

Advocacy workshop

Translational Science:

How Research Societies Can Inform Policy- and Decision-makers about Evidence-based Alcohol Policy

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Introduction

- * **Advocacy skills** - essential for the public health researchers and practitioners to potentially **influence policy- and decision-making processes** for better health-related policies (e.g. alcohol or tobacco policy).

Introduction

- * **Advocacy skills** - important especially in those public health areas where “unhealthy” industries are influential and / or (at least) want to be important stakeholders in the field (such as alcohol or tobacco industry).

Introduction

- * **Advocacy training** (potentially) increase competence on:
 - * forging **stronger relationships** with policy- and decision-makers and other key stakeholders;
 - * advocating for the **use of research to inform** policy- and decision-makers about evidence-based policies;
 - * providing **expert testimony**;
 - * **writing** position papers, press releases and social media posts;
 - * committing to **ongoing** advocacy.

Introduction of the workshop

- * a **template** for research societies and individual researchers to **build advocacy skills** and **increase the role of public health professionals** in setting evidence-based alcohol/tobacco policy.
- * **Research societies** need to become **more relevant to policy- and decision-makers**.

Introduction of the workshop

- * **Key topics** of this workshop:
 - * What is advocacy? (**definitions, aims & objectives**)
 - * **Coalition building** / developing effective coalitions
 - * Making the case with **media advocacy**
 - * How to organise **advocacy course / workshop**
 - * **Questions & discussions**

What is advocacy?

- * **Advocacy** (from the Latin “advocare” to summon or call to one’s aid) is popularly understood as support for, or recommendation of, a particular cause or policy ...

What is advocacy?

- * **Advocacy:** activities & actions by individual or group with the intention of **influencing policy- and decision-makers, resource allocation decisions** and with the aim of **developing, establishing or changing policies and practices** and of **establishing and sustaining programmes and services.**

What is advocacy?

- * **Advocacy** can include many activities including media campaigns, public speaking, commissioning and publishing research or polls or the filing of an amicus brief.

Social justice advocacy

- * One of the **most popular** forms of advocacy
- * It represents the series of actions taken and issues highlighted to change the “**what is**” into a “**what should be**”.

Social justice advocacy

- * questions the way policy is administered;
- * participates in the agenda setting (raises significant issues);
- * targets political systems “because those systems are not responding to people’s needs”;
- * is inclusive and engaging;
- * proposes policy solutions; and
- * opens up space for public argumentation.

Other forms of advocacy

- * **health advocacy** (support and promotion of **patient's health care** rights as well as enhancement of community health and policy initiatives that focus on the availability, safety and quality of care);
- * **legislative advocacy** (reliance on the national, regional or local **legislative process** as part of a strategy to create change);

Other forms of advocacy

- * **budget advocacy** (enabling citizens and social action groups to compel the government to be more alert to the **needs and aspirations of people** in general and the deprived sections of the community);
- * **bureaucratic advocacy** (people considered “**experts**” have **more chance to succeed** at presenting their issues to policy- and decision-makers);

Other forms of advocacy

- * **mass advocacy** (any type of action taken by **large groups**, such as petitions, demonstrations, etc.);
- * **media advocacy** (the strategic use of the **mass media as a resource** to advance a social or public policy initiative);
- * ...

Lobbying

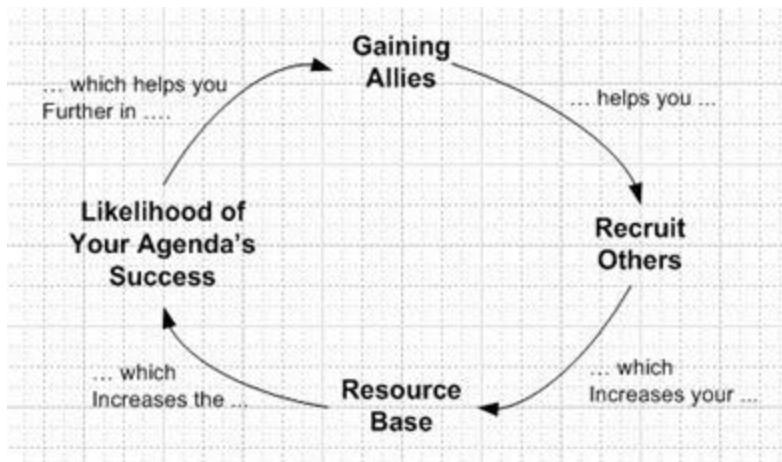
- * Educating the legislature on a particular issue is generally considered **advocacy** ...
- * ... while pushing a particular vote on a particular bill is generally considered **lobbying**

Social marketing

- * seeks to **develop & integrate marketing concepts** with other approaches to influence behaviors that benefit individuals and communities for the greater social good.

Coalition building / developing effective coalitions

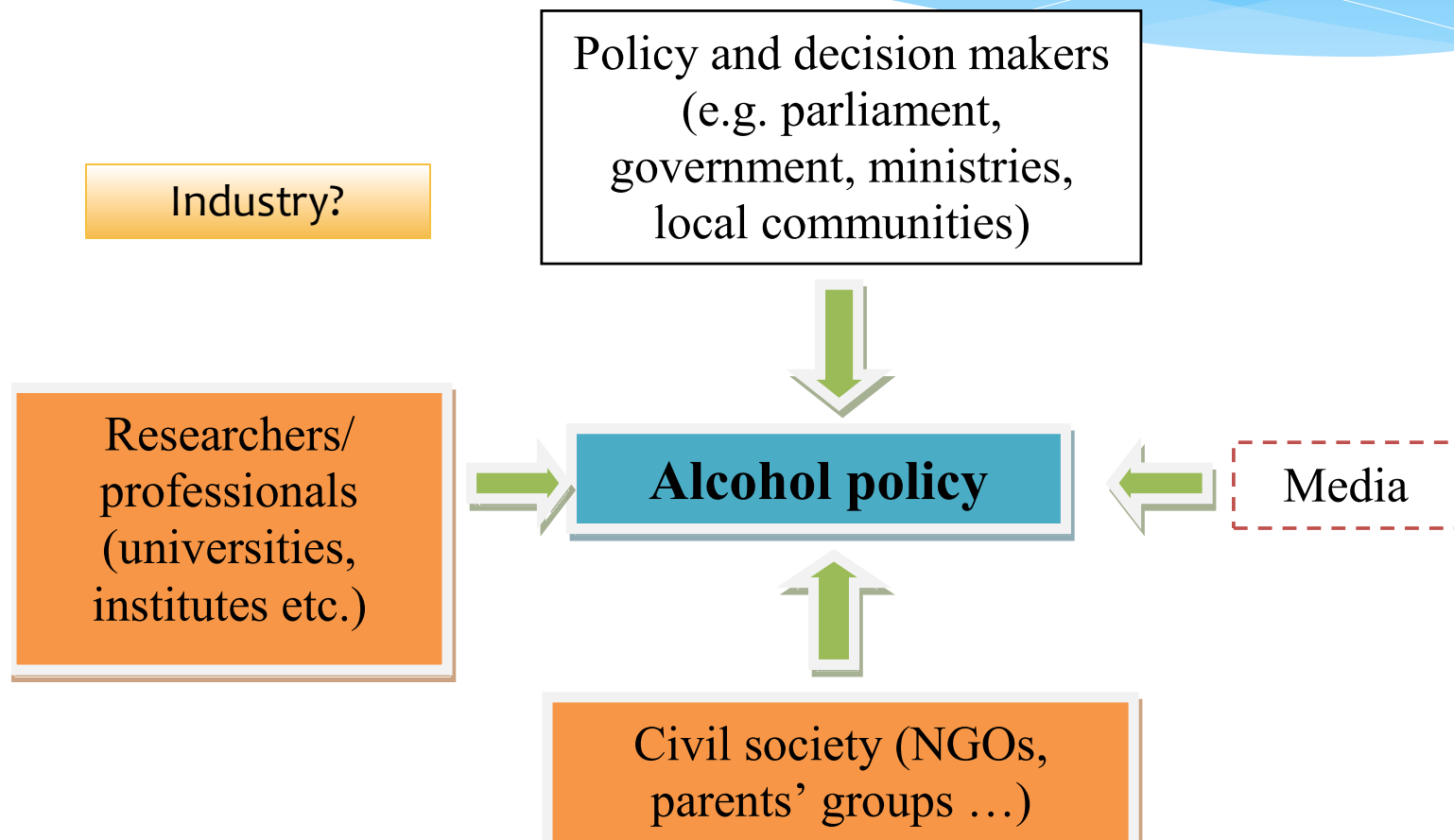
* What is a **coalition**?



Coalition building / developing effective coalitions

- * What is a **coalition**?
- * **Group of people, countries or stakeholders** that join together for a **common purpose**.
- * When building a coalition, these groups agree on **behaving and working cooperatively** towards a set of joint actions defined within the group.

Important stakeholders for coalitions



Coalition building / developing effective coalitions

- * Building a successful coalition implies a **series of steps**, namely:
 - * (1) setting **common & compatible goals**;
 - * (2) mutual **benefits of co-working**; and
 - * (3) assuring that the **benefits are surpassing the costs**.

Benefits of coalitions

* ...

* ...

* ...

Benefits of coalitions

- * increasing the potential of success;
- * empowering the weaker member to have more influence on the matter;
- * concentrating expertise and resources to deal with complex issues and attracting media attention.

Disadvantages of coalitions

* ...

* ...

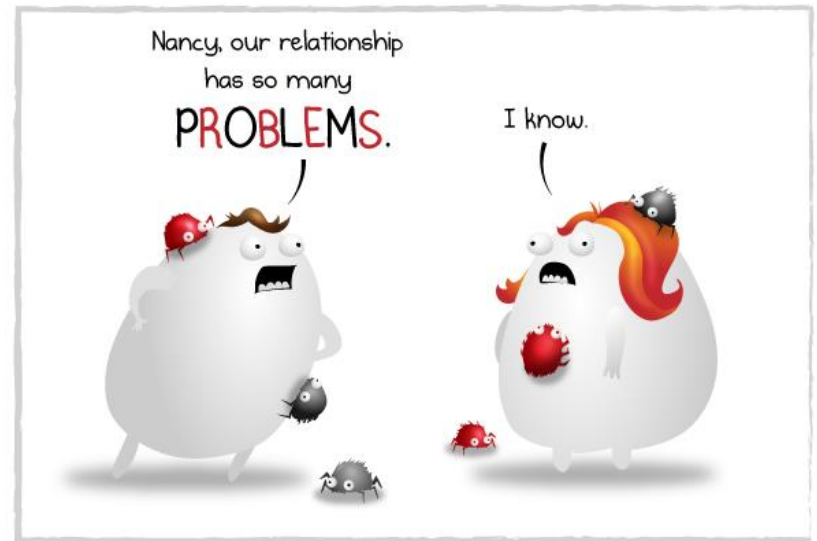
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Disadvantages of coalitions

- * overworking;
- * different levels of resources & interests;
- * different levels of credit.

Disadvantages of coalitions

- * When choosing the members of a coalition or building a coalition, attention should be drawn to the **organisation's goals & interests**, otherwise ...



Coalition building / developing effective coalitions

- * **Task** (2 groups):

- * **Create coalition** / choose members of coalition

- * Answer: Who? Why? What (distribution of tasks)?

- * **Problem/challenge** (recent study):

Connor (2016): Alcohol consumption as a cause of cancer – *alcohol is a direct cause of 7 forms of cancer, and people consuming even low to moderate amounts are at risk, 9 in 10 people aren't aware of the link between alcohol and cancer ...*

Making the case with media advocacy

“If you don’t exist in the media,
you don’t exist”

Daniel Schorr, commentator
National Public Radio (USA)

Advocacy and media

- * **Media coverage** is one of the best and most effective ways to draw **attention amongst policy- and decision makers.**
- * With **good message** is rather easy to draw media attention and coverage.

Message planning

- * Before action we need good **media plan** and **proper message**.
- * Some **key questions**:
 - * What is a *problem* & what are *possible solutions*?
 - * *Who* could put those solutions into effect?
 - * *What* should we do or say to draw attention of those who could put solutions into effect?

Establishing contacts with media

- * We need to prepare a **list** and **contact information** on media, journalists, editors etc. which are important for our action.
- * **Before we establish contacts with them:**
 - * Preparation of *message*
 - * *Role / task distribution*
 - * Selection of *speaker / reporter*
 - * Preparation of *materials, sources, information...*

Methods of using media

* **Press release** (written):

- * Name of organisation
- * Contact information
- * Date of release
- * **Title** (important, could be provocative)
- * Main content (**who, what, where, when and why**)
 - * Most important information on the top !!!
 - * **First paragraph** is most important
 - * Short paragraphs / sentences, simple language
 - * Use of **citations / quotations** recommended ...

Methods of using media

- * **Correspondence column/blogs** (written):
 - * Communication with general public, polemics, pro et contra, coverage in **more media at the same time**
 - * **Shorter columns/blogs** are more effective (250-300 words)
 - * Be aware on **criteria/rules** for publication, limits, special editorial rules etc.
 - * If possible, link your column/blog to other previously published related articles and stories
 - * Introduce yourself (name, contact information)

Methods of using media

- * **Interviews, TV and radio discussions** (speech):
 - * If you're not invited, try to **'invite' yourself**
 - * Inform yourself on **concept and host** of the talk show, names of other guests, programme and characteristics of discussion
 - * **Prepare yourself** for interview (practicing, selection of clothes ...)
 - * **During interview:** speak clearly, plainly, avoid slang, abbreviations, expose key message first, be short, concise ...

Methods of using media

- * **Press conference** (speech):

- * Could be **formal or informal**
- * Enables **direct contact and communication with journalists**
- * Organise it only for larger events, milestones, publication releases etc.

- * **Some hints:**

- * Location, timing, informing media in advance, materials, preparation activities, help of colleagues, presentation, interviews after the event, acknowledgements, contact details for additional questions, following the story ...

Some useful hints

(adapted from Berkeley Media Studies Group)

- * You can't have a media plan, if you don't have at least **action plan for advocacy**.
- * You should place all messages in media **correctly** (no lies, manipulations, threats etc.).

Some useful hints

(adapted from Berkeley Media Studies Group)

- * **Journalist is neither your friend nor enemy**, he/she is just a professional, who tries to do his/her job well.
- * It's not enough that we know our arguments, but we should know also **arguments of the opposite party** (e.g. alcohol/tobacco industry).

Some useful hints

(adapted from Berkeley Media Studies Group)

- * Media **sharpness** should be our **advantage**, exaggerated softness / politeness would be of no use.
- * Our **credibility** and **professionalism** should never be jeopardized in any way.

Some useful hints

(adapted from Berkeley Media Studies Group)

- * While we develop media advocacy plan, we should **identify all controversial issues** (e.g. measures), **possible solutions & persons / actors**, who have the power to make our goals true.
- * Controversy, conflict situations, injustice, irony, originality, sudden changes and incident, milestones and wonderful pictures or photos are always **worth highlighting** (hard to plan, quick response).

Some useful hints

(adapted from Berkeley Media Studies Group)

- * **Public opinion**: support to policy or not
 - * Public opinion is important while planning media activities irrespective of what the opinion is (e.g. Eurobarometer etc.)
- * **Manipulation by industry** / how to react?
 - * When we work with media, we should always be aware of activities by alcohol/tobacco industry

Some useful hints

(adapted from Berkeley Media Studies Group)

- * Use of **new (social) media** in actions
 - * Industry uses new media more and more and we should follow this trend.
- * Influence on **authorities** and **policy**
 - * Informing authorities against the industry „bad behaviour“ or violations of regulation ...

How to organise advocacy course/workshop

- * **Before** developing / delivering a course/workshop:
 - * **Target groups** (researchers/scientists, practitioners)
 - * Needs assessment on level of **knowledge and skills**
 - * Level of **experience** of attendees with advocacy
 - * **Availability** of attendees (number of days/hours) ...

Advocacy course/workshop

- * **Module 1 (*)**: **Basics of prevention** with special focus on environmental strategies (definitions, aims/objectives, what works / what does not work, quality standards, settings, target groups, risk/protective factors etc.).
- * **Module 2 (*)**: **Alcohol/tobacco** (effects on health, society at large, trends, norms, industry – e.g. 7 key messages of alcohol industry – how industry communicates different messages).

Advocacy course/workshop

- * **Module 3 (*)**: **Alcohol/tobacco policy** (analysis of existing policy, discussion about potential effective measures that could be incorporated in existing policy – e.g. increased taxation, bans on advertising and marketing, consistent enforcement of policy measures etc.; how to overcome potential barriers; how to communicate with media).
- * **Module 4 (*)**: **Conducting mystery shopping** (ethical issues, protocol, legislation). Practical part (role playing).

Advocacy course/workshop

- * **Module 5: Advocacy & media advocacy**
 - * Definitions, aims and objectives of advocacy
 - * How to communicate with media, how to present findings of research/studies, how to use new social media etc.
 - * Attendees are asked to design an advocacy plan (including media advocacy plan).
- * **Module 6: Building coalitions** with different stakeholders (step-by-step approach, advantages / disadvantages, key questions to answer etc.).

Advocacy course/workshop

- * **Module 7: How to maintain sustainability and motivation for continues advocacy** (e.g. funding and fundraising, development of human resources – e.g. skills training and new knowledge, conducting bottom-up approach at local and/or top-down approach at national level ...) ...

How to organise advocacy course/workshop

- * **Methods** of work:
 - * Lecture
 - * Group work / discussions
 - * Role play
 - * Developing advocacy / media advocacy plan (group work)
 - * Feedback and evaluation (process and outcome)

Questions & discussion

- * Special topics relevant for research societies, associations of scientists?
- * Structure of extensive advocacy course/workshop (any other units?)
- * Any other comments / ideas?
- * ...

Thanks for being
actively involved!

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