

P & B: Developing your campaign strategy

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1. Identify your target audience

When you are thinking about who you need to influence as part of your planned campaign, the cloud exercise below can be very helpful. The resulting diagram can be a very useful starting point in planning who to target to maximise your chances of success. For example, you may decide to focus on one very powerful, influential but negative individual, who can make a huge difference if they change

2. Planning your activity

Campaign activity can take place in any or all of the four quadrants of the social change grid shown in **Figure 2**. Ultimately, your activity will depend on the issue you're tackling and the key decision makers you need to influence.

Consider where you feel confident to be active, alongside what is the best fit for you, the members you represent, and the issue. Think about how you can share the load with other reps and active members.



2.1 Influencing in the workplace

As the campaign progresses and you move into developing and implementing your strategy, stay connected to your support base, drawing them into any planned campaign activity. As an RCN representative, you can facilitate meetings for members with key decision makers in the organisation; help them to prepare for those meetings; and progress the campaign through the formal structures and processes available to you as a rep.

When planning meetings with targeted individuals, take time to think through in advance what you want to achieve and what is key to winning their support. The Sheila McKechnie Foundation publication [Making the Most of Meetings](#) may be helpful.

It is worth thinking about who the key people are that you may need to influence around setting up a workplace-based event. Your Director of Nursing/Senior Nursing Lead will be important here and it is likely that you will need to negotiate with your Communications Department who will want to ensure that your event does not impact badly on the reputation of your organisation. It may be possible to get support from other trade unions through your staff-side meetings or from key workplace leads around speaking up, health and safety or staff wellbeing.

If you are struggling to get agreement in your workplace to hold a campaigning event then your regional office should be able to support you in your negotiations. As a general point, events that are badged as learning events can often be easier to gain agreement for and may be an appropriate approach for some workplace campaigning activity.

If you are thinking of holding an event in your workplace, check out the guidance in Part A, Section 1.3 available at www.rcn.org.uk/repscampaigning



Lobbying

Identifying those who have influence is the key to all campaigns. This includes trust/health board governors, local councillors, members of health overview and scrutiny committees or members of national parliaments. Lobbying influencers is done most effectively by those who are most affected by the issue.

Written lobbying

A well-constructed letter can be extremely powerful; many letters with a similar message even more so. Write to the person you are lobbying and encourage those around you to follow suit. Always check your facts and include your personal story.

If you don't get a response, chase it up. When the response arrives, reply, offering additional information, correcting any inaccuracies and pressing for action. If they offer support, thank them before asking what they intend to do, and what more you can do.

Requesting/attending a meeting

Your elected government representatives should be accessible. They can be contacted through their constituency office, with details listed on ["they work for you" website](#).

Remember you are the expert. You know your job, your workplace and how issues affect you, your family and your community. Some politicians are not focused on health and don't know detail. You do - and you can tell them. Consider how you might support members to engage with, and influence, local politicians and patient/user groups. RCN representatives play a key role in supporting members to initiate and execute high level opportunities to influence and communicate locally.

Support members to plan their questions and statements, identifying what they want to achieve from the meeting. Additionally, the RCN can signpost members towards appropriate evidence and resources to strengthen their case, enabling them to feel confident and authoritative.

See the RCN's resources [Making Our Voice Heard: the RCN Scotland Guide to](#)
[Political Leadership Programme](#) [ON Wales](#) [H&A](#) [H&A](#)

2.3 Mobilising public support

Public opinion can be a powerful influence on decision-making in healthcare.

Collecting member stories

We know that member stories are an important aspect of bringing the public into a campaign. Often the voices of members sharing their experiences brings home an issue much more powerfully than any corporate messaging.

As an RCN representative, you can first identify and then support members to tell their stories in support of a specific campaign. This activity should always be carried out with the support of your regional/national communications team, as they are able to give advice on keeping members safe throughout the process. Stories can be shared through a variety of channels, from social media and national media, to Citizens' Assemblies and national rallies.

2.4 Influencing politicians and national decision makers

Activity here mainly involves supporting national or UK-wide campaigns. Your role may involve encouraging members to take part in a government/parliamentary lobbying event, sending emails to parliamentarians, signing petitions, or responding to government consultations. In all of these activities, you are a key link between members and the RCN's policy and public affairs teams, who can build a stronger case illustrated by submissions from members on the ground.

Government/parliamentary lobby or drop-in event

Events of this type are arranged and co-ordinated by RCN policy and public affairs teams, who set up the event, identifying the activity that attracts key members of the profession to the event.

Co-ordinated e-mail/petition activity

Sometimes the RCN asks members to take part in co-ordinated activity, sending emails to their parliamentary representative or signing a national petition supporting a specific campaign aim. Promote the action to local members through all your networks – for example social media, the RCN notice board, and conversations encouraging them to take part.

Responding to national consultations

During some national or UK-wide campaigns there may be opportunities for members to respond to consultations, increasing pressure on national decision makers and policy influencers. Again, your role is to raise awareness of the opportunity, via your local networks, helping to achieve high AE V