

Outreach, Education and Enrollment – Communications Best Practices

The following provides some helpful tips to ensure that advocates are capitalizing on their outreach, education and enrollment activities so that the message is amplified and they are able to share the stories of their success.

A picture is worth a thousand words. Make sure you're documenting your efforts, especially through photo and video. Candid shots at enrollment events can be used in social media and other outreach materials. Even though photos or video taken with a smartphone can be useful, also consider hiring a local art student or even a professional photographer to capture some high-quality photographs for you to use in reports or on your website. Whatever technology you are using, it's important to try to capture the best quality photo you can. Remember to distribute photo release forms to photographers (both professional and volunteer) or to post signs at events notifying attendees that their photo may be taken and be used by the sponsoring groups. Ensuring you have permission to use all of the photos you take can prevent you from ending up with wonderful photos that you cannot use.

Use the media as your megaphone. Inviting press to cover your events gives you an opportunity to amplify your efforts so more people hear about their options to enroll or renew. Research which reporters from your local newspapers and television stations have covered health care issues in the past and reach out to let them know about upcoming events.

Step up to the mic. Navigators have amazing stories and are often some of the best spokespeople to talk about ACA successes. Not only can they share their personal experience, they make it clear that there are real people in the community available to help consumers make the right health care choices for them.

Story time. Don't forget to create opportunities to capture stories as part of your OEE efforts. Spitfire's [Story Banking Toolkit](#) gives you a wealth of tips and resources so you can show the positive effects of the ACA and help the uninsured see how people like them have been able to access quality, affordable coverage.

Sharing is caring. When you get a great media story, see a compelling infographic, find a helpful photo or attend a cool event, let your network know about it. Post it on social media, share it with partners and highlight the great work that your fellow enrollers and advocates are doing to make sure people in your state get covered. Additionally, ask your network to share information, success stories and images with you. Post signs at enrollment events asking attendees to tweet or post a photo to Facebook or Instagram when they get covered. Remember to make sure you have a unifying hashtag so you can track the posts that come in. You can even run a contest to get people in your community involved. For example, you could ask your email list to submit a photo with a designated hashtag that fits a theme, like "I'm covered because," and then award your favorite photo with a small prize, like a tote bag, and feature their photo on your Facebook page or give them a shout out on Twitter. This provides you with more content and builds online community around enrollment activities.

Collaboration. Making use of the resources and experiences of others in the field will help your efforts – and don't forget to share the lessons and best practices that come out of your work. Lean on the support from Community Catalyst and Spitfire and keep abreast of how other states are addressing challenges you may also be facing.