



Ryan White Medical  
Providers Coalition

# A visit is worth a million words: How to schedule & prepare for a congressional site visit

July 2025

Inviting your U.S. senators and representatives and their staff to visit your clinic, medical center or research institution to meet you, your team and the people you serve (if possible) is an excellent way to demonstrate the value of HIV services and the federal funding that supports HIV prevention, care, treatment and research, as well as highlight the success of your program. Building and sustaining relationships with your elected officials is a strategic way to contribute to discussions about federal funding as well as HIV and other infectious diseases-related policy issues.

## Checklist for organizing a site visit

### Scheduling

- Schedule the visit with the assistance of HIVMA or Ryan White Medical Providers Coalition staff, who will coordinate with your institution and the policymaker's office to schedule the site visit.
- Confirm the visit with the policymaker's scheduler one to two weeks in advance of the visit, including the exact time and length of the visit, as well as who plans to attend (e.g., policymaker and/or their staff).
- Get information for the "visit day" contact person from the policymaker's office.

### Materials

- **Develop relevant materials** to share with the policymaker and staff ahead of the visit. HIVMA and RMWPC staff also can help with materials development and have resources you can use. Materials should include:
  - An agenda or schedule of events for the visit
  - A list of visit participants, including brief bios
  - A map, directions and parking instructions for the visit
  - Contact information for key staff
  - Clinic and/or institution materials, including a brochure or brief fact sheet

### Preparation

- *Notify clinic and/or institution staff about the visit*, including the date, time and duration.
- *Describe specific goals and expectations* for the visit.
- *Request suggestions for HIV community members and staff* who would be good candidates to share their stories.

- *Explain the visit to community members and staff beforehand* and share the agenda and discussion topics. Reassure them that a respectful discussion is expected.
- *Identify a volunteer to take pictures* for social media both during and after the visit.
- *Prep participating staff at least one day before the visit* to ensure that all participants understand their roles and the purpose of the visit and are aware of the tour route and timing. Make sure to select locations for pre- and post-tour sit-down discussions.

### **Visit day**

- *Greet the policymaker and their staff* as they arrive at your facility.
- *Host a sit-down discussion* with the policymaker and selected program staff to describe the program. Make sure this discussion does not run too long. Allow plenty of time for the facility tour.
- *Tour the facility*, making sure to highlight special or particularly effective services provided.
- *Give the policymaker and their staff an opportunity to meet with HIV community members*, if applicable, to hear personal stories and learn how your clinic, research or other funding helps patients.
- *Wrap up the visit* by checking on the policymaker's experience and thank them for their time.
- *Take note of issues* raised during the visit and any questions that require follow-up.
- *Take some final photos!*

### **Follow-up**

- *Post photos from the visit on social media*, making sure to tag and thank the policymaker.
- *Email thank-you notes*, including a thank-you letter for the scheduler to share with the policymaker and individual thank-you emails to all of the staff who visited.
- *Send any requested information*, materials or answers to questions that were not available during the visit.
- *Share with HIVMA or RWMPC staff the policy issues raised during the visit* so that they can help you develop appropriate follow-up.

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HIVMA and RWMPC staff are here to help: Please contact Jose Rodriguez, HIVMA associate director for policy & advocacy, at [jrodriguez@hivma.org](mailto:jrodriguez@hivma.org), or Jenny Collier, convener of the Ryan White Medical Providers Coalition, at [jcollier@colliercollective.org](mailto:jcollier@colliercollective.org).

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*Adapted from a Ryan White Program clinical site visit checklist created by Collier Collective LLC.*