



## Make an Impact Psychologists as Advocates with Elected Officials

Only with good information can good decisions be made

Psychologists are uniquely trained in a vast amount of areas: program development, consultation, supervision, behavioural (non-pharmacological) pain management, telehealth, cross-jurisdiction expertise, etc.

### Psychologists as Advocates

Psychologists have natural networks and spheres of influence for advocacy, with great potential to develop core relationships with key professionals.

#### How we Advocate

Advocacy is not about competing with other professions. It is about focusing on the unique value, or niche “sells”, of psychology – we add value. We can, and do, make Alberta a psychologically healthy place to live.

### Unleash Potential

The time is always now for advocacy. Engaging grassroots lobbying initiatives are essential to success. Stay focused on the purpose (key messages). Active participation is crucial.

#### Assess

- Define the situation

#### Plan

- Goals & objectives
- Target audiences
- Key messages

#### Act

- Develop and implement advocacy plan
- Engage with Social Media

#### Impact Larger Systems

Know who you are communicating with - identify & locate your elected officials and understand the various roles associated with their position



#### Write a letter

- Address correctly
- Be: direct, accurate, informative, courteous, constructive, available, appreciative
- Personalize message
- Follow-up your letter



#### Call

- Idea clarity with concise facts and arguments
- Exact call to action
- Be persistent but courteous
- Follow up with a note



#### Meet In-Person

- Schedule the meeting
- Research the issue
- Supply fact sheets
- Establish ties
- Don't delay!

PAA mission: To advance the science-based professional of psychology & to promote the well-being & potential of all Albertans.

When visiting your MLA or elected official

- Know the staff scheduler
- Know the public relations office/press office
- Publicize your meeting and message
- Liaise with everyone
- Communicate clearly and effectively
- Thank everyone

Build relationships!

- Honour an MLA at your event
- Invite them to speak
- Recognize their efforts
- Approach them when you see them

### Key Messages: Core Stories

Know your story & tell it

Have a brief, clear story of the benefit of psychology in your experience. Ask about their experiences.

PAA Position Statements

- Psychologically healthy workplaces
- Mental & behavioural health funding parity
- Access for all Albertans
- “Mental health therapist” is a disservice to Albertans
- Counselling & psychotherapy = master’s degree
- Alberta health care insurance plan coverage
- Meaningful & effective school psychology

The Value of Psychologists

- Accountable
- Experts
- Accessible
- Trusted
- Uniquely trained

Psychologists, as practitioners, researchers, academics, and consultants, have demonstrated benefits, are in critical need, and are efficient & effective.

### Partners in Advocacy: What you can do

Reach out! Build relationships that matter, promote your profession, & assist elected officials to lead in ways that support the psychological health and wellness of our province. Call or write your elected official today.

If you are meeting with a minister, deputy minister, or senior civil servant, coordinate your visit with the PAA so that the CEO or a board member can join you. If you are meeting with any other official, advise us and we will collaborate and support you as best as we can.

**PAA Membership Benefits**

- Have a voice
- Benefits & services
- Referral Service
- Members Only Area

ADVOCACY

Influencing people to create change - educating & mobilizing

To become involved, or if you have questions, contact Ada Nieminen, PAA Governance Director  
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