



# Meeting Your Legislator: General Instructions

## Points to Remember

Legislators and staff members live in a chaotic and partisan atmosphere. Therefore:

- Always be respectful and non-confrontational. Never make them angry.
- Keep your comments succinct, and tied to plausible cause-and-effect scenarios.
- Teach, don't lecture. Do not use acronyms, medical jargon or platitudes.
- Use real-life examples, case studies and anecdotes.
- Take notes or listen carefully to their comments and questions so you can complete the CAA feedback form as soon as your meeting ends.

## Conducting the Meeting

1. Introduce yourself. Thank them for taking the time to meet with you.
2. Share some information about your practice – the number of patients, employees, the counties you serve, your payroll, taxes paid – so they are knowledgeable of your business's economic impact in the legislator's district/state.
3. State the issues you would like to discuss (Medicare imaging cuts, in-office imaging, practice expense cuts, Medicare physician payment reform, etc.)
3. Ask if they are aware of/informed about the issue.
5. State your thesis: for example, "we are here because we believe that in-office imaging is critical to the rapid diagnosis of heart disease, and that the use of appropriateness criteria will ensure that patients get the right test at the right time."
6. Review the reasons for taking this stance: "Private practice cardiologists use in-office imaging to provide high-quality, rapid diagnosis of disease at a lower cost to both Medicare and beneficiaries."
7. List the measures you want Congress to take: "We need to protect the in-office ancillary services exception and urge Congress to leave the Stark law unchanged."

### 8. ASK THE FOLLOWING

- a. "Do you need clarification on our position or have any questions?"
  - b. "What are you hearing from other constituents and organizations?"
  - c. "What's your prognosis on this issue – what will happen by session's end?"
  - d. "We'd like your support on this issue. "What's your/your legislator's position?"
9. Address the next issue on your agenda in the same manner.
  10. When your visit is complete, you may want to invite them to your facility to give them a bird's-eye view and meet your colleagues. Thank them again for their time, ask them to review the CAA packet you're leaving behind and urge them to call you if they have any questions.

As soon as you are out of the office, email your feedback to [mburrage@cardiologycaa.com](mailto:mburrage@cardiologycaa.com). Otherwise, you may confuse one visit with another or forget what was said in the meeting. Feedback is critical to CAA's advocacy efforts and helps us set our strategy.