

10 Steps to a Great Site or Facility Tour for Your Members of Congress

A tour of your facility is a great way to put a face on homecare issues. A tour can highlight the importance of homecare in your state or Congressional district. Here are a few guidelines to consider when arranging a tour for your elected officials.

- 1.** E-mail a polite, professional invitation letter to the Member of Congress in care of the staff person who schedules meetings. You might want to CC the Legislative Assistant (LA) for health care issues as well as the District Director who manages the Member's offices in the states. Mention the number of patients served by your facility, your service area, and number of employees.
- 2.** Be as flexible as you can about the timing which would likely occur during one of the district work periods when Congress is not in session. Allow for adequate time for the Member and his/her staff to get a sense of your operation, and leave time for questions.
- 3.** In conversations with staff about a potential tour, offer to invite the local media or photographer to accompany the Member on a tour. If a tour is scheduled, alert the press beforehand about the tour and how Medicare policy affects your organization.
- 4.** During the tour, invite employees—and patients if possible—top let the Member of Congress meet some of the people involved in your enterprise. Your Member represents employees, patients, and their families.
- 5.** Share key facts, such as what types of patients your organization serves, what types of services and equipment are provided, how many employees work at the facility, the economic impact of the facility in the region, and other information about the role your organization plays in the community and in the lives of patients and families.
- 6.** In the tour, show all of the components that go into providing homecare, such as key services, after-hour responsibilities, medical equipment, regulatory compliance, billing, deliveries, and maintenance. Some suppliers have spread out on large tables all of the paperwork required for a single Medicare patient.
- 7.** Make a connection between your organization's work and the critical homecare issues before Congress. Connect the dots for the Member of Congress and staff.
- 8.** Ask for the Member's help with specific legislative/regulatory issues affecting homecare.
- 9.** Offer to help the Member of Congress in whatever way you can.
- 10.** Follow up with thank-you's to the Member of Congress and those who helped with the tour.