



ADVOCACY POLICY

Canadian Professional Association for Transgender Health

1.0 CPATH Definition of Advocacy

Advocacy is understood as a strategic approach to influence public policy and resource allocation decisions within political, economic, and social systems and institutions. Advocacy is one of CPATH's organizational strategies to accomplish its mission of improving the care of individuals with gender variant identities by educating professionals involved in transgender health care.

2.0 Principles Guiding CPATH Advocacy Work

- 1) In general, advocacy activities will focus on issues rather than political partisanship or affiliation.
- 2) Board Members, General Members, and Volunteers who represent CPATH in advocacy activities will do so with the full knowledge of the Board and approval of the President.
- 3) Campaigns and activities will support improved care for individuals with gender variant identities.
- 4) Specific advocacy activities will be decided based on the importance of the issue to the organization, the organization's knowledge and expertise in the topic, the resources required, and any potential risks to the organization's continuity or reputation.
- 5) Advocacy activities will be grounded in knowledge and evidence gained through clinical or community experience and/or through the academic or community based research.
- 6) CPATH's position on an issue will be presented in a rational and factual manner and will cite the basis or evidence for concerns or recommendations. Where a public statement is made on an issue, a written copy of the organization's position will also be available with both a named contact person and supporting board member.
- 7) Advocacy activities that involve the media will be carried out in compliance with the organization's media policy.

3.0 Non-Representational Advocacy Activities by Members

CPATH recognizes the importance of advocacy in the personal lives of its members and the significance of grassroots, community-based advocacy in the advancement of transgender rights. To that end, the organization strives to include representation from

community support groups and trans identifying persons on committees, the board, and as members at large.

However, there are a few guidelines we'd like our members to keep in mind.

It is possible that media, public officials, clients, community partners or other groups, could interpret public statements or actions of individuals to be the official CPATH position. Such misinterpretation is more likely to occur with individuals who are readily identified as leaders or spokespersons for the organization. **Therefore, if you are speaking or taking action as an individual, be as clear as possible that you are not doing so on behalf of the organization.**

If you are uncertain about the relevance of CPATH membership status to a particular advocacy engagement (e.g., being interviewed by the press), please consult with the Board President.

Tools for Advocacy

A. Advocacy Work: Questions & Considerations

- 1) Does the issue/position fit with the CPATH mission?
- 2) Is there a unique role for CPATH on the issue?
- 3) Can you offer a solution?
- 4) Timing. Is this a long-term or quick issue? Is this the right time for your issue?
- 5) Controversy. When considering controversial issues, is it worth the flak? Is there a less controversial position that will still make a difference?
- 6) Allies/opponents analysis. Assess who might help on this and who will likely oppose you. Be realistic. This may take some research or some calls to figure out.
- 7) International vs. national vs. Province vs. local issues. Where can you have the most impact on real people in your area?
- 8) Avoid controversy that splits the group.
- 9) Who else is working on the issue? Are you really needed?
- 10) Politics. How will the politics of the issue bear on your organization, your Board, your funders, your members?
- 11) Review your issues and positions regularly. Are they still relevant?

Thanks to the Sherbourne Health Centre Corp. for giving us access to its policies and tools. They were helpful in the development of this document.

B. Decision Making Guide for Advocacy Activities

Check the following criteria. Use the scores to help determine the relevance of the planned activity and CPATH’s readiness to undertake it.

Positive	++	+	0	-	--	Negative
Issue is important to CPATH members.						Issue is not important to CPATH members.
Strategy is likely to benefit the health/wellness of individuals with gender variant identities.						Strategy is unlikely to benefit the health/wellness of individuals with gender variant identities.
CPATH has specific expertise in this area						CPATH has no specific expertise in this area
This area has already been identified as a priority issue						This area has not yet been identified as a priority issue
CPATH has the resources to undertake this activity (e.g., time, money, skills)						CPATH does not have resources to undertake this activity (e.g., time, money, skills)
CPATH has identified a clear course of action that is compatible with its mission.						CPATH has not identified a clear course of action that is compatible with its mission.
Issue has broad support throughout CPATH.						Issue does not have broad support throughout CPATH.
Not participating will undermine the reputation or credibility of CPATH.						Participating will put the reputation or credibility of CPATH at risk
CPATH is supported by other organizations/partners						CPATH is not supported by other organizations/partners