



National
Kidney
Foundation™

Advocacy and Social Media

Using social media to extend your advocacy outreach

Most lawmakers today know that social media (through outlets such as Facebook, Twitter) is a quick and easy way to engage constituents. Whether they themselves or their staff handle the account, they do keep tabs on what their constituents are saying. Here are some tips on how you can use social media to spread awareness and engage your lawmakers in issues that are important to you.

Twitter

- Follow your each of your lawmakers and **@nkf** on Twitter.
- Whenever appropriate, tag your lawmakers in your tweets, especially tweets that thank them for visiting with you. This increases the chances of your lawmakers seeing your advocacy messages. Use the @ symbol and make sure there is no space between the @ symbol and your lawmaker's Twitter name.
- Use a hashtag (#) to highlight a special issue in your tweets. For example: Use **#StopDialysisCuts** so other Twitter users interested in advocating for [Medicare payment to cover the costs of providing dialysis](#) will see and retweet your tweets.
- Keep your message under 140 characters.
- You can also tweet photos and videos of your visits with lawmakers!

Facebook

- "Like" the Facebook pages of supportive lawmakers and the **National Kidney Foundation, Inc.**
- Post photos and videos to your Facebook wall. When sharing to your own wall, be sure to tag your lawmakers and NKF in the post. If you feel comfortable doing so, change your privacy settings to "public" for these posts so other advocates can find and share them.
- Post photos and videos to the Facebook walls of your lawmakers.

National Kidney Foundation

30 East 33rd Street • New York, NY 10016 • 800.622.9010

NKF Government Relations Office

5335 Wisconsin Ave, NW, Suite 300 • Washington, D.C. 20015 • 202.244.7900

www.kidney.org

Photos and Videos

If you have a smartphone or digital camera, we encourage you to take photos or videos when participating in advocacy events.

- Ask your lawmaker for permission to take and share photos or video of your meeting.
- Assign someone to snap action photos during your meeting.
- Ask your lawmaker to pose for a photo after the meeting.
- Take a photo in front of the Capitol.
- Take a photo with a group of advocates.
- Pose outside the door of your Member's office next to their name plate and state flag and snap a photo.
- Write a short advocacy message on a piece of paper and take a photo of you holding it.
- Try to record videos in quiet, well-lit areas and be aware of your surroundings.
- Keep your message simple and brief.
- Here are some sample questions you can answer in your video:
 - Why did you decide to become an advocate?
 - What brings you to Capitol Hill today?
 - What do you want lawmakers to know about kidney care?
 - Describe your visit with your lawmaker.
- Be sure to use full sentences ("Today I am at the Capitol to raise awareness about the need for kidney transplant recipients to have access to their immunosuppressant drugs.")
- Try to encourage your lawmaker's participation in the video. This will increase the chances that his/her office will share the video with constituents. If your lawmaker cannot be part of the video, be sure to their name (s) in your video message.

Here are some **free apps for taking and sharing photos** online that you can download from the App Store on your smartphone:

- **Instagram** – Take photos, videos, add filters, share with your social networks.
- **PicStitch** – "Stitch" multiple photos together, share with your social networks.
- **Viddy** – Record 15-second videos, add text, music, share with your social networks.
- **SocialCam** – Record videos of any length, add filters, share with your social networks.

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