



Schedule Your Own District Meeting

The Pancreatic Cancer Action Network is the only national organization creating hope in a comprehensive way through research, patient support, community outreach and advocacy for a cure. The organization raises money for direct private funding of research—and advocates for more aggressive federal research funding of medical breakthroughs in prevention, diagnosis and treatment of pancreatic cancer.

One way that we do this is by supporting volunteers like you and providing you with the tools you need to make our message heard where it can really do some good: in the halls of Congress. After reading this guide, we hope you'll consider scheduling your own "district meeting" - a meeting with a member of Congress that is held in *your* hometown or state, not in Washington, D.C. These meetings have a big impact on the process and can really make a difference! Be sure to let us know about your plans to schedule a meeting with your members of Congress. Remember: we're here to help you *and Congress* understand how vital federal legislation and funding is for pancreatic cancer in our fight for a cure.

PREPARATION IS KEY

If you've ever participated in our annual Washington, D.C. event, "Pancreatic Cancer Advocacy Day", the structure of a *district meeting* will seem very familiar. If you've never participated in Advocacy Day, don't fret - just follow these easy guidelines:

1. Contact the Government Affairs & Advocacy staff for talking points (and the all-important "ask," where you'll request that your member of Congress take a specific and significant action to support our fight).
2. Print out two copies of necessary documents (see below): one for the elected official and one for the staffer, in case they both attend your meeting. Note: A normal meeting could include the member of Congress, but will mostly likely be between you and a staffer called the "Health Legislative Aide."
3. Follow the three-part meeting format described below: **Share, State, and Ask.**
4. Keep time constraints in mind as you are preparing for the meeting. Most meetings will only be 10-15 minutes and you **MUST** leave enough time for "the Ask" (the reason you are having the meeting), so make sure that other participants understand (if you've invited friends or family to attend) that they have to keep their parts of the meeting brief.

NECESSARY DOCUMENTS (www.pancan.org/AdvocacyLibrary)

- Fact Sheet – "2010 Pancreatic cancer Facts for Policymakers"
- Chart – Funding Charts NCI Funding and Survival Rates for the Top 5 Causes of Cancer-Related Death
- Fact Sheet – *Pancreatic Cancer Research & Education Act* (S. 3320/ H.R. 745)

STEP 1: SHARE

*At the start of the meeting, be sure to introduce yourself with **two sentences** about where you live and why you are there. **Be sure to keep it succinct!** For example, "My name is John Smith and I live on Main Street in Anytown. I'm here today because I lost my father to pancreatic cancer."*

Then share a more detailed version of your personal story. You should be honest and brief (no more than 2-3 minutes) while making sure the Member of Congress and staffers understand that this isn't just "your" story – it's the story of **MANY** people in that district who have been impacted by pancreatic cancer. You are there representing all the other people in the district who have been impacted by this disease.

STEP 2: STATE THE FACTS

Next, state two to four statistics and reference the 2010 Pancreatic Cancer Fact Sheets and the Survival/Funding chart.

NOTE: Please make sure that you are using the most up to date fact sheets and/or chart.

Some suggested statistics are:

- a. Pancreatic cancer is one of the deadliest cancers and has a five-year survival rate of just 6%.
- b. Over the last nearly 40 years, overall cancer survival rates have increased from 50% to 68%. The five-year survival rate for breast cancer is now 90% and the survival rate for prostate cancer is nearly 100%. Pancreatic cancer is the only top 10 cancer killer that still has a five-year survival rate in the single digits.
- c. We can't afford to wait another 40 years for true progress. It's time for a death defying strategy for pancreatic cancer.

STEP 3: MAKE THE FORMAL "ASK."

*The "ask" will change depending on the congressional calendar so check in with the Government Affairs & Advocacy Staff to see which "asks" are appropriate. For example, one ask MAY be to "please co-sponsor S. 3320/HR 745, the *Pancreatic Cancer Research and Education Act*," if they haven't already. Once you make "the Ask", hand them the necessary documents outlined above (the facts sheets and chart). Wait for their response and then ask if they have any questions. If so, tell them that you or the Government Affairs & Advocacy staff will get back to them shortly. This creates a great opportunity for us to follow up after your meeting! Stop once you get a response and be sure to thank them very sincerely.*

And that's it - your district meeting is done in about 15 minutes. (These meetings are usually just 10-15 minutes because members of Congress and their staff typically try to meet with as many constituents as possible when they are back in their home district.)

Thank you for sharing your story with a member of Congress who could significantly help us in the fight to find a cure for pancreatic cancer!

AFTER THE MEETING

- Send out personal thank you notes a week after the meeting to the member of Congress/staffer you met with.
- Please e-mail the Government Affairs & Advocacy staff a synopsis of the meeting, including any questions the member of Congress asked:

Contact the Government Affairs & Advocacy staff at advocacy@pancan.org or 202-742-6699.