

# Office of Advocacy Relations (OAR)

## ■ Communicating and Collaborating: Advocates and the National Cancer Institute

### Mission

The National Cancer Institute's (NCI) Office of Advocacy Relations is the NCI's primary point of contact for the cancer advocacy community. OAR oversees the involvement of advocates in research in order to enhance the scientific process and improve patient outcomes by providing diverse perspectives.

The NCI **Office of Advocacy Relations:**

1. Serves as the Institute's expert and central resource for advocacy matters.
2. Facilitates dynamic relationships and collaborations to promote mutual goals.
3. Disseminates information and fosters understanding of key cancer issues and priorities.

### Enhancing Cancer Research

OAR cultivates relationships with the advocacy community in order to increase NCI's accessibility, credibility, and transparency by:

- Identifying common priorities
- Collaborating for research progress
- Addressing non-scientific barriers to research

OAR:

- Engages in issues management and responsive communication
- Improves understanding of NCI priorities and activities
- Builds support for key Institute endeavors by leveraging shared interests
- Works with the community to identify, educate and catalyze action around non-scientific barriers
- Infuses a diverse perspective throughout the research process by including collective patient perspectives

### OAR and the Advocacy Community



### Advocates at NCI

Since the 1990s, the NCI has built relationships with advocacy organizations and facilitated the engagement of advocates in its research activities. The advocate voice is included across NCI. Advocates participate on all of NCI's advisory boards and as voting members of NCI peer review panels. Advocates are involved in steering committees, workshops, conferences, publication development, and many other types of NCI activities.

<http://advocacy.cancer.gov>



[nciadvocacy@mail.nih.gov](mailto:nciadvocacy@mail.nih.gov)



301-594-3194



Office of Advocacy Relations  
Building 31, Room 10A28  
31 Center Drive, MSC 2580  
Bethesda, MD 20892-2580



# A Framework for Research Advocacy

## Types of Advocacy

- Support
- Outreach & Education
- Fundraising
- Policy
- Research

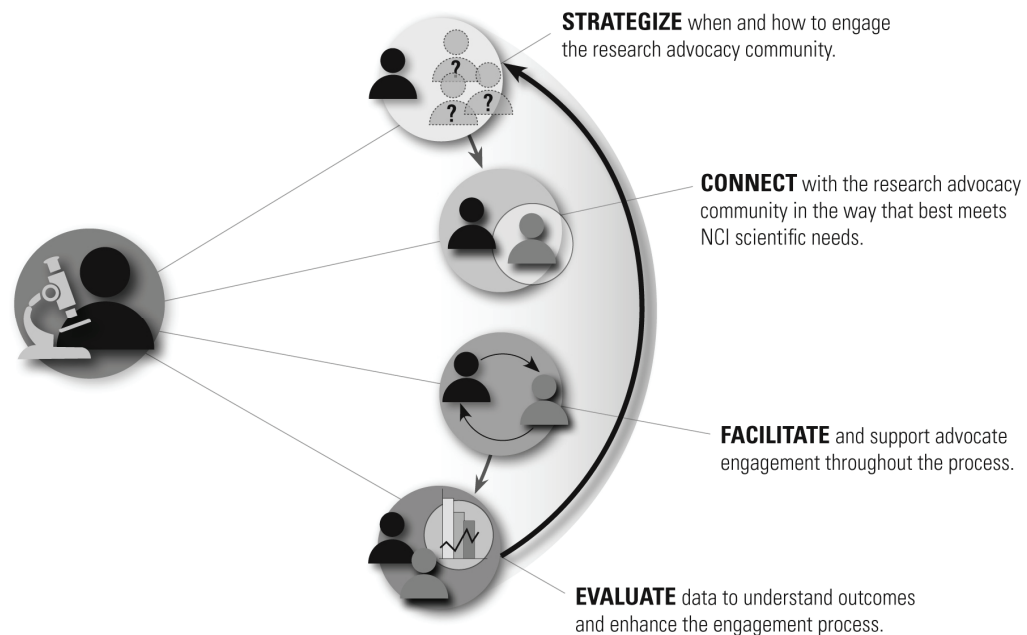
## Research Advocate Definition

- A research advocate brings a non-scientific viewpoint to the research process and communicates a collective patient perspective.
- A collective patient perspective is created when the person has knowledge of multiple disease experiences and conveys this collective perspective rather than exclusively his or her own experience.*

## Research Advocate Roles at NCI

- **Advise** — Develop recommendations or advice focused on strategic directions or broad policy issues
- **Design** — Develop new or enhance existing programs or activities
- **Review** — Evaluate and analyze research proposals and ongoing research activities
- **Disseminate** — Interpret and communicate scientific information for non-scientific audiences

## A Partnership Model: How OAR Facilitates Research Advocate Engagement at NCI



## Outcomes of Research Advocate Engagement

### Advocates Enhance Research

Research advocates:

- Contribute experiential knowledge
- Improve research feasibility and probability
- Ask straightforward questions that lead to:
  - Innovative research questions
  - Diverse perspectives
  - Discussion of controversial scientific issues
- Serve as a reminder of what and who we are all working for — improved patient outcomes

### Advocates Increase Public Understanding and Support of Research

Research advocates:

- Increase public trust through enhanced transparency and accountability
- Help break down barriers between the public and researchers
- Establish a conduit for regular communication
- Provide a venue where researchers can discuss their work with the public
- Communicate about the benefits of research