

Storytelling for Pharmacy Advocacy

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Conflict of Interest Disclosure

- The speaker has no conflicts of interest to disclose

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Learning Objectives

- Define federal and state advocacy priorities.
- Describe effective storytelling techniques.
- Practice storytelling techniques for pharmacy advocacy.

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The Power Within a 1- or 2-Minute Story

- Volkswagen Star Wars <https://vimeo.com/24401685>
- Budweiser Puppy Love <https://adage.com/super-bowl/aa-budweiser-puppy-love/>
- P&G Thank You, Mom <https://www.ted.com/watch/ads-worth-spreading/thank-you-mom-pick-them-back-up>

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What Is Advocacy?

2013 AIPE Consensus Definition	2019 ASHP Position Statement on Advocacy as a Professional Obligation
• "An ongoing commitment to advancing the awareness of the value that a pharmacist for the profession of pharmacy provides to the health and wellbeing of society by actively supporting and communicating that vision concisely to opinion leaders, elected officials, decision makers, potential partners and any other audience in order to influence their perspective and ultimately have them speak and/or act on your behalf"	• "activity by an individual or group to plead a case, support a cause, or to recommend a course of action related to patient-care, political, economic, social or institutional issues"

AIPE: American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education | ASHP: American Society of Health-System Pharmacists

Bzowczyk AS, Jarika KK, Am J Pharm Educ. 2013;77(2):24
Little J, Ortega M, Powell M, Hagan M, Am J Health Syst Pharm. 2019;76(4):251-253

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2019 ASHP Position Statement on Advocacy as a Professional Obligation

- "...all pharmacists have a professional obligation to **advocate on behalf of patients and the profession**"
- "Pharmacists should **stay informed of issues** that affect medication-related outcome and advocate on behalf of patients, the profession, and the public."
 - Legal, regulatory, financial, other health policy
- "...obligation **extends** beyond the individual practice site **to their broader communities.**"

Little L, Ortega M, Powell M, Harris M, Jan J. Health Syst Pharm. 2019;76(4):252-253.

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Ways to Advocate

- Levels of involvement
 - Individual: patient, self
 - Community: community-based or non-profit organizations
 - Legislative: meeting with and educating legislators and policymakers, providing testimony at hearings
- Stay informed of legislation that could affect pharmacy practice
- State and national pharmacy organizations
 - Governmental relations team
 - Lobbyists

Arnold K. Forbes. Published August 29, 2025. Accessed February 24, 2025. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbes/2025/08/29/storytelling-for-advocacy/>. Gohila A, Murphy KM, Carroll ME, Ray DB, Burnworth MI. J Pharm Pract. 2013;26(3):485-470.

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Ways to Advocate

- Identify your elected officials
<https://www.elections.il.gov/electionoperations/districtlocator/districtofficialsearchbyaddress.aspx>
- Make contact – they want to hear from their constituents!
 - Written: email, letter – include name and address, proposed bill, your concern or support, and how it affects you or your patients
 - In person: community meeting, town hall
 - Telephone

Gohila A, Murphy KM, Carroll ME, Ray DB, Burnworth MI. J Pharm Pract. 2013;26(3):485-470.

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Federal Advocacy Priorities

- **Ensuring Community Access to Pharmacist Services (ECAPS) Act (H.R. 3164/S. 2426)**
 - Provide seniors with access to pharmacist-provided test and treatment and/or vaccines for respiratory conditions in states where pharmacists are licensed to provide these services
 - Advocate by speaking the language of others (e.g. finance, government affairs)

American Society of Health-System Pharmacists Policy Week 2025

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Federal Advocacy Priorities

- **Rebuild America's Health Care Schools Act (H.R. 1708/S. 1087)**
 - Require CMS to clarify the requirements health systems must meet to receive Medicare reimbursement for operating pharmacy, nursing, and allied health residency programs
- **340B PATIENTS Act (H.R. 4581/S. 2372)**
 - Prevent drug manufacturers from restricting patients from receiving their 340B medications from these community pharmacies

CMS: Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services
American Society of Health-System Pharmacists Policy Week 2025

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Federal Advocacy Priorities

- **340B rebate model pilot**
 - Manufacturers lobbying they must do rebate model
 - Advocate with legislators by
 - Showing magnitude and impact (especially at patient level)
 - People closest to patient care will be most influential
- **340B state protections**
 - Most manufacturers complying with state legislation
 - Health-systems need to show transparency of how 340B savings helps the community
 - Advocate by speaking to hospital government relation teams

Klaus T. Böhm & Cohen T. Pharmacy executives advocacy strategies for a shifting landscape. Presented at: ADHP Pharmacy Leaders Conference 2025, October 2025, Chicago, IL

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Federal Advocacy Priorities

- **HR 1: OBBBA**
 - \$1T reduction in healthcare spending, affects Medicaid and Affordable Care Act subsidies
 - Opportunity: \$50B available for rural health
 - Advocate to legislators by speaking to how these reductions are why 340B is crucial
- **Move to Standard of Care pharmacy practice legislation (vs. historical bright-line legislation)**
 - Standard of care: degree of care a reasonable and prudent provider would provide to a patient
 - 4 states have codified standard of care: AK, CA, ID (1st), IA
 - Increases importance of post-graduate training, credentialing and privileging

Krusi T, Robb K, Cohen T. Pharmacy executives advocacy strategies for a shifting landscape. Presented at: ADHP Pharmacy Leaders Conference 2025, October 2025, Chicago, IL

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Federal Advocacy Priorities

- **Payers and PBMs**
 - Some payers getting around state payer laws
 - Advocate by telling patient stories how white-bagging directly impacts patient care

Krusi T, Robb K, Cohen T. Pharmacy executives advocacy strategies for a shifting landscape. Presented at: ADHP Pharmacy Leaders Conference 2025, October 2025, Chicago, IL

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State Advocacy Priorities – Illinois Legislative Day 2026

- **HB2371 SA2: Patient Access to Pharmacy Protection Act (340B protections bill)**
 - 340B hospitals will need to **subsidize more care for uninsured and underinsured patients** due to HR 1: One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA)
 - 340B federal statute states 340B program **enables eligible hospitals to stretch scarce resources to provide more comprehensive services** to more patients
 - **Protecting 340B helps protect access and the health, safety and welfare of all Illinois patients, including uninsured and underinsured patients**
- **340B Audit & Reporting Bills (HB5421/SB3878, HB4327, HB4954/SB3146, HB4953)**
 - All bills increase 340B reporting requirements, increasing administrative burden and costs

Illinois Council of Health System Pharmacists (ICHP). 2026 Illinois Pharmacy Legislative Day. Accessed February 25, 2026. <https://ichpnet.org/events/calendar/pharmacy-legislative-day/index.php>

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State Advocacy Priorities – Illinois Legislative Day 2026

- **HB4761: Transparent Cost-Plus Model**
 - Supplement to HB1697 Prescription Drug Affordability Act signed into law on 7/1/2025 that prohibits spread pricing by insurance
 - Advocates a **predictable pricing structure** that anchors medication reimbursement to **National Average Drug Acquisition Cost (NADAC)**, a publicly available, invoice-based benchmark
 - PBMs use Maximum Allowable Cost (MAC) cost lists that are not publicly verifiable
 - Other states that have implemented NADAC have seen significant cost savings (e.g. Kentucky: \$282.7 million in cost avoidance)
 - Adds \$10.49 professional dispensing fee to cover pharmacy professional services costs
 - **Cost avoidance attained by this bill will help counter federal cuts**

Illinois Council of Health-System Pharmacists (ICHP) 2026 Illinois Pharmacy Legislative Day. Accessed February 25, 2026. https://ichpnet.org/events/calendar/pharmacy_legislative_day/index.php

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State Advocacy Priorities – Illinois Legislative Day 2026

- **HB4793: Access Without Delay**
 - Amends Pharmacy Practice Act to allow pharmacists to
 - **Add missing non-pharmaceutical devices or durable medical equipment (DME)** needed for appropriate medication use (e.g. pen needles)
 - **Complete missing non-therapeutic prescription information** when there is evidence to support the change (e.g. missing quantity clarification, dosage form clarification)
 - Multiple states already implemented (CO, ID, IN, UT, WA)
 - **Enables patients to start medications as soon as possible by eliminating delays caused by prescription administrative omissions**

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State Advocacy Priorities – Illinois Legislative Day 2026

- **HB4154: Modernizing Pharmacist Licensure in IL**
 - Permanently **removes Multistate Pharmacy Jurisprudence Examination (MPJE) as licensure requirement** in Illinois
 - Multiple states enable licensure without a law exam (AK, ID, MI, VT)
 - Since Idaho law exam was eliminated in 2018, no measurable patient safety decline has been identified
 - Indiana is advancing same reform (SB 293)
 - **Removes an Illinois licensing barrier**
- **Standard of Care**

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Why Storytelling Is Important

- Stories enable memories to stick by associating emotions to events
- Biologically and neurologically designed to absorb and remember stories
 - Story recall lasts much longer than statistics recall
- Functional MRIs show when hearing stories
 - Hippocampus is activated
 - Neural coupling occurs
 - Absent when there is no narrative
- Study: Public service announcement that generated more oxytocin was associated with larger donations

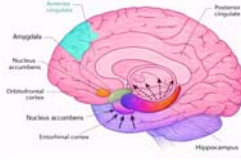


Image AI generated by Benicia Man, 2025, ChatGPT 5.2

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MRI: magnetic resonance imaging

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6 Steps to Tell a Great Story

1. Begin with a message, identify your audience
2. Extract your own experiences to anchor the story
 - Emotional entry points to show your vulnerability
3. Don't be the hero of the story
 - Focus on people you know or events you've witnessed
4. Highlight and embed a conflict
 - "A story without a challenge simply isn't very interesting"
5. Keep it simple – less is more
 - Transport your audience with a few key details
 - Don't let unnecessary detail dilute your message
6. Practice telling your story

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Gothoff L. Harvard Business Review. Published October 10, 2025. Accessed February 24, 2026. <https://hbr.org/2025/10/storytelling-can-make-or-break-your-leadership>.

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Storytelling Strategies

- Pair story (subjective emotion) with data (objective impact)
 - Statistics are useful to communicate urgency
- Keep your message simple - aim for digestibility
- Avoid technical jargon – it obscures your underlying idea
- Know your audience, translate to language they will understand
 - "Our species thinks in metaphors and learns through stories"

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Storytelling Do's and Don't's

Do:	Don't:
1. Think about your audience	1. Be the center of your story
2. Pinpoint the message you want to convey	2. Use technical jargon
3. Understand your story so well that you can describe it in simple terms	3. Dilute your message with superfluous detail
4. Use your life experiences as your inspiration	4. Think you're not a good storyteller

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Storytelling Arc

Once
Once, things were going well and everything was normal.

Until
Until something happened that turned our world upside down—a conflict, a challenge, or an unexpected event that changed everything...

And then
And then we had a turning point where we fought through adversity or made a transformative choice, and the story began to climb back up...

Finally
Finally, we arrived at a new, better "normal" after overcoming everything that had happened.

1. Setting
2. Challenge, problem or hurdle
3. Stakes and turning point
4. Change
5. Resolution

Story arc concept

Image AI generated by Bernice Man, 2026, ChatGPT 5.2

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 Story arc image based on concepts by Jason Allen 4016065

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Story Components

- What is the purpose of telling your story?
- Who is your audience and why should they care?
- What is your main message?
- Who is the protagonist?
- Who is the antagonist?
- What is the conflict?

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Let's Practice Writing a Story

Steps

1. Begin with a message, identify your audience
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Let's Practice Writing a Story for Pharmacy Advocacy

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 - Standard of Care

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Questions?

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