

# Secure the future of Helpline



Australian  
Breastfeeding  
Association



## Advocacy recommendations for ABA volunteers: meeting with your federal MP

### Setting up a meeting with your federal MP

Plan for face-to-face meeting – contact by phone and speak to staff member, such as their secretary or policy officer, or drop into their local office.

Explain who you are, that you are from ABA, the reason for meeting and who else will attend.

Arrange a convenient appointment.

Ask for email address and the next day confirm appointment by email, and provide a short summary of ABA's aims and objectives.

### Meeting preparation

Find out about the MP, their interests and focus of attention. Do they hold an additional position in Government or are they on the shadow front bench?

Review MP's website to learn about their policy positions.

### Prepare your information and key messages

This meeting is a way to build up a relationship with the MP.

Know campaign key messages and be aware of counter arguments to be able to respond.

Prepare yourself with key statistics to support key messages and tell a relevant personal story about your experience with ABA.

Clarify for yourself what you are asking for, and get to the point quickly.

Be clear about a specific action that you would like the MP to take.

Get a clear commitment for action from the MP

### How you can be an integral member of ABA's Helpline Services Commonwealth Government funding campaign

1. Sign and send the pre-written DoGooder letter in September.
2. Share the DoGooder campaign link with friends and family.
3. Consider setting up a meeting with your local federal MP in October.

## Secure the future of Helpline



### Take information with you

Information to help the MP to understand:

- Nature of the problem
- Who it affects
- How to tackle the problem
- What we would like them to do
- How this would support your LOCAL community

Leave your contact details for follow-up and a copy of *Essence* (if you have one you can spare).

### Practicalities

Go with another ABA volunteer – it helps to share the experience.

Rehearse beforehand.

Be ready to introduce yourself and your colleague.

Each person can make a specific point or request.

If you are on your own, make notes beforehand and refer to them.

If with a colleague, arrange for one of you to take notes of proceedings.

Email MP in the next few days to thank them, acknowledge their time and summarise key points. If your MP made a clear commitment to help, include the summary of it in the email.

Continue to build on and maintain the relationship

### Things to remember

Be punctual and neatly dressed. Remember, you are making a first impression.

If MP does not necessarily have a personal interest in your issue, indicate your passion with a personal story and they may show more interest.

When taking notes, write down what they say.

If you are unable to answer a question, let them know you will get back to them with the answer.

Remember that MPs are here to represent you.

Be confident, rational, and clear, do not be intimidated, be assertive and not aggressive.

Have a photo taken of the meeting and send to MP