The National CONSUMER VOICE for Quality Long-Term Care

ADVOCACY TOOLKIT

# Tips for Meetings on the Hill

1. **Be certain to arrive on time.** If meeting with a staff member, be sure you have the correct contact's name.

2. **Try to deliver your message in three to five minutes.** Be sure to introduce yourself and explain why you are concerned about the issue and why you have expertise regarding the issue. Be concise, polite, and professional.

3. **Be prepared to answer questions.** When asked what you want, clearly explain.

4. **Be a resource for the policymaker and his/her staff.** Offer your time and assistance if he/she wants to talk about your areas of interest and expertise in the future.

5. **Provide material to support your position.** Leave behind a business card and a one-page fact sheet summarizing your position.

6. **Follow up with a thank you letter or e-mail.** Be sure to include any additional information you may have promised or that may be relevant to the issue.

7. **Know the current political environment.** Arguments that are sensitive to economic consideration will be more effective. Protecting vulnerable populations will be seen as important but cannot ignore economic impacts.

8. **Who you may be meeting:** Members of Congress (Senator or Representative) and/or Relevant Staffer
   a. Direct interaction with a member of Congress can be rare as they are generally busy with committees, discussions, events, and other activities. You will most likely meet with the relevant staffer on the topic you are coming in to discuss. As staffers have a significant amount of influence on the types of policies the member supports, meetings with these individuals are often just as important as meetings with members themselves.
   b. If you do get to meet with a Congressional Member, be respectful of their time. Be clear, concise, and open.