Public Affairs management for health
An appetizer into why, who, how?

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‘Science can identify solutions to pressing public health problems, but only politics can turn most of those solutions into reality.’ 
Oliver, 2006

PHPP section: 'The art, craft and science of health politics will make political choice for health an easier choice!'
WHY?

- Weak facts due to 'wicked' health problems
- Health is a 'soft public value'
- Declining trust in government and experts
- Conventional lobbying on single health issue = powerless
DEFINITIONS AND DISTINCTIONS

- **Advocacy (plea) - LOUD**
  
  raising your voice in favour of an idea, cause or policy with the aim of educating the public and indirectly influence policymakers.

- **Lobbying - QUIET**
  
  is directed at influencing politicians and policymakers on a specific piece of regulation/legislation.
PITFALLS

- Stand alone, ad hoc intervention
- Support from a single issue minority only
- Huge transaction costs
- Being received and perceived as ‘activist’, missionary, unwilling to compromise
- Structural repercussions: social and political isolation
BUILDING STRATEGY AROUND LOBBY: PUBLIC AFFAIRS MANAGEMENT

WHAT?

- Systematic method to increase successful interest representation

WHO/WHERE? Three arenas:

- those in power; (generating compromise)
- stakeholders; (generating respect)
- one’s own organisation (generating backing)
HOW to develop a PA strategy (Van Schendelen, 2010, 2012)

Step 1. Collect intelligence

Step 2. Establish topical dossier

Step 3. Triple P lobby

Step 4. Monitoring progress

Step 5. ‘Window in’: publish scores
TEN GOLDEN RULES OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS MNT FOR HEALTH (1)

1. It all starts with listening and building reliable relations
2. Link facts to personal narratives and public values at risk

3. Link up health to powerful non-health interest groups, aim for a sustainable partnership
4. Formulate a positive and shared ambition
5. Have a powerful –non-health- opinion leader tell your story and make the case
TEN GOLDEN RULES (2)

6. Careful timing of actual lobbying only after thorough preparation of receptive potential partners

7. Visualise your support levels on social media

8. Support politicians with solutions and allow them to take credit or avoid blame

9. Develop long term consistent agenda and perseverance

10. Safeguard your reputation, ‘Built up in years, lost in days’
Sources


www.dods.com en www.stakeholder.eu (Interest groups)
www.eufeeds.eu (newspapers in Europe)
www.epaca.org en www.theecpa.eu (EU networks)
www.pac.org (US netwerk)


