

# Best Practices: Protect Treatment Access & Positive Health Outcomes for Patients



## Educate Stakeholders About the Need to Ensure Patient Access to Treatment

As many Patient populations in New Jersey and beyond struggle to access the medicines they need, it is critical that policymakers consider Patient perspectives to make informed decisions about treatment and care.

To empower advocates and Patients like you to raise your voice to support treatment access and medical innovation, BioNJ has created an educational guide around ways to join the conversation and best practices for engaging with policymakers, regulators, and the media.



We encourage you to use this guide and join BioNJ in advocating for the advancement of policies that prioritize better Patient health outcomes.

## Policymaker Engagement

Follow these best practices when you're meeting with a policymaker or staff member, sending a letter, providing testimony, or engaging with media around issues related to Patient access and medical innovation.



**Your experience is your advantage.** Share stories that highlight the personal impact of the issue that you are advocating around to help policymakers understand the broad diversity of Patient experiences. Every Patient story is unique and critical to shaping policymakers' understanding of an issue.



**Keep your target audience in mind.** Whether you are speaking with a state legislator, a co-sponsor of national legislation, or a reporter, make sure to adjust your language and tone to match the audience and grab their attention. Use terms that your audience will know and avoid jargon or complicated acronyms to make an impact.



**Make your message specific.** Keep your story and language straightforward and easily digestible so that the key messages are understood.



**Include a clear and concise call to action.** Clearly defining and conveying a single call to action will ensure that the audience you are engaging with has an actionable next step. A call to action could be supporting a specific piece of legislation, reviewing new data, or asking for a meeting with other advocates. Remember to restate the call to action at the end of your conversation, letter, etc.!

## Social Media Engagement

Social media empowers you to connect directly with policymakers, regulators, and their staff. **Follow these best practices when you engage on social media to help ensure that your advocacy is meaningful and effective:**

- ✓ **DO** tag lawmakers and use 1-2 hashtags to ensure the right people are seeing your posts.
- ✓ **DO** thank lawmakers for passing or supporting legislation. Just as we use social media to urge lawmakers to pass legislation, we should remember to thank them as well.
- ✓ **DO** use graphics or a short video in a post. Graphics are an easy way to make sure your message is eye catching.
- ✓ **DO** include relevant and newsworthy content that represents yourself and your advocacy work. Adding links to your organization's website can give your page more credibility.
- ✗ **DON'T** engage with trolls, or someone who posts or comments online to deliberately upset others.
- ✗ **DON'T** ignore grammar rules. Take an extra minute to proofread your post, as grammar and spelling mistakes can significantly reduce the impact of your content.
- ✗ **DON'T** be aggressive in a post. Remember, anything you post represents you and your organization.
- ✗ **DON'T** post anything you wouldn't want to be a headline tomorrow – or in twenty years. Social media is public and long-lasting, so you should always put your best foot forward.

## Creating (or Updating) Your Social Media Profile

- **Profile Photo.** Choose a profile photo to be the icon associated with everything you post, typically a picture of yourself or your organization's logo.
- **Header Photo.** Your header photo is an extension of your profile picture but with more space, so the image you choose can have words and is easier to see.
- **Account Username.** Your username is the unique name that comes after the "@" required by some platforms like Twitter/X or Instagram.
- **Display Name.** Your display name appears above your username and can be changed at any time. It's best to have both your display name and username be your name or the name of your organization.
- **Bio.** Add a direct link to your website, if you have one, and your location, even if your presence is purely online. You can add where you are based to help you connect with local followers.
- **Disclaimer.** Include a disclaimer in your bio or pinned post that confirms that all opinions are solely your own, and do not express the views of any affiliated organization or employer.

## Social Media Channels for Engagement

Depending on your advocacy goals and the type of content that you create, engaging across different social media platforms can help you reach your intended audience and make a meaningful impact.



**Twitter/X.** Engage with key policymakers and regulators around specific policies and legislation impacting Patient access and medical innovation.



**TikTok.** Post short-form video content to raise awareness of your story, share health information, and engage with other advocates and Patients.



**Facebook & Instagram.** Share original image or video content and connect with others in your community to amplify your voice and perspective.

## Get Engaged

Because Patients Can't Wait®, health policy in New Jersey and beyond must promote innovation, incorporate the unique needs of Patients, and ensure access to care. Join us and raise your voice to protect medical innovation and access to life-changing treatments for New Jerseyans and all Americans. **Ready to get started? Follow these first few steps for engagement:**

### Patient Engagement Checklist

- Create and/or update your social media accounts.** An easy one to start with is Twitter/X!
- Follow relevant legislators and organizations** engaged with Patient-centric issues. We've included some suggestions here →
- Make your first post!** Check out our social media toolkit for some customizable recommendations.
- Join our email list** to stay up to date on ways to engage → [BioNJ.org/join](https://BioNJ.org/join)

| Name                                       | Twitter/X Handle |
|--|------------------|
| BioNJ                                      | @BioNJ_Org       |
| Governor Phil Murphy                       | @GovMurphy       |
| NJ Department of Banking & Insurance       | @NJDOBI          |
| Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services   | @CMSGov          |
| U.S. Department of Health & Human Services | @HHSGov          |

**Raise Your Voice in Support of Patient Access and Medical Innovation.**

[BioNJ.org/Protect-Medical-Innovation](https://BioNJ.org/Protect-Medical-Innovation)