

Advocacy 101: Part 2

Designing and planning your project

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SLIDE 1

Welcome back to the PedsCases advocacy podcast series. My name is Dr. Katie Boone, and I am here along with two of my co-residents Dr. Laura Betcherman and Dr. Amelia Kellar, We are pediatric residents at the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto. This podcast series was developed with the help of Dr. Charlotte Moore-Hepburn, a pediatrician at SickKids and Canadian Pediatric Society Director of Medical Affairs.

This is the second in a three-part series on advocacy. In the first podcast, we introduced you to the concept of public policy advocacy. In this podcast we will address how to better understand the various levels of government and how to design your own advocacy project.

Planning your project

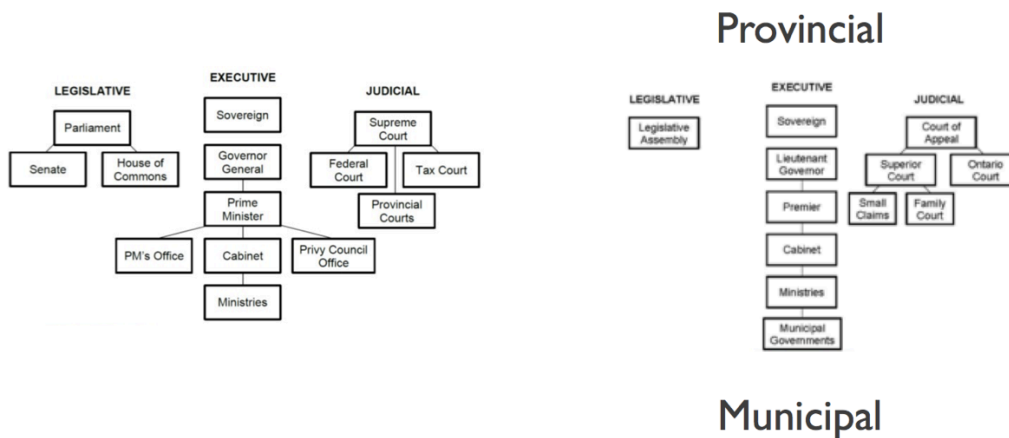
- UNDERSTAND levels of government / policy making process
- IDENTIFY stakeholders
- COMPLETE power mapping
- DEVELOP a strategy



SLIDE 2

To create and execute an effective advocacy campaign it is important to have a clear plan of action. This often involves interacting with government and policy makers. In this section we will discuss the different levels of government and their various roles in public policy. Next, we will discuss how to identify stakeholders and construct a power map. Last, we will discuss how to develop a strategy to execute your project, mainly by setting goals to help your project be objective-focused rather than activity-focused.

Understanding the levels of government



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As a start, it is important to understand the scope, roles and authorities of different levels of the Canadian government and to identify which level of government is best to address. For example, an intervention to improve education for children through curriculum reform may be addressed at a provincial level, a project to address a consumer product safety issue may be addressed at a federal level, and a program to improve refugee integration may be addressed at the municipal level.

Let's look at the structure of the Canadian government. Overall, the federal and provincial governments are structured similarly. Each has a legislative, executive, and judicial branch. The federal legislative branch is parliament, which is made up of two houses, the Senate and House of Commons. The house of commons is made up of elected representatives called "members of parliament" who represent the electoral district from which they were elected for a period of 4 years. Senators, however, are appointed by the governor general with the guidance of the Prime Minister. The House of Commons generates the majority of new legislation, and the principle function of the senate is as a "sober second thought" on federal level public policy. The executive branch has a sovereign and an elected representative, the prime minister or premier. The elected representative is supported by his or her office, cabinet and ministry. Cabinet members are appointed by the prime minister or premier and tend to serve in their portfolios for two to four years. The ministries are staffed by bureaucrats, many of whom serve in their positions for five or more years. In some cases, senior level civil servants have worked in a single ministry, or in a single division for a decade or more.

In the constitution, there are only two sanctioned levels of government: provincial and federal. However, provincial governments can delegate authority to municipal governments. Municipal governments can be divided into upper tier and lower tier. Upper tier municipal governments

refer to counties, districts, and regions. These are lead by a chair or warden. Lower tier municipal governments are cities, towns, and municipalities, and are lead by a mayor. These are also elected positions.

Understanding levels of government

- Federal:
 - Covers: defense, criminal law, trade regulations, external relations, transportation, money + banking, citizenship, employment insurance, postal service, census, copyrights, aboriginal affairs
 - Representative: “Member of Parliament”



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The federal government is responsible for defense, criminal law, trade regulations, external relations, transportation, money and banking, citizenship, employment insurance, postal service, census, indigenous affairs.

The federal government will be particularly important if your project involves indigenous health care, consumer product safety, drug approvals, or national level public health surveillance, such as rare disease or national cancer surveillance.

Understanding levels of government

- Provincial:
 - Covers: property + civil rights, administration of justice, natural resources + environment, education, **health + welfare**, age of majority, prisons
 - Representative: “Member of Provincial Parliament” in Ontario, “Member of National Assembly” in Quebec, “Member of House Assembly” in NFLD, or “Member of Legislative Assembly” elsewhere



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The provincial government is responsible for property and civil rights, education, social welfare as well as the management, operation and oversight for the health care system. It is also responsible for administration of justice, natural resources, prisons, age of majority, and natural resources and the environment. The term used to refer to provincial representatives varies across the provinces but most refer to them either as a member of provincial parliament (also known as an MPP) or as a member of the Legislative assembly (or MLA).

The provincial government is often a target for health proposals. Particularly if your project involves changes to the larger health system and its funding, addressing social assistance, child care, or the public education system.

Understanding levels of government

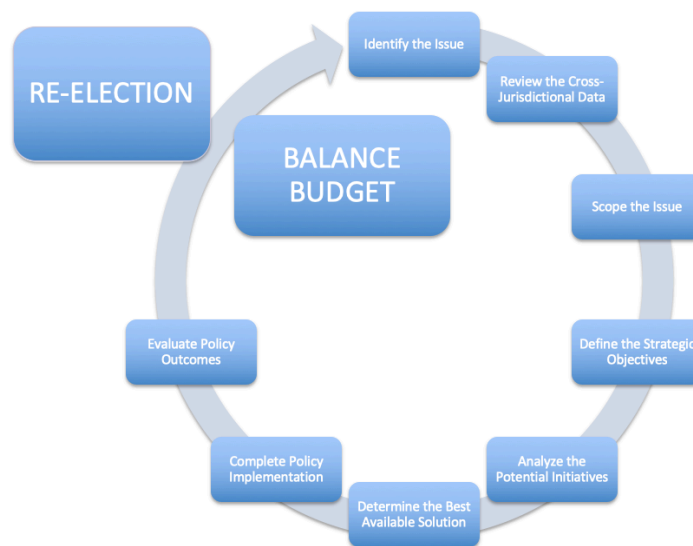
- Municipal
 - Generally covers: water, sewage + waste collection, public transit, land use planning, libraries, **emergency services**, animal control, economic development, public health



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The municipal government covers local issues, which may be involved in your advocacy project such as water, land-use planning, libraries and emergency services. It is also responsible for sewage and waste collection, public transit, animal control and economic development. The municipal government may be best to target if your project involves the regional public health authority, local government bylaws, the local school board, or local programming like community outreach for the homeless.

It is important to note that your project may involve multiple levels of government. If it seems that multiple levels of government may need to be engaged for the project to go forward, consider either narrowing to project to involve only one level or ensure that the different levels are engaged at the right time in the project to address the appropriate aspects of the project.



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Once you have identified the issue at hand and you know what level of government you should target for your project, it is important to lay out your proposition in a way that policy-makers will understand.

First, paint a picture of the landscape for your issue. Try to understand how your jurisdiction compares to others. For example, Are there many jurisdictions doing this or will this be a new concept? would your jurisdiction be the first to have a project like this? Is there evidence from other jurisdictions that your intervention will work? These are all important points to leverage.

Second, scope your issue. When approaching government, it is critical to have a narrow scope with a specific ask. Focus in on one specific change to legislation, or better enforcement of a specific bill for example. This narrow scope allows for concrete downstream effects and will prevent the project from becoming too lofty or complicated.

Once you have a sense of the landscape and scope, you can set strategic objectives, determine potential projects to meet these objectives, and decide on the best solution. Also, consider how you might evaluate the project early on so that this essential component can be integrated into the planning and implementation stages. Once you have completed your policy implementation it is important to evaluate the outcomes of your policy change. This is important as this information will help to support change in other jurisdictions, and could support subsequent interventions after your project is complete. Last, the policy making process is very dependent on the election schedule. Representatives will try their best to hold true to the promises they made during their campaign. Try to target representatives whose platform is consistent with the change you are proposing. You might also consider approaching candidates with potential projects prior to an election to insert the policy change into their platform.

Understanding policy making processes



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As a healthcare provider it is likely clear to you that your intervention is the right thing. However, the right thing from a healthcare perspective may not be the right thing from a government perspective as there are many different stakeholders to take into account. It is important to acknowledge that government officials need to incorporate many different viewpoints into their decision-making before approaching them. Most importantly, you can anticipate these perspectives and potentially alter them or highlight them during your meeting. As we discussed earlier, the government official will try their best to stay true to their platform as well as to close strategic stakeholders. They will also be considering public perception of the issue as they will be hoping to be re-elected. During your meeting, you can highlight how the proposed intervention fits into their platform and is advantageous to their key supporters or strategic stakeholders.

Developing a strategy

- Develop a Strategy – include stakeholder analysis, power mapping, and goal setting
 - Delegate work with specific responsibilities and timelines
 - Develop a budget
 - Define your end point -- When will your advocacy strategy conclude? What will happen if you are successful? What will happen if you are unsuccessful?



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The last step in project design, is strategic development. This refers to the combination of stakeholder analysis, power mapping, and goal setting. By combining all of these activities, an approach to government advocacy can be made. This outline should be put on a timeline with a specific budget assigned to each task and with specific responsibilities assigned to those participating. There should be check in meetings intermittently to keep the group on track. It is important keep your endpoint in mind and try not to become too focused on individual activities but keep a big-picture perspective focusing on objectives and goals. This is a critical step in project development and can be very time intensive. However, it is essential to the successful completion of a project.

Understanding your stakeholders

- Stakeholder analysis: who has power to make changes, who are impacted by changes, who are your allies and who are your opponents
- Analyse the decision making space, who decides and when
- Identify allies and opponents
- Anticipate what arguments your opponents will make and how you will deal with them

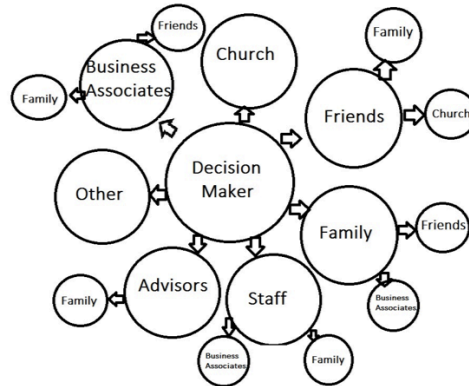


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Stakeholder analysis is a critical component of strategy development. As we discussed, the first step is to determine the level of government that is most important to target. Then you should identify specific persons in government who have the power to make your proposed change. Try to determine who contributes to decision making around your topic of interest and when those kinds of decisions are made (keeping in mind the election cycle). Try to determine who your allies and opponents may be. Try to anticipate what arguments your opponents will present and how you will deal with them in advance. Determining key stakeholders is time intensive but will yield important dividends if a positive relationship can be formed, at the right time, with someone who has the power to implement your project.

Power mapping

- Choose a desired target → government representative
- Map influence → associations, people, institutions, donors, etc. that have relationships with the target
- Target priority relationships → find out more about people or groups that have a lot of influence
- Develop a plan to access the individuals identified

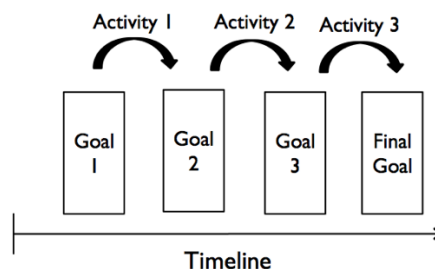


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The easiest way to approach stakeholder analysis is to make a power map. First, choose a critical decision maker who has the power to implement your project. From there, try to map the influences at play for that person. These can be other political party members, associations, financial backers, colleagues, and family. Target priority relationships. Try to find out more about influential groups or people and meet with them as well to discuss your idea. Develop a plan to access the individuals you have identified. Formal meetings are best but impromptu meetings can also be influential.

Goal setting

- What are the short, medium, and long term goals, what are obstacles
- Identify primary and secondary targets for advocacy work
- In addition to setting objectives, focus on what outcomes you want to see: outcomes reduce the danger of being activity-focused.



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The final step in strategic development is goal setting. Of course, the end goal of any project is successful implementation of the intervention. However, it can sometimes be difficult to decide what route to take to get to the final goal. One simple way of approaching this daunting task is to break down the final goal into a series of smaller objectives. Once you have identified which smaller steps can lead you to your larger goal you can identify single activities that will progress your project from goal 1 all the way to the final implementation of your project. This series of goals can be placed on a timeline, which will allow you to break down the project into smaller, manageable pieces. It is important that the goals are outcome focused rather than activity focused.

For example, an activity might be to run a public campaign, perhaps a fun run in support of your intervention. The outcome of this would be to increase public awareness and to spark a conversation in your community. The danger, is that often people will begin to focus too much on the activity itself, the fun run, rather than the ultimate goal of the campaign, to increase awareness and spark conversation. Becoming activity focused can sometimes lead the project away from the initial goals and objectives. To prevent this try, to continuously ask “how will this activity lead me to my interim and final goals?”.

Summary of project design

- Determine the relevant level of government
- Define the current landscape
- Define the desired scope of your issue

- Think about the issue from the perspective of a government official
- Develop a strategy to implement your project through stakeholder analysis, power mapping, and goal setting
- Apply your strategy to a timeline with a specific budget and people assigned to each task



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In summary, designing your project prior to beginning work is critical. Decide which level of government your project falls under. Look into the landscape in that area and create a narrow scope for your project. When approaching government, think about the issue from their perspective, remember 'money talks'. Last develop a strategy to implement your project by determining key stakeholders and understanding their relationships through power mapping. Come up with outcome-oriented goals that can be accomplished by a series of activities. Apply these goals and activities to a timeline with people and a budget assigned to each activity. Have frequent check-ins with your team to ensure things stay on track.

That brings us to the end of part 2 of our advocacy podcast series. In the next podcast we will discuss how to implementing and evaluate your advocacy project. Thanks for listening!