

MENTAL-BRAIN HEALTH ADVOCACY ROADMAP

POLICYMAKERS



EDUCATION

ACQUIRING FACTS AND KNOWLEDGE

- Learn about your issue
- Stay up to date
- Learn from your network
- Update your knowledge

1



IDENTIFY

OBJECTIVES, TARGET PERSON(S) AND RESOURCES

- Building strategic relationships and alliances
- Keep communicating to build trust
- Use info to build a compelling story
- Funding considerations

2



ENGAGEMENT

COLLABORATING WITH POLICYMAKERS

- Navigating stakeholder engagement and advocacy
- Helping policymakers navigate mental health challenges
- Effective and respectful advocacy
- Bring solutions, not problems
- Find allies

3



SHARING

AMPLIFYING YOUR VOICE

- Work with the media
- Build an online presence
- Raise awareness through direct methods
- Breaking down stigma
- Spreading the message

4



EDUCATION

ACQUIRING FACTS AND KNOWLEDGE

1



LEARN ABOUT YOUR ISSUE

Understand the local, national, and international impact of the issue, and assess how existing policies address it, identifying any gaps that could lead to improvements.



STAY UP TO DATE

Stay informed through expert reports, specialist journals, policy updates, and relevant newsletters.



LEARN FROM YOUR NETWORK

Connected with contacts, authorities, NGOs, and experts for updates, and consult trusted sources like WHO, Eurobarometer, World Bank and OECD for statistics and health data.



UPDATE YOUR KNOWLEDGE

Attend talks or online courses (free or paid) e.g. edX, Futurelearn, Coursera.



IDENTIFY

OBJECTIVES, TARGET PERSON(S) AND RESOURCES



BUILDING STRATEGIC RELATIONSHIPS AND ALLIANCES

Build relationships with key decision-makers at local, national, and international levels, such as policymakers, councils, and sector leaders. Identify shared goals to foster collaboration and strengthen advocacy efforts.



KEEP COMMUNICATING TO BUILD TRUST

Understand the local, national, and international impact of the issue, and assess how existing policies address it, identifying any gaps that could lead to improvements.



USE INFO TO BUILD A COMPELLING STORY

Use statistics to highlight the issue's scale and stories to illustrate its personal impact.



FUNDING CONSIDERATIONS

Funding is scarce, often short-term, and highly competitive, with complex applications and limited support for capacity-building. Advocacy is seen as high-risk, making it harder for smaller organisations to justify costs.



ENGAGEMENT

COLLABORATING WITH POLICYMAKERS

3



NAVIGATING STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND ADVOCACY

Build relationships with policymakers by starting first locally and engaging with city officials and community leaders. Attend meetings to understand their priorities and align your message while navigating diverse and sometimes conflicting stakeholder interests.



HELPING POLICYMAKERS NAVIGATE MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES

Mental health is complex, and policymakers may struggle with oversimplified solutions. Provide a clear message while recognising their financial constraints and competing demands for public funding.



EFFECTIVE AND RESPECTFUL ADVOCACY

Introduce yourself politely, follow up with gratitude, and stay persistent while respecting policymakers' time. Deliver a clear, actionable message by relaying a specific, desired change and why it matters.



BRING SOLUTIONS, NOT PROBLEMS

Help policymakers navigate competing priorities by providing clear, practical solutions they can advocate for. Offer education and training, such as Mental Health First Aid, to equip professionals with the knowledge to support your campaign.



FIND ALLIES

Join umbrella organisations for support, expertise, and a stronger voice. Build alliances to promote shared causes, engage high-profile ambassadors, and connect with influential local representatives to expand your network.



SHARING

AMPLIFYING YOUR VOICE



WORK WITH THE MEDIA

Craft a clear, concise message about your work. Issue press releases ahead of key dates to raise awareness and provide journalists with timely, well-presented material. Develop media guidelines to promote considerate language and avoid harm to vulnerable groups.



BUILD AN ONLINE PRESENCE

Use blogs, videos, social media, and publications to enhance the campaign's credibility and accessibility.



RAISE AWARENESS THROUGH DIFFERENT METHODS

Engage through different channels: Emails, phone calls, attend public meetings. Also, use social media and learn from other advocates and share experiences.



BREAKING DOWN STIGMA

Stigma can be a focus and challenge for advocates of mental health. Work to break down discriminatory language, by providing gentle education and persuasion.



SPREADING THE MESSAGE

Use statistics to highlight the issue's scale, but personal stories can be equally powerful. If sharing your own story, ensure you have support and feel comfortable being open and genuine.





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