

2019

# Advocacy Roadmap



## What do we mean by advocacy?

Advocacy is public support for or recommendation of a particular cause or policy. The Crohn's & Colitis Foundation advocates for public policies on behalf of patients on the state and federal level.

## What are the Foundation's 2019 advocacy priorities?

The Foundation's advocacy priorities are developed in collaboration with patients, as well as physicians and advanced practice providers from the Foundation's National Scientific Advisory Committee. Our 2019 advocacy priorities are to:

- Protect and improve patient access to care
- Increase funding for medical research on IBD

## Why should I advocate?

The U.S. Congress and state legislatures are making decisions that impact patients with inflammatory bowel diseases (IBD). These policies can affect your access to medical care as well as national funding for medical research. The best way to ensure that your needs are considered in policy decisions is by sharing your story and explaining how specific policies will affect you or your loved ones.

## How can I advocate in my town?

All politics is local, and we will help you establish relationships with the legislators who represent you. Below are several tips to get started with local advocacy:

- Send emails from your own address or our Action Center
- Ask your U.S. Representative to join the Congressional Crohn's & Colitis Caucus, a group of legislators that work together to support the IBD Community
- Schedule an in-person meeting with your legislators in their local offices
- Attend public events hosted by your legislators and introduce yourself

Email us at [advocacy@crohnscolitisfoundation.org](mailto:advocacy@crohnscolitisfoundation.org) for more information!

## How can I participate?

Getting involved with the Foundation's advocacy initiatives is easy! Sign up for our **Advocacy Network** ([www.crohnscolitisfoundation.org/advocacy](http://www.crohnscolitisfoundation.org/advocacy)) email listserv. We will email you monthly action alerts as well as any relevant instructions and legislative updates. The Foundation has mapped out monthly activities to help you plan your participation in advance, see below.



Find out more about our advocacy priorities and check out additional tips at the Foundation's **Be An Advocate** webpage.

Below is a calendar of action alerts and training opportunities that we will send you via the Advocacy Network in 2019. Topics are subject to change based on current events. We will occasionally email additional action items when legislation is moving and we need to make our voices heard.



Questions? Email [advocacy@crohnscolitisfoundation.org](mailto:advocacy@crohnscolitisfoundation.org)

Month	Action Alert Topics	Justification
January	Welcome to Congress	The 116th Congress convenes in early January. Send your legislators a welcome email via the Action Center explaining IBD and the 2019 advocacy priorities.
February	Call, email, post, tweet, or send a carrier pigeon to your legislator	Take time this month to strengthen your relationships with your legislators by contacting them online and/or offline! We will help you find your best contacts and provide you with tips on effective advocacy communication.
March	Show [IBD research] the money!	Congress usually begins considering spending decisions for the next fiscal year in March, including spending on medical research. Use our template email to urge your legislator to support funding for IBD research!
April	What's your story?	Your story is your most powerful tool in your advocacy arsenal. We will provide tips to help you connect policy asks with your personal experiences.
May	IBD goes to Washington	Volunteers from across the nation will meet with their legislators in Washington, D.C. during our annual Day on the Hill. If you can't be there in person, you can still participate via social media and local outreach!
June	Everything is local	During the summer, legislators return to their local districts. Take time in June to prepare for in-district opportunities by learning strategies for successful outreach and engagement with your legislators and their local staff.
July	Dive headfirst into health policy	Further prepare for your in-district meeting with your legislator by taking a deep dive into pertinent health policy issues in July.
August	Congress is out for summer!	You've been preparing for this moment all summer. Put your skills to work by meeting with your legislators locally and/or participate in a public event. Make sure you follow up after your meeting with an email reinforcing your requests.
September	Last chance to fight for funding	When legislators return to Congress in September, they will be tasked with finalizing the funding bills for the next year. This is your last chance to contact your legislators to remind them to support IBD research funding.
October	The year isn't over yet	2019 isn't done yet—there is still time to follow up with your legislators on your policy asks. We'll provide you with an update our progress in gaining support for key legislative items.
November	Where the money goes	You've spent months urging your legislators to fund IBD medical research. Now learn about federal IBD medical research programs, the Foundation's initiatives, and how they all support the IBD research pipeline.
December	Raise awareness with us!	Did you know that Crohn's & Colitis Awareness Week was established by a U.S. Senate resolution? Join us from December 1-7 to raise awareness of Crohn's disease & ulcerative colitis!



Don't forget to tell us about your outreach! Email [advocacy@crohnscolitisfoundation.org](mailto:advocacy@crohnscolitisfoundation.org) if you had a positive phone call and/or met with your legislators either locally or in Washington, D.C. We will follow up on your efforts!