

THE CHAPTER DISPATCH

May 2007

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AT A GLANCE – Important Dates

2007 CALENDAR

Jun 19 CHAPTER LEADERSHIP WORKSHOP, Denver, CO

Jun 20 CPC Meeting, Denver CO

Oct 7-13 National Case Management Week

NATIONAL UPDATES

Member-Get-a-Member Campaign

All together the chapters have recruited **94 members!**
Thanks for all the Good Work!

Help us thank these recruiters for their efforts!

TOP RECRUITER:

Christine Tocco of Grand Rapids, MI is in the lead she has recruited 17!

RECRUITERS WITH 5 OR MORE RECRUITS:

Anne Marie Smith of the Long Island chapter (NY3) with **5 new recruits.**

Helen Judd of the Greensboro/Pinehurst chapter (AL1) with **5 new recruits.**

When these new members joined CMSA during the campaign period, their recruiters received the following for their recruiting efforts:

- **FIRST RECRUIT:** A CMSA Member pin
- **EACH RECRUIT:** A \$5 CMSA coupon for each person recruited
- **FIVE OR MORE RECRUITS:** One free year of CMSA membership
- **TOP RECRUITER:** A complimentary Denver 2007 conference registration

Inaugural Summit on Behavioral Telehealth: Technology for Behavior Change and Disease Management May 31-June 1, 2007

This Summit will offer detailed and practical instruction on using emerging information technologies to support the integration of behavioral health into primary care and chronic disease management. The program will explore how e-empowered health consumers can truly become partners in their own self-management. This timely event brings together leaders in behavioral health, disease management and telemedicine to celebrate the successes, tackle the challenges and advance the goal of integration.

For information on speaking/sponsorship/exhibition/registration, please contact:

Satish Kavirajan, Managing Director, TCBI Ph: 310-265-2570 Email: sk@tcbi.org.

Case Management Writing Contest

Congratulations to the winner Lynn Beasley!

CMSA and Dorland Health Care Information, publisher of *Case in Point*, are hosted their first **CASE MANAGEMENT WRITING CONTEST**, to help mark their new relationship, and to encourage the sharing of best practices. The contest was open to all readers who wish to tell their stories. Lynn Beasley's article will be published in *Case in Point*. She has also won the valuable prizes listed below:

GRAND PRIZE: FREE FULL CONFERENCE REGISTRATION TO DENVER 2007

CMSA's 17th Annual Conference & Expo, June 19-23, 2007, at the Hyatt Regency Denver & Colorado Convention Center

- **A one-year CMSA membership**
- **A complete set of the Dorland Healthcare Website Guide**
- **A complete set of the Case Management Resource Guide**

CHAPTER REMINDERS

2007 Annual Leadership Workshop

Are you a new Chapter Officer and struggling for resources and training? Or, have you held a long-term chapter leadership role and can't seem to get out of a rut? This workshop is for you! Join other CMSA Chapter Leaders, Board Members, and Committee Chairs to explore and identify ways to increase your chapter's knowledge and resources. You'll be relieved to discover that your chapter is not the only one facing issues and in need of fresh ideas. Discussions will evolve from getting your members more involved, leadership retreats and board issues, recruiting members from various practice settings, and planning solid educational programming. This full day workshop will be led by your peers as they share real life experiences and knowledge. Also, time is allocated for Q&A to ask those pressing questions to other chapters and CMSA staff.

This is a Pre-Conference workshop that will be held on Tuesday June 19th at the 17th Annual Conference and Expo in Denver. There is still time to register if you have already registered for the conference; this workshop will be an additional cost to the conference registration fee. Go to www.cmsa.org and click on the conference logo, then go to Tuesday under the sessions and events section for more information. Or contact mlee@aciment.com (501)225-2229 ext.1120.

CPC Meeting – Jun 20, 11:45a – 1:15p

The Chapter Presidents' Council Meeting is held every year at the Annual Conference. The CPC is made up of affiliate chapter presidents, vice-presidents and president elects. During this meeting, chapter innovation award winners are announced and other chapter recognition. The leaders also get a chance to hear from their current CPC Rep on the National Board and the installation of the newly elected CPC Rep. The CPC Rep position is a National Board of Director that is voted on by the affiliate chapter presidents each year.

Lunch will be provided this year for the president, vice-president and president-elect leaders in attendance. Other officers and board members are welcome to attend but lunch will not be guaranteed.

This is another opportunity for the leaders to talk and network and to be proud of what they do!

Membership Meeting – Jun 22, 4:30p – 5:30p

Join the CMSA National Board as they deliver updates on membership benefits and activity over the last year, plus a look ahead. During the Annual Membership Meeting, CMSA will transition board members and vote on some changes to the National Bylaws. As a member and leader of the organization, your support is needed! Hope to see you there.

Local Chapter Directory

Visit cmsa.org and click on membership, then chapters, then local chapter's directory. Review the information for your chapter to make sure it is current and up to date. This area can be used to post meeting and event announcements, in addition to your local chapter's websites. As current and perspective members of CMSA visit the website they will be able to view events happening in their area. Send updates and notices to njackson@acminet.com.

Chapter Officer Updates

Thank you to those chapters that have submitted your officer update information as requested. Many chapters still have to undergo elections for the new term; however there are still some chapters that do not have contact information because the terms have expired. Be sure to get the names, titles and email addresses of these new officers, board members and committee chairs to CMSA National to update the Leadership Database. Please remember that this information is used to determine who to include on correspondence,

reports, chapter dues checks disbursement, chapter contact information, etc.... For the official Officer Update Form, please visit www.cmsa.org, under Membership, then Chapters, then Chapter Resources. Please complete and fax to 501-221-9068 or email njackson@acminet.com.

2007 National Case Management Week!

Make plans now for *National Case Management Week 2007!* “*A Showing of Hands*” is the theme, so begin plans to celebrate the week of October 7 – 13 to help promote case management and bring attention to the contributions that case managers make to the healthcare industry.

Products this year will include:

- Heart-Shaped pins “Case Managers Hand in Hand”
- Luggage Tags with CM week Logo
- Retractable Name Tag Holders
- Mouse Pads with CM Week Logo
- T-Shirts with CM Week Logo
- Coffee Mugs with CM Week Logo
- Posters



Also, visit the official National CM Week website at www.cmsa.org for information on to assist you in planning your CM week events:

- Online tools, such as, flyers, advertising, poster graphics, and guides
- Ideas for planning an event
- How to recognize the case managers in your Chapter or organization
- How to design your own local National Case Management Week promotional piece
- What other organizations support National Case Management Week
- Sample proclamation request letters.

Now is the time begin working on your chapter to receive a proclamation form your governor.

LETTER FROM YOUR CPC REP



Greetings Everyone!

It is hard to believe that my term as Chapter Presidents Council (CPC) Chair and Liaison to the CMSA Board of Directors is nearing an end. Those before me said it would be a fast paced year but an experience well worth the effort and hard work. Indeed it has been all of that and more.

The CPC forum continues to remain a valuable resource for chapter leaders as a means for networking, sharing ideas and collaboration. It is due to the openness and willingness to share successes and failures, as well as a desire to assist each other that helps chapter leaders attain new members, retain established ones and develop meaningful programs. In addition, it is another means to develop new leaders and mentor new chapters. I encourage everyone to continue to utilize this valuable resource and to participate in CMSA's Chapter Dispatch with information on your programs.

My thanks to the CMSA Board of Directors, who recognized the need for the CPC Role and participation on the Board and continued support for our chapters.

Thank you to the chapter leadership for allowing me to serve you this past year as CPC Chair. It has been a wonderful opportunity and experience.

I wish our new CPC Representative much success in the year ahead and offer my support and assistance and know you will as well.

I look forward to seeing you all in Denver next month, especially at the CPC meeting and the Chapter Leadership Workshop.

Warm regards,

Pat Agius RN BS A-CCC CCM CPHQ
2006-2007 CPC Rep
CMSA Board of Directors

CHAPTER HIGHLIGHTS

To contact any of the local affiliate or pending chapters, visit www.cmsa.org – under the Membership link choose Chapter.

Official CMSA Chapters

Phoenix, AZ

The Arizona Chapter of CMSA is currently planning their annual conference to be held the second week in September. This annual conference will offer attendees 6.5 CEUs. The chapter has procured a group of very impressive speakers for the event. The title this year is *Thinking Out Of The Box - Innovations In Case Management*.

Los Angeles, CA

The Southern California Chapter of CMSA is sponsoring a CCM Prep Course on October 5th and 6th at Little Company of Mary Hospital in Torrance, California.

Fort Wayne, IN

The Fort Wayne Chapter is hosting a seminar titled *Solving the Mental Health Puzzle* held at The Landmark Conference & Reception Centre on Ellison Road on May 17 8:00-4:30pm. 7 CEUs was available. The morning consisted of a presentation on depression by a therapist, followed by a presentation on Vagus Nerve Stimulation by a psychiatrist, and then a presentation on integrating components of mental health care. The afternoon brought the keynote speaker, Dr. Gregory T. Hale PH.D, from Indianapolis. He spoke on psychological testing and diagnosis, and treatment recommendations.

Massachusetts

CMSNE will hold their 18th Annual conference, *Practicing Within the Standards - Legal and Ethical Issues in Case Management* on September 27 & 28 in Manchester, NH. Confirmed Keynote Speakers include John Banja speaking on ethics, Attorney Gayle Sullivan speaking on legal issues, Michael Demoratz speaking to cultural disparity in healthcare and Diane Huber from the CCM Commission speaking on ethical dilemmas and the CCM Code of Professional Ethics. The Call for Papers for breakout sessions and poster has now been completed, and proposals for pre and post symposia are now been accepted. The Exhibitor Prospectus will be available mid May. Visit our website for upcoming details. <http://www.cmsne.org/annualconference.htm>

CMSA kicked off its official campaign to get the Nursing Licensure Compact passed in all states. To support this important effort, CMSNE created a webpage with information to prepare and send off letters to key contacts at the Boards of Nursing, NCSBN, and state legislatures. Because the New England chapter covers four states (two of which have already passed NLC legislation), we are focusing efforts on Massachusetts (MA) and Rhode Island (RI). There are bills introduced in the MA and RI Senate, as well as the RI House of Representatives.

Group email lists have been utilized (member and legislative affinity) to announce the campaign kick off, as well as to provide updates as to our chapter's website resources. To support the members, a customized letter template (a link for which was sent with the CMSA kick-off announcement), creating variations for members to cut/paste or download onto their own computer. Our website provides links to both MA and RI legislature pages so people can find out who their current representatives are and how to correspond with them. Key contact information for correspondence (e.g., mailing address, email, fax) is located in one place to simplify active participation in this campaign. For those who may not be able to send off letters or emails the option to sign a

petition at the CMSANE chapter meetings. These petitions are addressed to the bill sponsors and a copy will be sent to every legislator in both MA and RI legislatures. The CMSNE NLC Action page is available at <http://www.cmsne.org/NCLAction.htm>.

The chapter has begun outreach to other healthcare professional organizations in our region to educate and inform them of this legislation with the hope that others will jump on board and help the effort. In May, Teri Treiger is presenting the topic of multistate nursing licensure to the Southern New England chapter of the American Association of Legal Nurse Consultants. Peter Moran is on the Board of the Massachusetts Association of Registered Nurses (MARN) and actively seeking their support. Correspondence sent to the Executive Director of the MA Board of Registration in Nursing was copied to the MARN Executive Director who responded the matter has been referred to their Health Policy committee for further discussion and recommendation to their Board.

The New England chapter is excited to offer these options to our members. Though it will take more time and effort but we remain hopeful for the eventual passage of the NLC in both MA and RI.

Springfield, MO

The CMSA of Springfield and the Greater Ozarks held its board meeting this month and began planning for the chapter's 10th Anniversary celebration. An annual meeting will be held at the end of the year with a banquet where new officers will be elected. In celebration of the 10th Anniversary, the chapter is planning to make the banquet/annual meeting very special with something to commemorate this special time for each member. The planning of the annual seminar is in the beginning stages.

Omaha, NE

Check the web site (www.nebraskacmsa.org) for directions. The next educational event will be a Lunch and Learn held June 14 sponsored by and to be held at Nebraska Orthopedic Hospital in Omaha, Nebraska. This will be followed by the Fall Forum conference on September 28th, also in Omaha, Nebraska. Details on these upcoming events will be posted on the web site when they are available.

Woodbridge, NJ

NJCMSA had its' final program before summer on May 9th. There were about 135 attendees and 14 exhibitors. The Woodbridge Hilton provided us with all the "fixins" for the second annual indoor barbecue. The focus was also on Nurses week.

The speaker for the evening was Robert Vrablik, MD, Medical Director of Rehabilitation Services at St. Clare's Hospital System. The topic was *Pain Management – "A Multidiscipline Approach"*. Dr. Vrablik offers such a comprehensive and unique approach to pain control and medication selection and factors for consideration, etc. The response from the audience was tremendous! Many said, "Best speaker ever!"

For this months' chapter giveaways (focusing on stress reduction) door prizes with an outdoor theme/time with friends and family were offered.

Over the last three meetings we have had exhibitors in the double digits as well as 17 new members.

The chapter is aggressively in the planning stage of a website as well as planning for the Annual Program in October. Many Board members and several chapter members are traveling to Denver in June.

New York, NY

A mailing to the membership is being prepared to obtain updated email and telephone contact data, since most member communications are sent via email, with telephone outreach as necessary. Many members' list work contact data when they register with CMSA. So, when they change jobs, their contact data is no longer valid. The mailing will include a survey to solicit feedback on the best days of the week and times for future conferences, as well as suggested topics for future meetings.

Hudson Valley, NY

HV-CMSA held a spectacular and hugely successful May dinner event last week! Taking place at a new and fabulous spot, Graziella's in White Plains and sponsored by Allergen, Dr. Peter McAllister, Associated Neurologists of Southern Ct., P.C. presented, "*Botulinum Neurotoxins: Expanding the Continuum of Care: Migraine and Spasticity*" Due to a fabulous and prompt response, over 60 attendees were treated to a four course; sit down dinner and as always, some pretty great raffle prizes. Three new members were also introduced and welcomed into the chapter.

Keep watching your e-mail for information regarding the chapter's annual River Rose Boat Cruise down the Hudson River on June 6th, 2007. Everyone is welcome to attend and enjoy not only the speaker and dinner but also the lovely scenery as we cruise aboard an actual riverboat!

In an effort to continue to thank members for supporting the Hudson Valley Chapter of CMSA, the chapter raffled off a registration to CMSA's 17th Annual Conference & Expo. The lucky winner, Susan Pavlick, was chosen at the May dinner meeting. Way to go Sue!

Las Vegas, Nevada

Valerie Grosjean, RN CCM, CMA-LV Program Chair has secured nationally known speaker, Nancy Skinner, RN, CCM to discuss DVT treatment on May 15th, 2007. This evening event will be sponsored by Sanofi-Aventis and held at Panevinos restaurant. Future topics the Program Committee is working on include Pediatric Obesity and Transplant Overview. The Membership Committee, chaired by Gigi Woltz, RN has been working diligently on updating the chapter's membership/guest demographic database, as well as several strategies to encourage CMs to officially join the chapter. The chapter is very excited that the Board has voted to sponsor one of the award categories at the March of Dimes Nurse of the Year 2007 event. Over 800 nurses attend this event so the chapter is thrilled about the amount of exposure the chapter will receive through this sponsorship, not to mention it is a great cause!! Last of all, Ellen Aliberti, RN CCM the chapter President attended the CMSA Chapter leadership retreat sponsored by the DFW-CMSA chapter. Not only was it a real down-home Texas hoot but very worthwhile and inspirational.

Reno, Nevada

Amid a spring snow in April the Reno Chapter enjoyed a dinner presentation by Mary Beth Canham of Regenosis on "Advance Practices in Wound Care". Thanks to all who attended. The June presentation will be about nutrition presented by Critical Care Systems. This too will be a dinner presentation. The Reno Chapter is busily working on the October day long seminar on "Legalities in Case Management". Our presenters will include a mock trial! More information on this fun and informative seminar will be forthcoming.

Chattanooga, TN

Chattanooga Chapter CMSA held their 11th annual Spring Seminar on April 13th at the Chattanooga Trade and Convention Center. The theme of "*Catch the Excitement*" tied in with downtown Chattanooga attractions, especially the Tennessee Aquarium. The venue changed this year to accommodate a larger participant attendance and an expanded vendor hall, as there was a waiting list for both last year.

Connie Commander, the current National President of CMSA, provided an opening night program on April 12th with an additional CCM available as well as the opening session on April 13th titled "*The Future of Case Management*". Additional sessions included "*Ethical Dimensions of Outcome Research and Evidence-based Medicine*" by John Banja, PhD, Center for Ethics at Emory University "Overview of Medicare Drug Prescription Benefit" by Mary Zega, Senior VP, Coram Healthcare, "Spinal Cord Injuries and Disability" by Susan Council, MD, Medical Director UNUM, and "*A Multidisciplinary Approach to Reduce Inappropriate Utilization of the Emergency Department*" by Donna Sharp, CCM and a member of Chattanooga Chapter CMSA. The closing session "*Moving From Promise to Performance*" by Tim Durkin was a great way to end the day and everyone was glued to his or her seats until the end wanting to hear more.

The vendors provided some great door prizes and the chapter gave away 2 local and national memberships, a registration to the National CMSA Conference in Denver in June and someone from each table at lunch was the winner the centerpiece - a fish bowl with 2 live goldfish.

The chapter is also excited membership has grown to 122 which is an all time high and continues to increase monthly.

Houston, TX

The 3rd annual Invitational Leadership Retreat was held at the Garrett Creek Ranch April 27-29. The leaders from thirteen new and pending CMSA chapters were invited to spend 2 ½ days on a beautiful Texas ranch while learning strategies for chapter development and professional as well as personal leadership skills. Nationally known speaker Tim Durkin facilitated the event. The attendees were provided with sample officer position descriptions and evaluation measurements, chapter business plans and organizational structures.

The event was developed by the Strategic Planning Committee and sponsored by industry leaders who also participated in the event as attendees. Plans are already underway for the next Leadership Retreat!

Chapter elections have concluded for 2007-08 chapter officers and BOD. Patti Grady will be sworn in as Chapter President and Jose Alejandro will assume President-elect. Other Chapter officers will be announced at the May dinner meeting.

DFW CMSA does not hold meetings in the summer months, June through August. During that time, however, the monthly e-letter will continue to provide Chapter updates to all members. Monthly dinner meetings will resume on the 3rd Tuesday of each month beginning in September.

We wish everyone a safe and happy Memorial Holiday! Take a moment to remember the reason for this holiday as you enjoy family and fun over the long weekend.

Montpelier, VT

The Green Mountain Chapter will be holding its annual conference, *The Many Colors of Case Management* on Saturday, October 13th this year. The day-long Conference will be held in the new Davis Auditorium at Fletcher Allen Health Care in Burlington Vermont. To celebrate the beautiful Autumn season in Vermont, the Chapter has planned an evening networking dinner cruise on beautiful Lake Champlain aboard the Spirit of Ethan Allen on the evening of October 12th. This will be a wonderful opportunity to network with conference attendees and exhibitors prior to the conference.

Volunteer Management – Finding Leaders and Chairs

Preferred Practices

1. Take time to plan and get organized – Before volunteers are asked to work on a project, the project team leader must take time to think the project through and do adequate pre-planning.
2. Determine the deadline for completing a large project – for major projects, set interim deadlines up front. For example, in the case of planning a conference, set deadlines for contracting speakers, completing the program topics and mailing registration materials.
3. Break the project down into groups of major tasks to be done – If your project is large or complex, recruit a project team of experienced volunteers, each to be responsible for a group of major tasks.
4. If your project is smaller, create small tasks that are achievable in a short time and will not intimidate new volunteers. – For a one-day event, small tasks may include securing preparing the event site, planning food, etc.
5. Clearly define each task to help ensure that a member will agree to volunteer and the task will be completed – If you recruit volunteers to welcome new members, they may interpret that as greeting them in person when, in fact, you intend them to be called by telephone or written a note.
6. Develop a timeline – Using the list of tasks, estimate how much time each will require.
7. Determine how many volunteers you will need – keep in mind the more volunteers you recruit the less work each has to accomplish.
8. Determine the level of experience that a given volunteer needs to complete each task – This depends on the amount of risk involved; for example, tasks dealing with financial or legal risk should be handled by an experienced volunteer.
9. Determine what information skills and tools the volunteer must already have and what training you will provide – Think about the needs of your project beforehand, and if a volunteer lacks certain skills, be ready to provide needed training.
10. Design a worksheet for each project – More complex projects will have more detailed planning sheets; features may include task descriptions, estimated completion time, risk levels, deadlines for completion and evaluation, and assigning volunteers.
11. Don't wait for members to volunteer – ask them – Recruit the best people for the job and don't wait for someone to offer.
12. Fill high-risk tasks with experienced volunteers first – Concentrate on assigning your most experienced and proven volunteers for large and more important tasks, then assign smaller tasks to less experienced members.

Pitfalls

1. Letting new volunteers loose on a project – Assign low risk tasks to new volunteers until they prove to be dependable; don't assume they understand how to complete a project after providing one training session or explanation.

2. Feeling that asking a member to volunteer was a waste of time if your request was denied – Even if a volunteer declines at this time, it lets the volunteer know that there is a need for them to volunteer in the future.
3. Asking everyone to volunteer – Narrow the field; make a list of names and telephone numbers of five people you think would be good for the task in order of who would be the best fit for the job.
4. Asking the person first who is most likely to say yes – The best person for the job may not be likely to say yes first; go for quality and let the person know that they were asked first and that it is important that they get personally involved – making them feel flattered to be asked.
5. Assuming that people will say no – Instead, assume that people will say yes, people like to be asked and it shows that you respect their work.
6. Failing to be flexible with task assignments – Whenever possible have more than one task from which the member can choose; be flexible and willing to adjust your request to meet the member’s needs.
7. Limiting your list of potential volunteers to your current volunteers – Creating a diverse group that represents all segments of your membership is the first step in recruiting volunteer leaders and officers; for example, collect potential volunteers from interest surveys, project reports, and ask staff and board for recommendations.
8. Asking a member to volunteer with whom you won’t directly be working – If you do not personally know anyone in the group from whom you are recruiting, ask other volunteer leaders and staff who are closer to them for their input on your list of prospects.
9. Waiting to assess a member’s interests for volunteer activities until he or she arrives at your doorstep – When you call to ask someone to volunteer, ask for their task preferences, allowing you more time for organization and a proper fit for the volunteer.
10. Providing no public recognition – Use published notices of volunteer opportunities in your newsletters to remind members that their time and talents are essential elements in the organization.
11. Standing up at a meeting and asking members who are interested to contact you or sign up on a sheet being circulated around the room – This communicates that anyone can do the job at hand when actually you want the best person for the job.
12. Asking a volunteer to stay longer to finish a task – When a volunteer completes the time block they are committed to, thank them and let them go; leave the door open to come back to the task at a later date.

Source: Adapted from: *Volunteers: How to Get Them, How to Keep Them* by Helen Little.

How Can I Find Sponsors for an Event?

Summary: A 9-step guide for nonprofits on how to solicit corporate sponsors; and some advice from a seasoned observer. For complete information on this Guide, visit: www.nonprofit-info.org/npofaq/17/28.html.

Corporate sponsors seem to be everywhere in today's world. Take the Olympics, for example. Hard to imagine what the skating rink would look like without those ubiquitous banners touting fast-food restaurants and telephone companies. It's not just the big events that draw sponsors, either. Small, local events-10K runs, award dinners, neighborhood festivals-usually have a slew of corporate logos in the accompanying literature.

Why is corporate sponsorship so prevalent? Quite simply, it makes money. Done correctly, it can make a lot of money and build important relationships. Done poorly, it can cost money and waste many people's time.

Below is a 9-step guide that offers tips on soliciting, acquiring and retaining corporate sponsors. It is by no means a "definitive" guide, but it is a good starting point. The guide was written with small- to mid-size events in mind, however most of the suggestions offered apply to larger groups as well.

Note: This article will NOT tell you what type of event you should do. That's another subject. There are many things to choose from, from dinners to auctions to golf tournaments to walk-a-thons. Before you read the nine steps, make sure you have a good event. You should not be soliciting sponsors until you've planned the event. Once you've figured out what your event is going to be, where it's going to take place, etc., then you're ready to move to Step One...

For details on each step, click on the title link:

1. [Determine who your audience is](#)
2. [Set sponsorship levels](#)
3. [Make lots of phone calls](#)
4. [Send proposal letters](#)
5. [Follow up](#)
6. [Cultivate your relationships with sponsors](#)
7. [Cultivate your relationships with non-sponsors](#)
8. [Give your sponsors plenty of publicity](#)
9. [Cultivate relationships with sponsors, Part II](#)

This resource was found on the Internet NonProfit Center, the NonProfit FAQ - <http://www.nonprofits.org/npofaq/>.

Communicating with Elected Officials

Article from ONS Legislative Action Center, www.ons.org.

Heightened security measures have dramatically increased the time it takes for a letter sent by post to reach the offices of federal or state legislators. More and more, citizens are using emails and faxes to communicate their concerns and increasingly elected officials' offices prefer electronic communications for constituent contact. As a general rule, Members of Congress are far more likely to heed your message if you are one of their constituents. The following tips aim to improve the effectiveness of your correspondence, regardless of the means you choose to deliver your message.

Tips for Writing Congress: <http://www.ons.org/lac/pdf/10TipsLetters.pdf>

- State your purpose for writing in the first sentence of the letter. For example: As your constituent, I am writing to urge your support for increased funding for health care.
- If your letter pertains to a specific piece of legislation, identify it. And make sure that you are referencing the correct legislation to the correct body of Congress. House bills are H.R.____; Senate bills are designated as S.____. It is also important to know the status of the bill.
- Be courteous.
- If appropriate, include personal information about why the issue matters to you to make your point.
- Address only one issue in each email.
- Close your letter with a restatement of your purpose and indicate the response that you expect.

Addressing Your Correspondence to a Senator:

The Honorable [Jimmy Stewart]
__(room number)__(name of) Senate Office Building
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator [Stewart]:

Addressing Your Correspondence to a Representative:

The Honorable [Jimmy Stewart]
__(room number)__(name of) House Office Building
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative [Stewart]:

Tips For Phoning Congress: <http://www.ons.org/lac/pdf/10TipsCalls.pdf>

Telephone calls are usually taken by a staff member, not the member of Congress. Ask to speak with the aide who handles the issue about which you wish to comment. (See our guide to Congressional staff [here](#).)

After identifying yourself as a constituent, tell the aide you would like to leave a brief message, such as: "Please tell Senator/Representative [Name] that I support/oppose [S.____/H.R.____]."

State your reasons for your support or opposition to the bill. Ask for your senators' or representative's position on the bill. You may also request a written response to your telephone call.

