consistent in its message, but original in its presentation or angle.<sup>27</sup> To be sure of this, you can always draft the letters yourself and send them to your partners to sign and contribute to, and then submit to the newspaper.

Here are some pointers about the format and content of letters to the editor which may help your letter have the impact you want:

- Letters are often written in response to recently published letters or articles. Identify the article you are responding to early on by its headline or author and the date published – and respond quickly.
- Be timely – exploit windows of opportunity by using a current news event or article as a hook.<sup>27</sup>
- Brief letters are more likely to be published and less likely to be altered by the letters editor. Aim for less than 250 words.
- Have a punchy opening sentence to get the reader's attention.
- Familiarise yourself with the writing styles of the letters which get published in your target newspaper – do they use wit, satire, metaphors, formal or colloquial language? The editor may have a preference that you can use to guide your approach.<sup>27</sup>
- Stick to one issue and include only the two or three most important points.
- Localise the issue – taking the local angle on an issue will increase the impact.<sup>27</sup>
- Make sure your key message is clear.
- Ask yourself: would you stop to read your letter?
- The author's name and suburb (and position/role if appropriate) is generally included below the letter. You are able to request that it be left off if necessary.

The Community Newspaper Group have an online form on their website which you can use to use to submit your letter. You can find the form by navigating from the newspaper's homepage. Letters to *The Australian* newspaper ([letters@theaustralian.com.au](mailto:letters@theaustralian.com.au)), *The Sunday Times* ([letters@sundaytimes.com.au](mailto:letters@sundaytimes.com.au)) and *The West Australian* ([letters@wanews.com.au](mailto:letters@wanews.com.au)) are submitted via email.

## Media Interviews

There are three most common types of interviews that advocates encounter.

These include:

- 1) An on-the-spot request for comment over the phone – if it's for radio, it may be taped and broadcast to listeners within minutes.
- 2) A pre-recorded radio or television interview – it will be edited to fit the news format it was recorded for.
- 3) A live-to-air radio or television interview – the broadcast will include everything you say.

If you are phoned by a journalist asking you to make a comment and you're unprepared, buy some time (e.g. mention you're just finishing up a meeting) and ask to call back in ten minutes. Use the few minutes to plan what you want to say, how best to frame it and choose a sound bite to include.<sup>27</sup>

In all interviews you do, you need to sound authentic and personally committed to what you are saying.<sup>27</sup>

It can be effective to frame your issue in ways that are personally relevant to everyday people, rather than focus on statistics.<sup>27</sup> For example, "The amount of people that are affected by this condition would fill Perth Stadium five times".

### Radio

Radio can be accessed anywhere, anytime and by anybody. In 2017, almost 10.5 million people listened to commercial radio each week in the five metropolitan capital cities<sup>100</sup>. On average Australians are listening to 16 hours of commercial radio a week. Breakfast is consistently the most popular timeslot, attracting many young people aged 25–39 years, and an increasing proportion of even younger people.<sup>100</sup>

Radio stations target a distinct audience so it is necessary to research the audience demographics of each radio station before you approach them with your story. It is also necessary to research what time of day is best for your story. It is best if a spokesperson is available to provide a live or taped comment which will add interest to the news segment.

The length of time dedicated to each news story in the media is very short. In every interview, you

should include a 'sound bite' or 'radio grab' which is generally a memorable and repeatable comment that can sum up the issue.<sup>27</sup>

Some suggestions for producing an effective radio grab include:

- Be brief and use short sentences.
- Start and finish with your key message.
- Use concrete images which evoke a lively response.
- Humour can be appropriate and effective, but be careful not to downplay the seriousness of the issue.
- A witty quote may be chosen over others when space or time is limited.
- Remember that you are trying to advance towards meeting your public health objectives, not earn laughs or applause.
- Use sound bites that use standard literary devices such as analogies, puns or alliteration which may resonate with the audience.

### EXAMPLE

#### **Emeritus Professor Mike Daube AO**

During a debate between Tony Abbott, former Minister for Health and Ageing, and Emeritus Professor Mike Daube AO, titled 'Welcome back nanny? Civil liberties vs the public good', Abbott stated that he didn't support laws banning smoking in cars carrying kids. Abbott revealed that his own parents were smokers, and displaying his trim physique, asked theatrically whether his childhood exposure had done him any harm. After the debate, Daube located a press release from Christopher Pyne, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Health and Ageing on 26 November 2006 (while Abbott was Minister), which stated that Pyne supported a proposal in Tasmania to ban smoking in vehicles carrying children, because "Smoking in a confined space such as a car is particularly harmful and it is important to limit the exposure of children to this danger". The day following the debate, Daube commented on Croakey (the Crikey health blog): "His health might not have been affected by passive smoking, but his memory seemed to have been..."<sup>101</sup>

**Simon Chapman**

Regarding 'compromises' by the hotel and tobacco lobby groups to have smoking and non-smoking sections in hospitality venues, Simon Chapman stated that "a non-smoking section in a restaurant is about as meaningful as a non-urinating section in a swimming pool".<sup>102</sup>

**Julia Stafford**

To listen to a radio discussion regarding the pros and cons of minimum floor pricing for alcohol you can use the following link <https://www.abc.net.au/radio/perth/programs/focus/alcohol-floor-price/10405102>

## Television

Television interviews allow you to have visual impact and add a face to your issue.

Many of the considerations needed for a successful television interview are similar to those needed for an effective radio grab. These include:

- Research audience demographics and target your messages to the audience the television program and station attract.
- The time allocated for your news story may be very short.
- Get your point across clearly and succinctly – focus only on the main points.
- Use your voice (and mannerisms etc) to show your enthusiasm and passion for your issue.
- Include one or two sound bites – memorable phrases that capture the urgency or magnitude of an issue and stay with the listeners or viewers long after the interview is aired.
- Remember that you are trying to advance towards meeting your public health advocacy objectives.

### What to wear

- For men wearing suits, dark and solid colours are strongly recommended.
- Some patterns and stripes do not translate well to the screen.
- Large, bright or flashy jewellery also does not televise well and is not suggested.
- Dress to suit your message. For example, if you are outside you can model sun smart messages

by wearing a hat or conducting the interview in the shade.

### Be prepared

Stay on message; know what points you are trying to convey, and stick to them.

Brainstorm likely questions as well as worst-case-scenario questions. If you spend some quality time really thinking about it, you should be able to anticipate 85 per cent of the questions. It's tougher – though not impossible – to come up with the crazy questions that come out of left field, but it's worth spending time thinking about them and practicing ways to respond.

There are a few common interview scenarios where interviewees are wise to prepare responses. These include:

- If an interviewer asks a question that is outside of your area or experience. Your response may be, "I'm sorry, that question is outside my expertise".
- A 'last line' – have a line ready if asked, "Is there anything else you would like to add?"
- You have just a few seconds to sell your story. Studies have found that the average television soundbite is around seven seconds long. Practice with a stopwatch in front of your bathroom mirror. By practicing out loud you can get rid of audible pauses such as "um, "like" and "you know".

Spend time beforehand identifying specific examples that help make your message personal. You can help journalists tell their story by using examples, anecdotes and graphics. Telling stories also helps break your conversation into soundbites.

The location where the interview is taped is often decided by the television station, so you may not get a say in it. They may want to tape the interview at your workplace, your home, the television studio or a location relevant to the story. If they request to meet at your home, consider suggesting an alternative venue as you may not want to reveal your address.

If possible, be aware of any messages or promotions in the background, and determine if they support your message or discredit it.

Be early to allow yourself time to relax.

Talk to the reporter – they may provide the questions to be asked in advance.



### How to act

- Stay calm, no matter how much the reporter may try to get a strong or emotional reaction from you.
- Never argue with a reporter, especially when you are on-camera.
- Make and hold eye contact. Focus on the person asking the questions and not on the camera. The more your eyes move around, the more uncomfortable your audience will become. The underlying message is that you are either trying to hide something or you are unsure of yourself. A powerful, steady gaze speaks volumes about your trustworthiness.
- When sitting during an interview, sit up and lean forward slightly when you talk to open up your diaphragm. This increases your air supply, prevents you from slumping, and makes you look engaged in the discussion. Do not relax, or let your back touch the back of your chair. You need to be “on” at all times.
- Avoid being side-tracked into a subject not directly related to the subject of the interview. You can accomplish this by returning to your key points.
- Turn off your mobile, spit out the gum, remove coins from pockets, don’t hold pens and ask the technician to turn off the television set by the camera so you’re not tempted to see how you look during the interview.
- Also, avoid chairs that swivel and rock. They are too tempting, especially when you get nervous.
- Be an active participant. Television observes everything, especially posture, energy and facial expression. Watch the delivery of the news anchors and you’ll see how much they accentuate what they say with unspoken cues. If possible, take a brisk walk before going on camera to get your blood flowing and wake yourself up.
- Flexibility is a must. Recognise that anything can happen in television news, so be prepared and try to accommodate any unexpected changes. Don’t be fazed if an in-studio interview changes to a satellite hook-up, or an interview that was supposed to be taped suddenly is carried live.
- Define your key messages and be ready to deliver those messages regardless of the questions you’re asked. Acknowledge any questions you’re asked, but always bridge back to your key messages during an interview. Also, reiterate those messages if you’re asked to provide a sound check or give a closing thought.
- Answer succinctly. Keep your responses to three or four sentences at most. Keep in mind that most stories on local television newscasts are one and one-half minutes average length. The producer will

edit your responses down to “sound bite” length, usually no more than 10 to 15 seconds. Giving long, wordy answers will give the reporter more control over what you will be saying in the story.

- If the interview is set up to explore a specific topic, but the reporter immediately starts in on a different one – one that you’re not prepared for – make a clear, calm statement: “It was my impression that we were going to discuss Mr. Jones’ complaint regarding his service interruption. The additional information you are requesting is not immediately available, but I’ll try to get back to you with it later today.”

### Final words

The reporter and/or a producer will control the final content of the piece. The only control you will have is over what you say, and how you say it.

Do not feel that you should fill empty space after you’ve given a response. If you are not prepared to elaborate, don’t.

For an example of a television interview, you can use the link below to watch Alcohol Programs Team Research Fellow Julia Stafford discuss ALDI’s liquor licencing application. <https://www.facebook.com/9NewsPerth/videos/1823707214308097/>

## Blogs

A “blog” is the shortened name of a “weblog”, which is a type of Web Diary or Online Journal. These websites consist of chronological “posts” (the online equivalent of a diary entry), which allow readers to comment and interact with the content.

You may be thinking that you don’t have the time or capacity to set up your own blog page, but when we are talking about blogging, we are talking about multi-author or collaborative blogs that you can contribute towards – see Croakey, The Conversation, Drink Tank, and John Menadue as examples.

With these collaborative blogs, there is a central editorial team who commission or collate posts from many different authors. The editing is professional, there is a strong common format, standard lengths and well-defined style. Each blog post is shared on

## EXAMPLE

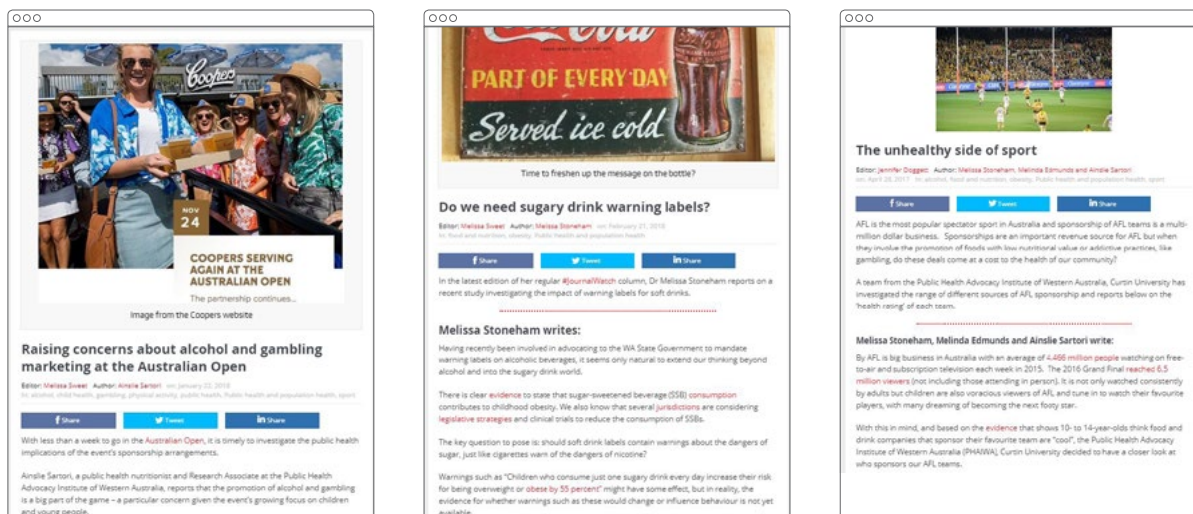


Figure 63. Blog pieces written by PHAIWA staff for Croakey.<sup>103</sup>

social media and connected with the blog. It is a great avenue to disseminate your work to a broad audience.

This isn't to say you can't do a solo blog – you can. But you will be responsible for all content, dissemination, social media, branding and search engine optimisation.

## How to write a blog

Before you begin it is important that before you get writing you do some research on where you will be publishing. If you have your own blog it's no problem, but if you are submitting to a collaborative blog it's important that you check their criteria, and perhaps get in touch and make sure they would be interested in what you have to say.<sup>104</sup>

To start out writing, it is important you have your topic clear in your head, do plenty of research and make sure you check your facts. It is important you identify what is the status quo, and what new angle you are bringing? What is the 'so what?'

The 'so what?' question is about giving your readers enough information so that they will want to, and feel compelled to, keep reading or even acting on your call to action. You don't want readers wondering "why should I care about this?"

As the blog author, you need to remember that you are the expert in this topic. As you hold your readers' hands, remember that you need to keep them interested, and give them enough information to answer the 'so what?' that they started reading for. As you progress through your argument, the question should disappear because you are providing new and relevant information, and providing a pathway to ensure what you are discussing can be applied in the real world.

If you are basing your blog on work you have recently done, or work that has been published, it is important that you condense the methodology, analysis and literature review. As blogs are usually around 1,000 words, it's important that you stick to your main message and use all your other data to support your argument. Key figures are important in driving home a point, but you don't want a blog full of them, so choose the ones that will have the greatest impact. To add extra information to your blog you can also easily link to relevant sources, or add informative figures to break things up.

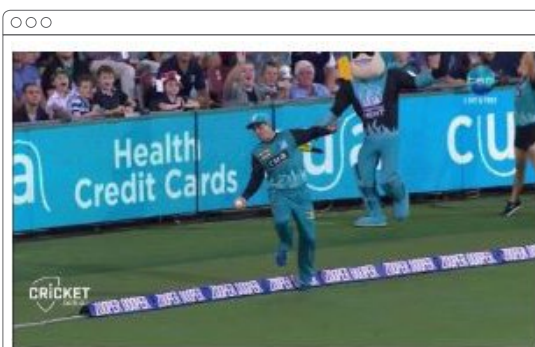
Once you have written your blog it is then necessary to come up with a catchy title. When trying to think of a title, it is important to keep in mind the audience you are trying to reach. Will they understand your technical jargon? Or is it better to simplify your message? It may also be important to think of the keywords your title will include. This will help in

attracting your audience, as they will know from the title it is relevant. If you are unsure of which keywords to use, perhaps try looking up how much traffic different words get.

Once you have written your title it's important that you write a 280 character sub-heading which can be used as the tweet/link to your blog. This will be helpful in attracting readers – so make sure you keep it clear and to the point.

### EXAMPLE

A great example of a blog is the piece by Dr Melissa Stoneham and Ainslie Sartori titled 'Who owns who in the Australian food market?' You can find the full article at <https://croakey.org/who-owns-who-in-the-australian-food-market/>



#### What is not quite right about this picture?

Sponsorship in sport is commonplace. Name recognition, brand reputation and greater sales are some of the obvious benefits. Yet we know that sponsorship of development programs and sport offers companies an avenue to expose children to their brand and foster a connection between children and their brand. In 2013, a [Perth study](#) of five- to 12-year-olds found they could associate team sports with the products and messages promoted via the sports' sponsors.

So back to the photo. In this case, Zooper-Doooper is a sponsor of the [Perth Scorchers](#). Zooper-Dooopers are ready-to-freeze icy poles available in most retail outlets. They come in "8 cosmic flavours", and with 12.7 grams of sugar [per serve](#), you would class them as an unhealthy sponsor. Not wanting to appear to be too nannyish, one might suggest that a Zooper-Doooper is a lesser evil than an online gambling, fast food or alcohol sponsor.

**Figure 64.** An excerpt from the blog 'Who owns who in the Australian food market?'.<sup>105</sup>

## Twitter

Twitter is a quick and easy platform, where news is broken, links are shared, and researchers and health professionals all over the world can connect and share their work.

The tweets of everyone you follow will appear in mostly chronological order, although if you haven't logged in for a while the top stories you missed will be displayed in a box of recommendations in your timeline.

Tweets can contain links, photos, GIFs or videos, they can be a new tweet or perhaps a retweet of something you agree with (or perhaps don't), where you can add your own commentary, or just share what you've found. When tweeting you can only use 280 characters, which may seem tough but it keeps your message concise and to the point.<sup>106</sup> To save your word count it can be useful to use a few clever tricks. Firstly, if you are sharing a link, try using [Bitly](#) or [TinyURL](#), which are websites that shorten your link to a more manageable size. It can also be helpful to use acronyms, though only if they will be widely understood.

Twitter can be helpful in a number of ways. If you are a researcher, this tool can help you increase the reach of your work, and even help you recruit study participants. If you are a public health professional or advocate hoping to make connections within your field and beyond, Twitter allows you to connect with people from all over the world, Finland to Colombia, and everywhere in between. And, for all your advocacy needs Twitter allows you to quickly share information on an issue and keep people updated on your progress.

## The Twitter Lingo

### Handles

Your Twitter handle is the username you will use to log in to your account, it is also what people will use to mention you in tweets and comments. It is important that when setting up your handle you choose a username you like, because it can be tricky to change!



Figure 65. Tweets by Alice Pryor and Professor William Bellew.<sup>107</sup>

### Display name

This is the name people will see first when you tweet, and if people hover over it they will be able to see your account information and bio. This title can be changed regularly, and doesn't need to be unique like your handle.

### Hashtags

A hashtag or #, allows you to link a specific word or phrase to your tweet. This feature is helpful in getting your tweet in front of people who may be interested in the same topic, or help you get involved in a popular discussion. To use hashtags, simply type the # symbol then type the word or phrase you are trying to link. Remember, if you are trying to link a phrase, don't include spaces between the words as the hashtag won't work if you do. To search hashtags type it in to the search bar and you will find all the people and posts using that hashtag.



Figure 66. Tweet by Katinka Day.<sup>108</sup>

### Mention someone

Also known as an @, mentioning someone allows you to directly link the person or people you are talking about, or those who are responsible for the information you are sharing, and notify them of the tweet. To do this you simply type in the @ character to your tweet, followed by the person's Twitter handle.

For more information on tweeting, you can read PHAIWA's guide to tweeting at the link below: <https://www.phaiwa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/A-Guide-to-using-Twitter.pdf>

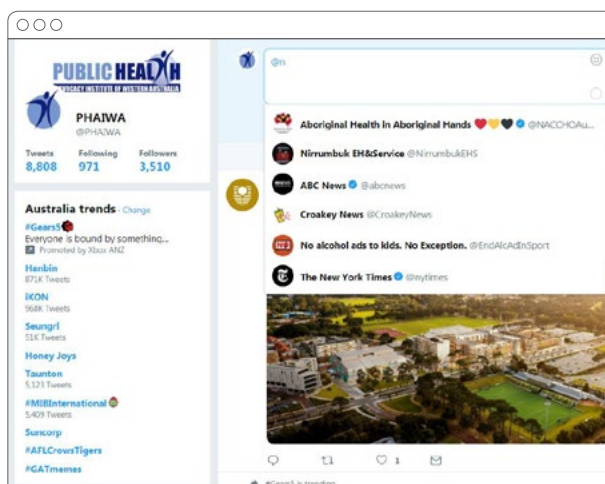


Figure 67. The Twitter interface when mentioning someone in a tweet.

### Retweets


Retweeting (RT) is a quick and easy way of sharing tweets that interest you. When sharing a tweet just click the  button at the bottom of the tweet, which allows you to either just retweet, or to tweet with comment.



Figure 68. Tweet by the Australian National Congress for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.<sup>109</sup>

### Tagging

Along the same lines of mentioning someone, it can also be useful to tag people in images that you share. This allows you to directly link people who are involved in what you are sharing to your tweet, and keep them updated on the discussion.



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