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| Title of Document: | Advocacy 101 |
| Overview: | This document contains some basic general advice to use when starting an advocacy campaign. Not all the steps will be applicable to all issues, so find what works for you. |
| Organizations: | Find out if anyone else is working on your issue. If you can combine your efforts, you will be more successful. Check with consumer and disability groups, advocacy organizations and anyone else who might have an interest. Keep in mind that many organizations have a specific mandate and may not be able to help, even if the staff member you speak to is personally sympathetic to your issue. |
| Government Contacts: | It is always a good idea to contact your local MP, MLA or city councilor, depending on the level of government responsible for your issue. They may be able to help directly and will certainly benefit from knowing which government programs are not working for their constituents. They may also be able to point you in the direction of groups that can help. To find your local MP go to www.ourcommons.ca/Parliamentarians/en/constituencies/FindMP |

For further information on SCI BC programs and services check out our website at www.sci-bc.ca

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To find your MLA go to
<https://www.leg.bc.ca/members>

These sites also have links to government departments and the minister responsible. You can send your letter to the appropriate department head or supervisor to ensure wide knowledge of the problem you are having.

Letter Writing:

Talking to people in person and making phone calls is important, but it also helps to have things in writing. When writing a letter, explain the situation and suggest solutions. It is also important to include your contact information and other people that can be contacted who also know the issue. For general letter-writing guidelines, use Google to search for Advocacy Letters and you'll find lots of examples from different organizations.

Social Media:

Contact your social media connections and organizations that have an online presence when considering an advocacy campaign. Having people on your side makes your case stronger and a groundswell of support can make a difference in the success of your campaign.

Useful References:

Disability Alliance BC

<http://www.disabilityalliancebc.org/>

Does advocacy work, especially with CPP and PWD applications and has a number of useful publications.

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