

The Nurse Practitioner Association
New York State

Grassroots Advocacy
and
PAC Manual



January 2010

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Grassroots & PAC Manual

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The Need for Grassroots Lobbying

People often say that in the political process, there are two sources of power and success – money and people. While both are important, the NPA has strength in its numbers. There are over 13,000 practicing Nurse Practitioners across New York. These working professionals are our best attribute – they have the greatest stake in the passage (or defeat) of legislation and can speak most passionately about the practical consequences of what happens in Albany. Lawmakers respond best when their constituents appeal directly to them. The NPA legislative strategy cannot be fully successful without the support and validation of the Nurse Practitioner community.

It is critically important that grassroots lobbying be organized and coordinated to have maximum impact. It is like a campaign, which Webster's New World Dictionary defines as "...a series of operations with a practical objective or a series of planned actions." Effective grassroots lobbying needs to be clear about its goals, demands and what the ideal outcomes are. Grassroots lobbying involves a series of well timed, connected events over a period of time – office visits with lawmakers in their district, attendance at local public events where the NPA agenda can be shared, initiation of well thought out media outreach – which build on and contribute to the strength of the Association and its members. Grassroots lobbying is not a "solo" affair but involves a group of people in a coordinated effort who are committed to the success of the NPA's goals.

When a grassroots lobbying campaign is organized, it must always keep in mind the "end game." In the case of the NPA, particularly during the legislative session, it is about reinforcing, through a variety of means, the importance of passage of legislation important to the larger Nurse Practitioner community. The key components – both short and long term – of a grassroots lobbying effort are:

- Identify appropriate, meaningful and achievable goals.
- Target your lawmakers and other key decision makers.
- Remember to build good relationships with all of these targets.

Even the best lobbyist relationship with a legislator is no match for strong expressions of constituent involvement and first hand knowledge of the issue and its impact on the profession.

Developing a Strong Legislative Program

The NPA Legislative Program 2010 was developed by the NPA leadership in consultation with the NPA Lobby Team. The legislative priorities reflect the mission of the NPA and the needs and goals as expressed by the NPA membership and those of the profession in general. The proposed agenda is presented to the Board of Directors for approval. Upon establishing the legislative agenda, the Lobby Team is then directed to advance these measures through the legislative process with the strong support of the NPA Grassroots network.

The result of this process is outlined below. This information, in its most updated form, can be found at our website at www.theNPA.org. In addition, the website will be updated throughout the legislative session to provide with memos in support/opposition on bills as they move through committees.

2010 Approved Legislative Agenda

The NPA supports all legislation that promotes access to quality, affordable healthcare for patients in New York State. Specific legislation that the NPA will sponsor and support in 2010 includes the following:

- **A.765 (Gottfried)/S.2948 (Montgomery)- Patient Access & Advocacy Act -** Removal of Statutory Collaboration & Reimbursement
- **A.6651 (Gottfried)/S4490 (Duane) - Reimbursement Assurance** to assure health plans do not deny reimbursement for services rendered by nurse practitioners acting within their lawful scope
- **A.7877 (Gottfried)/S4491 (Duane) - Access Protection** to promote practice opportunities for nurse practitioners by prohibiting health plans from excluding nurse practitioners from their provider networks and to insure that reimbursement rates are reasonable
- **A.3704 (John)/S.3908 (Duane) - NP Worker's Compensation Access Act** authorizing NPs to fully participate within and be reimbursed under the worker's compensation program in NYS as a legislative study bill
- **A.2028-A (John)/S.2969 (Montgomery) - Death Certificate Bill** authorizing NPs to sign death certificates
- **A.1719 (Gottfried)/S.2947-A (Hannon) - Do-Not-Resuscitate (DNR)** authorizing NPs to issue orders not to resuscitate
- **A.6654 (Gottfried)/S.4070 (Montgomery) - Immunization Bill** to add NPs to the category of persons legally qualified to certify that an immunization required by section 2164 of the public health law may be detrimental to a child's health

Grassroots Coordinator

Chapter Presidents need to appoint a “Grassroots Coordinator” who will be charged with the responsibility of creating a “network” of NPA members to carry out the instructions set forth in periodic NPA Action Alerts.

Responsibilities of the Grassroots Coordinator:

- Create phone trees or email list – establish a list of NPA members who are in a position to pass important information and legislation alerts for other members. These members in turn would have a phone tree or email contact list as well.
- Manage and Support communications – receive communications from the NPA or Chapter Leader and support NPA E-Advocacy activities via phone tree or email list.
- Organize and oversee letter writing campaigns as requested by the NPA or Chapter Leaders – sample letters will be made available to the Grassroots Coordinator from the NPA.
- Local visits – will be responsible for scheduling and organizing lobby visits to the district offices of Senators and Assembly representatives as targeted by the NPA..
- Field Reporting – when action alerts call for local legislative visits a field report is submitted to the NPA office either by fax or email. Field Report form can be found on page 9.

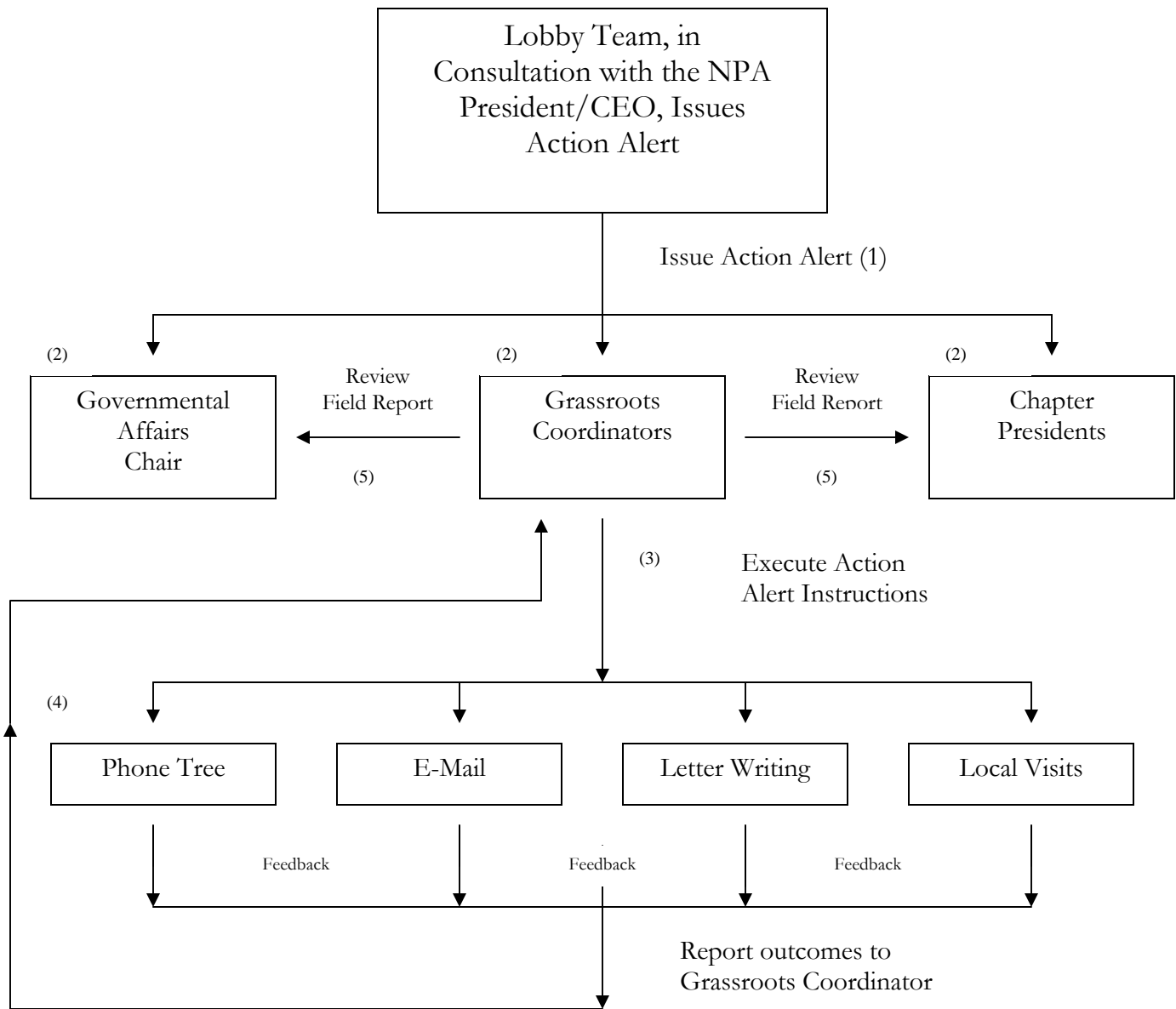
2010 Grassroots Coordinators

Chapter	Coordinator Name	Coordinator Email
Adirondack	Cheryl Kabeli	corishrn@yahoo.com
Brooklyn/Queens	Elaine Leinung Dorothy Grasso	ezleinung@optonline.net Teal724@aol.com
Capital	Jeanne Millett	capitalnp@aol.com
Chautauqua/Cattaraugus	Amanda Kaufman	Aekaufman2000@yahoo.com
Dutchess/Ulster	Scott Owtiz	mowitz@hvc.rr.com
Finger Lakes	Elizabeth Mizro	lmizro@roadrunner.com
Greater Newburgh	Jody MacHugh	jlmachugh@hotmail.com
Greater Rochester	Jane Tuttle	Jane_tuttle@urmc@rochester.com
Lake Ontario	Elizabeth Ewing Burns	ewing@oswego.edu
Leatherstocking/Catskill	Cindy Ploutz	ploutzc@hartwick.edu
Long Island	Mary Beth Koslap Petraco Peg O'Donnell	petraconp@aol.com pegsfullmoon@aol.com
Lower Hudson Valley	Aditya Arya	nursearya@gmail.com
Manhattan/Bronx	Elaine Gibbons	elainemgibbons@aol.com
Mohawk Valley	Brenda Carney	Maryrn528@hotmail.com
Saratoga/Warren	Susan Badera	sue@badera.us
Staten Island	Patricia Discenza	pdiscenp@aol.com
Susquehanna	Marita Florini	fnpmaf@yahoo.com
Syracuse	Ann Grosso Jane Monnell Sherri Loucks	huocalg@omh.state.ny.us jmnse70@verizon.net dloucks1@twcny.rr.com
Thousand Island	Jean Lee-Mosier	jleemosier@gmail.com
Tompkins/Cortland	Kit Veley	kitkat52@care2.com
Western New York	Kimberly Schmittendorf Trisha Whistler-Adams Betsy Leiner	kssfnp@yahoo.com healthy132003@yahoo.com betsyleiner@yahoo.com

As of May 13, 2010

The NPA Action Alert Process

Action alerts will be generated by the NPA Lobby Team under the direction of the Association's President & CEO and sent to all Grassroots Coordinators. The alerts will contain specific, easy to follow instructions on how to proceed with the grassroots efforts. Alerts may involve generating letters to Legislators and others utilizing the NPA's E-Advocacy tool, making phone calls, setting up meetings in the district, emailing or other such communication with state officials. Grassroots Coordinators will be responsible for providing local support, following the directions provided, communicating the messages with chapter members and following up with members to insure a high level of participation in the action alert process.



1. The Lobby Team in consultation with the NPA President and CEO issues Legislative Action Alert.
2. The Alert is sent to the Governmental Affairs Chair, Chapter Presidents, Grassroots Coordinators and to members.
3. Grassroots Coordinators carry out and support the action alert process using the networks that they have created.
4. Grassroots Coordinators take feedback from participating members of the NPA and compiles a "field report" that is forwarded to the NPA for use by our lobby team.
5. The Field Report is evaluated to determine the overall impact the Alert has on the legislative process and to help determine if further action is necessary.

Grassroots E-Advocacy Communication Tool Format

When an Action Alert is needed you will receive an email communication from the NPA providing you with specific information and instructions on how to proceed.

Advocacy made Simple!

- Action Alert email from NPA
- Click on the E-Advocacy link provided in the email
- At the next screen click on the alert you want to respond to
- At that next screen complete the correspondence by filling in the blanks as are available, including your street address information if requested
- Click on the “Send Message” button at the bottom of the page
- At the next screen complete the name and email addresses of any friends you wish to inform about the alert
 - If you do not wish to email any friends about the action alert you are finished and can leave the alert page
- You will receive a confirmation email at the email address you provided during the action alert

Field Report Review

When Action Alerts call for local legislative visits, the Grassroots Coordinator is asked to complete the field report form below and submit it to the NPA by fax to 518-348-0720 or email to info@TheNPA.org attention President and CEO.

Grassroots Outreach Field Report

Bill # _____ Visit Date _____

Task _____

Legislator and/or Contact Name: _____

Name of NPA Members making the visit:

Feedback:

**Please fax or email form back to NPA Office
Attention President & CEO**

Fax # 518-348-0720

Email – info@TheNPA.org

Tips for Effective Lobbying

You **CAN** affect legislation by letting your legislator know how you feel on an issue. Here are some suggestions.

If you visit your legislator's Albany or district office:

- Make an appointment
- Have a short, written statement outlining your views
- If you come in a group, choose a spokesperson
- Be familiar with existing laws and message points
- Know the pros and cons of your proposals and be prepared to answer objectives
- Send letters thanking the legislators for their support or telling them you hope they will reconsider their positions

Find out a bill number and/or sponsor by calling the NPA at (518) 348-0719 or by visiting our website at www.theNPA.org – under Advocacy/Practice section.

Legislative Visits

In light of the thousands of bills introduced in the Legislature each session, legislators and their staff have limited time to give you and your issue. This is especially true during the height of the legislative session. Therefore, your presentation should be concise and take ten minutes or less.

Your presentation to a legislator should show why your bill is good public policy that will benefit the people of the legislator's district. Three important elements of the presentation are:

- The bill numbers in each house and names of the prime sponsors
- The names of constituents, important persons and associations who support your bill
- The provisions of the legislation, their justification and benefits

Remember that most lawmakers and staff are lay persons who likely know little about your issue or profession. Make your presentation as simple as possible. Emphasize the major talking points provided. Make the presentation interesting and relevant to the lawmaker's philosophy and district.

When preparing your presentation, anticipate questions and challenges to your legislation and position. Be aware of what the opposition to your bill is saying and be ready to provide rebuttal.

After initial introductions have been made, you should express gratitude to the lawmaker and staff for their efforts on behalf of constituents. Then begin the prepared presentation. Listen closely to what the legislator and staff may say, observe how the message is being

received, and take notes about the visit and of any request by the legislator for information that you may not have been able to provide at that time.

Ask the legislator if you can count on his or her support or vote. If strong support is expressed, ask if he or she would be willing to contact the leadership (e.g. Committee Chair, Speaker or Majority leader) to recommend passage of the bill. If the legislator does not commit, indicate that you understand that more information or time may be needed to enable a decision to be made and that you are available for further consultation.

Make sure you leave a summary of the primary bill discussed, each labeled with the bill name and bill numbers included for the legislator's reference. Bring a camera with you. Ask if you could have a group photo with the lawmaker and offer to include the photo in your next chapter or statewide publication or send it to the local press. Be sure to thank the legislator for his or her time and follow up the visit with a written thank you letter.

Try to build future contacts into your visit by sending additional information and following that up with phone calls. Offer to answer any questions about the new materials that may arise. The more contacts you make, the more opportunity to reinforce your message and to let the lawmaker know you are asking for help and that you will communicate your understanding of his or her position to the other members of your group and to the public.

Follow up visits will be needed at various times throughout the legislative process: when a bill is being circulated for co-sponsorship, coming up for a vote in committee, stalled on the floor of the Senate or Assembly, scheduled for a vote in either house, or before the Governor to be signed into law or vetoed.

Do not offer the lawmaker your opinions as to what his or her support or opposition will mean politically. Any suggestion that failure to support your bill will harm or help at election time is out of order and may be taken as a threat. Lawmakers calculate the political consequences of their actions on their own.

Networking

Ongoing networking by Nurse Practitioners is critically important to most every aspect of the NPA's grassroots outreach campaign. Networking among chapter members will ensure that everyone is up to speed on the NPA's activities and feels involved in the advocacy efforts. When the members are well briefed and enthusiastic about being key players in the grassroots outreach, they in turn are our best agents. In addition to internal networking, Nurse Practitioners have frequent occasion to be in contact with patients and other critical components of the healthcare delivery system. Take advantage of these encounters! Share the NPA story and message. The intent is to have as many independent validators as possible – these supporters can be helpful with letter writing, fundraising and other outreach efforts. Keep track of your efforts and successes – networking success is gauged by its sustainability.

Political Action Campaign

The importance of a viable and effective Political Action Campaign (PAC) cannot be overstated. PAC resources allow us to attend a variety of political functions throughout the state, increasing the visibility of nurse practitioners and assuring our participation in the political process. Elected officials who share our commitment to quality healthcare in this state should be recognized and assisted in their efforts.

The NPA lobby team has recommended the NPA PAC maintain a biennial PAC goal of \$50,000 for the 2009-2010 political years. With this in mind, individual PAC fundraising goals have been established for each Chapter based on the number of members. (see PAC Goals on page 15)

Grassroots PAC Coordinator

Grassroots Coordinators are asked to make the PAC visible at all Chapter events/meetings by taking a few minutes to remind members of the importance of the NP of NYS PAC. The following bullet points below are offered as a guideline.

We Need to Support our PAC!

- Our Political Action Campaign (PAC) is essential to the success of our legislative agenda and increasing the visibility of NPs with important and influential state elected officials.
- PAC Funds enable us to attend political events and functions across the state.
- The PAC allows us to support legislators who share our commitment to the advancement of the profession.
- NP of NYS PAC serves as a platform for nurse practitioners to build political power and influence legislation at the State level.
- We are asking that members support the PAC as it is utilized to support the profession!

Chapter Support for our PAC

The importance of fundraising cannot be understated. The funds are a critical component to advancing our legislative agenda and reinforcing key relationships, but equally as important, grassroots fundraising is an important part of building an effective, organized and motivated chapter. The more engaged your members are in every aspect of the NPA agenda, the better!

Chapter PAC Goals are established by the NPA Board of Directors. A copy of the Chapter

PAC Goals is found on page 15. While there are several different fundraising approaches, below offer some simple ways to raise PAC funds at the Chapter level.

- **Mail Solicitation**

Send a letter to each of your members to make a contribution to the NP of NYS PAC. Explain to them simply that in order for our voice(s) to be heard we must have their financial support. The key components of successful mail solicitation include a well-refined mailing list and a powerful letter. The NPA can help you draft the letter.

- **“Dialing for Dollars”**

This approach is often effective because it provides the opportunity to have a one on one conversation with the individuals you are soliciting. It is also a way to build your base. It requires a script for those that will be making the calls (to ensure that they have message points that they are comfortable with) and an ability to “close the deal.” In fundraising, if you don’t ask, you will never receive. And if you ask for \$25 dollars, you will rarely find someone who offers to give you \$50. Be realistic, but don’t undersell yourself. What you are doing is important!

- **Chapter Event/Meetings**

Our Long Island Chapter (NPALI) has instituted a successful model for PAC fundraising. Once per year, members attending a Chapter event/meeting are asked to write their check for the event payable to the NP of NYS PAC instead of the Chapter. This is a great way for the Chapter to contribute without creating a tax liability for itself!

Special Note:

Chapters are not encouraged to contribute directly to the PAC as this may generate a tax liability for the Chapter. Therefore members are encouraged to contribute directly to the PAC by check or money order as there is no tax liability for the individual contributions. PAC contributions are not tax deductible.

2009/2010 PAC Goals by Chapter			
CHAPTER	MEMBERS	* 2009/2010 PAC Goals	Annual Goal
TOTALS	2567	\$50,056.50	\$25,028.25
Adirondack	22	\$429	\$214.50
Brooklyn/Queens	113	\$2,203.50	\$1,101.75
Capital	215	\$4,192.50	\$2,096.25
Chautauqua/Cattaragus	37	\$721.50	\$360.75
Dutchess/Ulster	69	\$1,345.50	\$672.75
Finger Lakes	30	\$585	\$292.50
Greater Newburgh	100	\$1,950	\$975
Lake Ontario	35	\$682.50	\$341.25
Leatherstocking Catskill	39	\$760.50	\$380.25
Long Island NPA	620	\$12,090	\$6,045
Lower Hudson Valley	184	\$3,588	\$1,794
Manhattan/Bronx	104	\$2,028	\$1,014
Mohawk Valley	108	\$2,106	\$1,053
Rochester	173	\$3,373.50	\$1,686.75
Saratoga/Warren	61	\$1,189.50	\$594.75
Staten Island	41	\$799.50	\$399.75
Susquehanna	64	\$1,248	\$624
Syracuse	183	\$3,568.50	\$1,784.25
Thousand Islands	29	\$565.50	\$282.75
Tompkins/Cortland	52	\$1,014	\$507
Western New York	275	\$5,362.50	\$2,681.25
<i>Individual</i>	13	\$253.50	\$126.75

- **Note:** Target Goal set at \$10.00 per member/student/retired per year to correspond with 2-year election cycle. Campaign start date of January 1, 2009. (*Membership numbers as of January 5, 2009.*)