

HCAO Tabling Communication Tips

Listening is Crucial

While tabling, you have the opportunity to educate people with facts about universal health care, healthcare as a human right, single payer systems; but you also have a chance to listen. Hear their fears and concerns, and then address them accordingly. Everyone you meet has a different opinion about the U.S. healthcare system. Once you know his/her position, you can decide how to best pursue (or “frame”) a conversation. Are they mostly concerned about cost? Or that single payer could be a government run program?

Opening (and Closing) Doors For Conversation

Once you know where he/she stands, you may choose to talk to them about healthcare as a human right and how single payer would be a social, moral, and fiscal step forward for our country. Or, they may not agree that it is a human right, but still be supportive of health care for all people! Granted it is not everything. The whole system is broken and we need improvements with the delivery system as well as financing. We need better coordination of care too and fortunately, Governor Kitzhaber is working on this approach. Tabling presents a golden opportunity for someone you may have never met otherwise to become involved with this movement.

As you know, there will always be people who don't agree with you. However, that doesn't mean you have to stand there and be a punching bag or subjected to personal attacks. End those conversations immediately. They will go nowhere, and leave you frustrated and emotionally depleted. Say something like “Thank you for your time, I guess we'll just have to agree to disagree, have a nice day” and walk away.

One-on-one conversations are the backbone of any grassroots movement. Personal interactions are key for winning universal health care in this country.

Example Lines

- “Would you like to take a Photo Petition? It's like a written petition but puts a face to the name.
- “Would you like to send our postcard to Congress to support Medicare for all?”
- “Could you sign our statement of support for universal health care?”
- “Do you support health care for all minus the insurance companies?”

- “Would you like some information about health care for all?”

If you don't feel that you are able to answer a person's tough questions on the street, you could say:

- “Why don't you come to our meeting and the speaker will answer your questions?” (And supply the date of your next meeting.)
- “I'll find out for you and get back to you by e-mail or phone. This takes some pressure off of you feeling put on the spot, and shows your commitment towards universal health care. Then, by following through, you demonstrate respect, accountability, and care.

Refer them to the following websites:

www.healthcare-now.org (national organization for single payer)
www.pnhp.org (physicians for a national health program)
www.HCAO.org (health care for all-Oregon)

Privacy

Assure people that we never sell or loan our database lists to anyone, ever. It is for our use only. Encourage people to fill out as much information as they are comfortable providing.

(Taken from Tabling Guide, section 7.)

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