Change Agency, Advocacy, & Managing Your Passions Through Writing

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Disclosures

- No financial disclosures
- Historical context
- Bias acknowledgment
- Know institution’s policy on advocacy
  - Bipartisan political activities
  - Representing your institution vs. your personal/professional views
Intended Learning Objectives

- Construct a priority list for becoming a change agent
- Examine opportunities for advocacy writing within your circle of influence
- Identify a topic for future writing focused on your advocacy passion
What does it mean to be a change agent?
Characteristics of change agents

- Enthusiastic, passionate and inspiring
- Strong, engaging and dynamic communicator
- Effective networker and facilitator
- Capable of engaging in self-assessment, self reflection and analysis
- Committed to the lifelong learning of themselves and others
- Proactive not reactive
- Works in cooperation with others
- Critical and systems thinker with the ability to solve problems creatively
- Ability to act as a responsible citizen
- Understanding of environment, social and economic connections

https://www.istockphoto.com/illustrations/empty-car-interior
What are the ten steps to change?

1. Define your purpose: Mission, vision, and SMART goals
2. Educate yourself on the issue at hand
3. Build your network with equity
4. Develop a strategy: solutions driven ROI with measurable outcomes
5. Embrace collaboration
6. Communicate effectively
7. Mobilize support
8. Influence decision makers on all levels
9. Be adaptable & resilient
10. Measure success & celebrate
Advocacy
Circles of influence

Change agency & advocacy as complements

https://argoprep.com/blog/complementary-angles/
Change agency, advocacy, & writing

https://www.istockphoto.com/illustrations/empty-car-interior
Why Advocate Through Writing

- Professional responsibility – AMA, ACGME, ACOG
- Telling the narrative or changing the narrative
- Silence is acquiescence
- Confusion from mis/disinformation
- Enduring
- Easy to disseminate
**2022 Most Trusted Professions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Profession</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nurses</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctors</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pharmacists</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judges</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawyers</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Car Sales</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congress</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telemarketers</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Gallup Poll, Americans’ Ratings of Honesty and Ethics of Professions, 10 Jan 2023
Principles of writing

- Audience
- Purpose
- Format
- Content
- Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging
- Trauma-informed
Writing for change agency & advocacy

- Personal Narratives
- Opinion pieces
- Research & White Papers
- Quality Improvement
- Education
- Social Media
- Policy & Procedure
Writing for advocacy & change agency:

Personal Narratives

- Mother
- Woman who takes care of women
- Pregnancy marginalized
- Access to care inequities
- Mental health stigma
- Lack of education
- Community engagement
- Lack of resources
- Trauma-informed care
- Violence against humans
The Motherhood Penalty in Obstetrics and Gynecology Training

Polan, Rosa M. MD; Mattei, Larissa H. MD; Barber, Emma L. MD, MS

Author Information


Abstract

Since 2017, the number of women enrolled in medical schools in the United States has increased steadily. For the average female graduate, residency training will coincide with peak childbearing years. Despite increasingly well-defined parental leave policies in other industries, there is no standardized approach across graduate medical education programs. Physician mothers, particularly those in surgical specialties, have also been shown to be at increased risk for major pregnancy complications and postpartum depression. In addition, despite excellent initiation rates, the majority of breastfeeding trainees struggle with low milk supply, and as few as 7% of physician mothers continue to breastfeed for 1 year. Although the medical field routinely advocates for the benefits of
Writing for advocacy & change agency:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Op-Ed</th>
<th>Letter to the Editor (LttE)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Column from a contributor</td>
<td>Comment from a contributor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New, interesting, unexpected perspective</td>
<td>One or two points; response to recent coverage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>600-800 words</td>
<td>200 words or less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevant in a few weeks (op-eds have a longer lead time)</td>
<td>Response to topic within one to two days (LTTEs have a faster publishing turnaround)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Include a personal story, if appropriate and a call to action</td>
<td>State your position quickly, back it up with one proof point, sign off</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How the fall of Roe could change abortion care in Mass.

Letter: Newsom also cut help for maternal mental health

Gov. Gavin Newsom is cutting the newly passed postpartum Medi-Cal extension

As obstetricians, we seek to highlight an omission in Skelton’s piece “Skelton: California’s budget cuts stick it to the most vulnerable” (Opinion section, Mercurynews.com, May 18).

Gov. Gavin Newsom is also cutting the newly passed postpartum Medi-Cal extension.

In 2019, AB 577 passed to extend Medi-Cal benefits to one year postpartum in the setting of maternal mental health disorders. This was a huge win for women and families of California as 50% of births are funded through Medi-Cal. Medi-Cal coverage lapses six weeks after delivery, leaving new mothers uninsured thereafter. This program was to fill a critical coverage gap — up to 20% of new moms are diagnosed with postpartum depression, anxiety or psychosis. Suicide in the postpartum period is one of California’s top causes of maternal mortality.

We strongly urge Gov. Newsom to prioritize the health of women and families and reconsider his proposed funding cut, implementing extended Medi-Cal for postpartum health coverage without delay.

Dr. Andrea Henkel
Dr. Hayley Miller
Dr. Anne R. Waldrop
Palo Alto

It’s time to say no to politicians in exam rooms

OPINION > LETTERS

Letter I Bill will expand coverage for postpartum care

By LETTERS TO THE EDITOR I Santa Cruz Sentinel
April 13, 2019 at 5:00 pm

As Ob/Gyn physicians at Stanford University Hospital, we care for the pregnant women of the South Bay, including some of the most vulnerable patients with mental health conditions. These conditions range from severe anxiety to postpartum depression causing thoughts of suicide. One in five women have a diagnosed mental health disorder in pregnancy. We see the direct impacts on the health of pregnant women, young children, families and our community.

About 50% of our local pregnant women have MediCal insurance, one that covers California women for up to six weeks postpartum – and abruptly ends at that point, leaving those women uninsured thereafter. Assembly Bill 577 would expand MediCal coverage for postpartum care for women with mental health conditions for up to one year in order to provide the care new mothers need and deserve.

Please call your local Assembly representatives to ask them to support AB 577.

— Dr. Hayley Miller, Dr. Erica Martinez, Dr. Paige Bates, Dr. Roshan Burns,
Writing for advocacy & change agency:

Research articles & White papers
April 14, 2023

Association of Race With Urine Toxicology Testing Among Pregnant Patients During Labor and Delivery

Marian Jarlenski, PhD, MPH¹; Jay Shroff, MS¹; Mishka Terplan, MD²; et al

Mifepristone Combination Therapy Compared With Misoprostol Monotherapy for the Management of Miscarriage
A Cost-Effectiveness Analysis

Holly H. Berkley, MD, Howard L. Greene, PhD, and Michael D. Wittenberger, MD
Writing for advocacy & change agency:

Quality Improvement
Quality Improvement

• Address systemic problems
  • Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
  • Reproductive Health Justice
  • Social Determinants of Health

• Creates a "paper trail"
  • If you didn’t document it, it didn’t happen
Quality Improvement

• M&M incorporation of selection criteria and assessment

CONTENTS: CLINICAL PRACTICE AND QUALITY

Pilot Implementation of a Health Equity Checklist to Improve the Identification of Equity-Related Adverse Events

Fan, Linda L. MD; Sheth, Sangini S. MD, MPH; Pettker, Christian M. MD

Author Information

Obstetrics & Gynecology 140(4):p 667-673, October 2022. | DOI: 10.1097/AOG.0000000000004934
Quality Improvement

• RCA – include these domains in the fishbone diagram

Ishikawa or Fishbone Diagram
Quality Improvement

SDH
Transport
Food Desert
Economic
Racial
Bias

Equipment
Process
People

Materials
Environment
Management

Problem

Secondary cause
Primary cause

Cause
Effect

This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under CC BY-SA
Writing for advocacy & change agency:

Education

- Individual
- Local
- State
- National
- International
Education: Individual and local

- Curriculum design
- OSCE
- Acting internships
- Trauma-informed care
- Problem-based learning
- Curriculum re-design
- Mass communication & media
Education - State

- Optimize your resources
- Department of Health
- Society Legislative section
- State Medical Society
Education-National

• Contribute to national organizations
  • Maternal Mental Health Leadership Alliance
  • Policy Center for Maternal Mental Health
  • Mom Congress
Education – International

• Wikipedia, Medscape authorship
• Provide evidence-based entries on widely read platforms
• Add diversity to the authorship pool
  • Wikipedia authors 85% male, 89% white
Writing for advocacy & change agency:

Social Media

USE OF SOCIAL PLATFORMS AS SOURCES OF NEWS
PERCENTAGE OF WORLDWIDE SURVEY RESPONDENTS* WHO SAY THEY USE EACH SOCIAL PLATFORM TO DISCOVER AND ACCESS NEWS CONTENT

- Facebook: 44%
- YouTube: 29%
- WhatsApp: 23%
- Instagram: 15%
- Twitter: 13%
- Facebook Messenger: 12%
- Telegram: 6%
- TikTok: 4%
- LinkedIn: 4%
- Snapchat: 2%

*Source: Edelman, State of Public Relations 2021. Visit https://www.edelman.com/state-of-public-relations-2021 to read the full report. *Note: Online survey of people aged 16 and older in 64 countries around the world. According to Edelman figures, these represent the average (mean) across global survey respondents and may not be weighted by the size of the population or the number of Internet users in each country.
Who uses social media?

- **Facebook**
  - 2.5 billion monthly users
  - Gen X, Boomer

- **Instagram**
  - 1 billion monthly users
  - Millennials

- **Twitter**
  - 330 million monthly users
  - 63% users 35-65 yo
  - Cross-generational
    - Median age 40 yo, 66% male
On the 49th Anniversary of #RoevWade, here are 49 thoughts, facts, and feelings about #abortion.

1) Abortion is health care
2) 1 in 4 women will have an abortion in their lifetime...

Show this thread

Twitter

Promote your Tweet

Your Tweet has earned 25,829 impressions so far. Switch to a professional account to broaden your reach.
Writing for advocacy & change agency:

Policy & Procedure
Policy Development

- Stakeholders
  - Key to policy development

- Our Role
  - “Context Setters” as SME’s
  - We can be........???

- Opportunity to magnify & advocate for interests of marginalized populations
  - Under-represented views in low power/high interest quad

[Image: https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Power-versus-Interest-Grids_fig2_322488375]
Public Comment

- Healthcare regulatory agencies include:
  - CDC, CMS, FDA, HRSA, OSHA

- Regulations are 1 of 3 authority actions

- Process: Initiating → Proposing → **Commenting** → Issuing
  - NRPM (Notice of Proposed Rulemaking Form) published
  - No time limit
  - Must respond to every comment
Public Comment

- Find open regulations at www.federalregister.gov
- Submit comments via “Submit Comment” button, or at www.regulations.gov
Communicating with Representatives

• Our elected officials work for us
• E-mail and phone call better than snail mail
• Social media – excellent amplifier
• Communication is NOT a research project

• 3 parts to communication
  • Greeting with your title/credentials & your position for/against a topic
  • 2-3 sentences supporting your position
  • Cordial conclusion – “Thank you for considering my opinion.”

• Bonus points
  • Identify specific legislation by name, number
  • Include story (HIPAA compliant) about constituents
Writing for change agency & advocacy

- Personal Narratives
- Opinion pieces
- Research & White Papers
- Quality Improvement
- Education
- Social Media
- Policy & Procedure
Call to action & Questions?

- Identify a topic for future writing focused on your advocacy passion
  - Write out your narrative
  - Find your passion point
  - Identify your circle of influence
  - Pick a platform
  - Give yourself a deadline
  - Write a piece

"Most of the important things in the world have been accomplished by people who have kept on trying where there seem to be no hope at all" - Dale Carnegie
Resources

Training and Education Opportunities

Congressional Leadership Conference
- Annual, 3-day ACOG hosted event to learn about key women’s health topics, and meet with your elected officials on day #3.
- Funding often available through your ACOG District

Physicians for Reproductive Health
- Annual Leadership Training Academy covers multiple aspects of advocacy, over 3 separate in-person conferences. Includes a Lobby Day at the Capitol. Funding provided.
- https://prh.org/leadership-training-academy/

Wiki-Edu
- Virtual classes on effectively writing Wikipedia entries – format, references, etc. Special training for Science/Medicine entries.
- https://wikiedu.org/learn/

SIX – State Innovation Exchange
- Helps state legislators and their staff use evidence-based information to craft policy and legislation. Works to ensure policy is based on science. Helps the legislators reach out to pull in research.
- https://stateinnovation.org/

SSN – Strategic Scholars Network
- Helps researchers collaborate to pursue research efforts that can be used to inform evidence-based policies and laws. Helps research push their findings up to the legislators.
- https://scholars.org/

Op-Ed Project – “Public Voices” and other programs
- Offers mentorship for authors on writing Op-eds; website with resources and guidelines for writing these pieces.
- https://www.theopedproject.org/
Resources

Websites for Advocacy Engagement
ACOG – https://www.acog.org/advocacy/get-involved
CREOG - https://www.acog.org/education-and-events/creog/curriculum-resources/additional-curricular-resources/advocacy
American Public Health Association - https://www.apha.org/Policies-and-Advocacy
AMA - https://www.ama-assn.org/health-care-advocacy
Finding your elected officials - https://www.usa.gov/elected-officials
Find pending regulations for comment - https://www.regulations.gov/

Tips for Writing/Calling Your Elected Officials
AMA Publication – “How to make your voice heard by Congress”

Berkley Library, University of California
https://guides.lib.berkeley.edu/ContactingOfficials/Tips

National Center for Health Research
https://www.center4research.org/get-involved/let-your-voice-be-heard/

National Women’s Law Center
https://nwlc.org/resources/tips-tools-for-offline-action/
Resources

Organizations Discussed in Session
Vo+ER - vot-er.org/
Maternal Mental Health Alliance - www.mmhla.org
Policy Center for Maternal Mental Health - www.2020mom.org
Mom Congress - www.mom-congress.com

Other Collaborators
Healthcare – Other Specialties, Nurses, Psychologists, Social Workers, etc
Legal – ACLU; National Women’s Law Center, If/ When/ How - https://www.ifwhenhow.org
DEI, SDH, Environmental, Media/Journalism, Academic, Faith-based, Community Leaders, Business

Podcasts
Freakonomics - https://freakonomics.com/series/freakonomics-radio/
#405 - Policy Making is Not a Science (Implementation Science)

No Stupid Questions - https://freakonomics.com/series/nsq/
#10 “Why are Stories Stickier than Statistics?”

Short Wave - https://www.npr.org/podcasts/510351/short-wave
05 Aug 2021 “How to Correct Misinformation”
06 Jan 2021 “One Page at a Time, Jess Wade is Changing Wikipedia”
14 Jan 2020 “Your Brain on Storytelling”