

# SUCCESSFUL MEETINGS WITH ELECTED OFFICIALS

## THE IMPACT OF GOVERNMENT DECISIONS

**The decisions made by elected and non-elected officials have a significant impact on the lives of people with cystic fibrosis (CF).**

Decisions about which drugs and treatments are available in Canada are made by government. Decisions about which medicines are covered by provincial and territorial drug plans are made by government. Decisions about how to fund our healthcare system, from our hospitals, to our clinics, to our community-based care are made by government.

Elected officials need to understand CF and how it impacts people's lives. Your story and expertise can help ensure politicians make decisions that support excellent healthcare for people with CF. Elected officials also need to know that the CF community in Canada is strong and determined.

### EFFECTIVE MEETINGS

#### 1. KNOW WHY YOU ARE MEETING

- ✓ Before you request a meeting, make sure you know why you are meeting and what your approach will be.
- ✓ Clearly identify your goal.
- ✓ Gather and review relevant material, including counter arguments and evidence. (Cystic Fibrosis Canada can assist.)

#### 2. SET UP A MEETING

- ✓ Request a meeting with your provincial representative, Minister of Health, the opposition health critics and/or other elected officials you think might have an interest in CF.
- ✓ Provide a specific reason for the meeting. For example, "I would like to meet with the Minister of Health about the importance of providing public coverage for a new CF drug."

#### 3. PREPARE

- ✓ Contact Cystic Fibrosis Canada to get support and background materials for your meeting.
- ✓ Prepare and review your key points. Include relevant parts of your own story. Clearly state the solution you are seeking and how it will impact people with CF. As much as possible, keep your story the focus of the meeting to make the solutions you are offering more powerful and relevant.
- ✓ Prepare a package of relevant background material about CF and the specific issues to be discussed. (Cystic Fibrosis Canada can provide these materials.)



#### 4. MEET

- ✓ Arrive a few minutes early.
- ✓ Share your points using plain language. Avoid medical and scientific terms.
- ✓ Listen to and record the responses. What are the obstacles the elected official sees? What does the elected official need to be able to support your request?
- ✓ Leave a few written materials with the office.

#### 5. FOLLOW UP

- ✓ Follow up with a thank you note. Provide additional information or material that addresses questions or concerns raised in the meeting.
- ✓ Contact Cystic Fibrosis Canada to tell us about the meeting.
- ✓ Monitor what the elected official is doing related to your issue. If the elected official takes action to support your issue, be sure to thank them.