

Guide to a successful meeting with your MP

Preparing for your meeting

Establishing a relationship with your Member of Parliament's (MP's) staff:

The staff in your MP's office often do the background work to prepare your MP for a meeting. Staff will sometimes be your main point of contact and are very important to successful advocacy.

Be prompt and patient:

It is normal for your MP to be late or to be interrupted during meetings. If this happens, know that it has nothing to do with you or the topic of discussion. You may decide to continue to meeting with your MP's staff or try to reschedule for another time. Remember: a meeting with a staff member is an opportunity to put forward your key message and share background information. If you do meet with staff, treat it like you are meeting directly with the MP.

Be prepared:

Bring supporting information and materials to the meeting (download our materials or use your own). Be clear, calm, and concise when you present your facts. Information and examples that clearly demonstrate the impact of endometriosis in your community are especially helpful, as are details about your personal endometriosis story.

At the meeting

At the beginning of the meeting, thank the person for taking the time to meet:

This will help set a professional and positive tone for the rest of the meeting.

Remember to ask your MP to take action:

The key is to raise awareness and call your MP to action. Ask them how they can personally help address the issue of endometriosis care in Canada and/or how they can raise your points to another avenue in government to gain traction.

Listen intently:

Advocacy is as much about listening as it is using your voice. Listening and looking for indications of the MP's views, personal connections to endometriosis, and finding opportunities to provide insight on their areas of interest, can make the world of difference in advocacy.

Be prepared but don't overwhelm:

Remember that the MPs often have 30 minutes maximum for a meeting – so prioritise key information and calls to action. Don't feel that you need to share every detail of your endometriosis journey. Instead, choose personal feelings and experiences that you are comfortable talking about and highlight your main points.

Know when to admit “I don’t know” and offer to follow up:

Be open to counter-arguments, but don't get stuck debating them. If you don't know the answer, don't guess. Tell your MP that you will get back to them with that information if you're able to, or ask them to follow up with EndoAct Canada on any unanswered questions (info@endoact.ca).

Don't stay too long:

At the end of the meeting, quickly recap your main points and reinforce that you want to maintain open communication moving forward.

Remember you are there to build a relationship:

Whether or not the person you are speaking with is supportive, approach the meeting with long term goals. Your aim should be to address doubts and build support for the future.

Be polite:

Ultimately, you are the connection between your MP and the endometriosis community. Ask what their position is on the issue. If their mind is not made up, ask them to favourably consider the position you have presented. Thank them for their time and the courtesy of meeting with you.

After the meeting

Be sure to thank any staff members:

This includes staff that helped arrange your meeting, attended the meeting, or who have been assigned to work on your issue. Establishing a good relationship with staff can be the key to a strong, on-going relationship.

Be sure to thank any staff members:

If possible, send a thank-you email/letter summarising the purpose of your meeting and the points you covered, and providing any additional information your MP requested. Try to do this within 2 days of your meeting.

Don't forget

- Be punctual.
- Be respectful and polite.
- Make yourself available as a continuing resource.
- Take a photo if in person / screenshot a virtual meeting to share on social media (tag @EndoActCanada so we can celebrate your advocacy success).
- Thank them for taking time out of their busy schedule.