

# PROVIDERS AS ADVOCATES

Cara Heuser, MD MS

Sept 22, 2017, Project Echo

University of Utah/Intermountain  
Healthcare/Physicians for Reproductive Health

[Cara.heuser@utah.edu](mailto:Cara.heuser@utah.edu)

# Objectives

- ▶ Define and describe advocacy
- ▶ Describe ways we can influence public policy
- ▶ Provide strategies to bring our voice to the public arena
- ▶ Discuss reasons for advocacy
- ▶ Convince you that you already have many of these skills!

# DISCLOSURES

▶ none

# WHAT IS PROVIDER ADVOCACY?

Action by a health professional to promote social, economic, educational, and political changes that ameliorate the suffering and threats to human health and well-being that he or she identifies through his or her professional work and expertise

# Advocacy

- ▶ Lawyers
- ▶ Politicians
- ▶ Lobbyists
- ▶ Doctors/Providers
- ▶ Citizens
- ▶ Stakeholders

# Topics for Advocates

- No single topic
- Access to care
- Reproductive rights
- Reimbursement
- Scope of practice
- Larger social/societal topics
- General medical topics
- Safety initiatives
- Many others!

# WHAT IS ADVOCACY

**Dr. Kelly Culwell**, alumna of the Physicians for Reproductive Health Leadership Training Academy, meeting with her then-Senator from Illinois

Capitol Hill 2006



# MODELS OF ADVOCACY





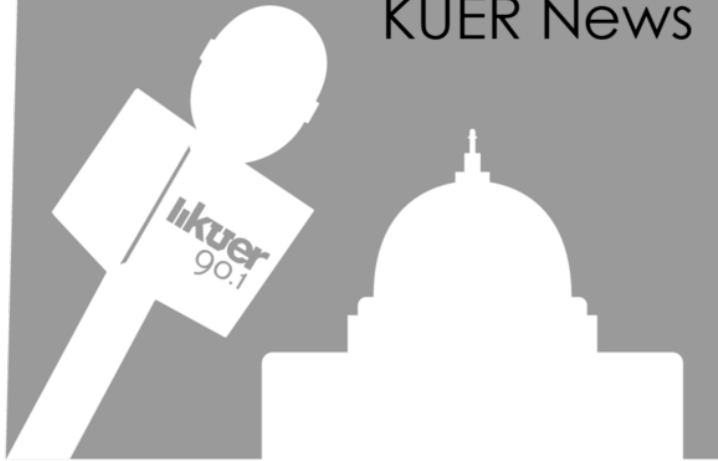
# Policy

- ▶ Legislative
  - ▶ Federal Level
  - ▶ State Level
  - ▶ Lobby Organizations
  - ▶ Defensive position or positive legislation
- ▶ Regulatory
  - ▶ Health Department
  - ▶ Hospitals/health systems

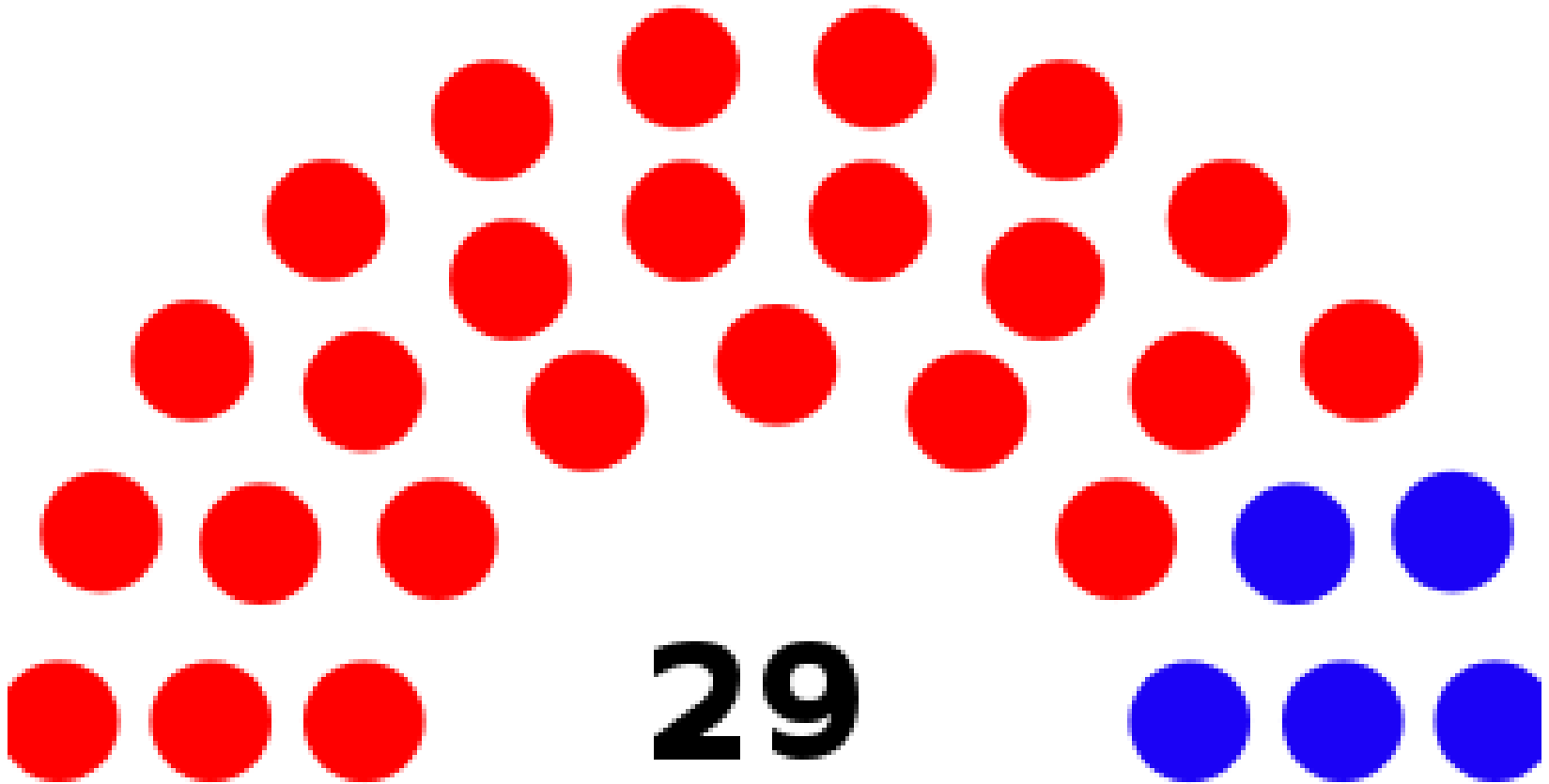
# Utah Considerations

# 45 DAYS

KUER News



# Utah Senate



# Media

- ▶ Tell your hospital
  - ▶ Traditional
    - ▶ Op Ed/opinion pieces
    - ▶ Letters to Editor
    - ▶ Lay press AND professional publications
    - ▶ Levels
  - ▶ Social
    - ▶ Work with national organizations
    - ▶ Share events
    - ▶ Spread awareness
  - ▶ Others?
-

# LETTER TO THE EDITOR

## The Seattle Times

### **Zika virus: Ensure equal access to reproductive care**

...As an obstetrician and gynecologist in Washington state, I am acutely aware of the public-health crisis we face with the Zika virus ["As Zika epidemic worsens, Congress takes a vacation," Opinion, Aug. 10]. It is time to herald the need for equal access to comprehensive reproductive care. (...)

Sara Pentlicky, Seattle

## The Salt Lake Tribune

Single Payer Sensible by John Schirak MD

LTE: ...The time has come to approach health care from a more efficient direction and to scrap our outdated, often fraudulent insurance-based system....

# Deseret News

A **global warming** solution to grow the economy

OPED July 2014

David Folland (pediatirican)

**As a physician**, I'm especially pleased with the improved health that would accompany the reduced air pollution from this proposal. Because all the factors leading to death are usually not apparent, we generally don't recognize how air pollution contributes to the deaths of so many people: it's reported that over 7 million people each year die from air pollution, which includes an estimated 1000 to 2000 Utahns. These people die from heart attacks, asthma, and other lung disease, but "air pollution" is not listed as a cause of death on their death certificates. So why aren't members of Congress working tirelessly on carbon fee and dividend policy? In fairness, the great benefits of such a policy have just recently been reported. But there is also tremendous pressure to keep the status quo.

---

# Academic

## ▶ Education

- ▶ Work with your institution and educational directors
- ▶ Different approaches and flexibility important
- ▶ Involve different trainees
- ▶ Don't forget about "lateral" education (e.g. grand rounds, etc)

## ▶ Research

- ▶ Possibilities abound
- ▶ Good (recent!) examples:
  - Upadhyay, UD et al. Distance Traveled for an abortion and source of care after an abortion. *Obstet Gynecol.*
  - Christiana et al. Increasing uptake of LARC and permanent methods of family planning in Indonesia. *Midwifery*

# Professional and Other

- ▶ National and state medical societies
  - ▶ Utah: UMA, ACOG, PP, ACLU, UWU,
- ▶ Communities
- ▶ Volunteer organizations
- ▶ Places of worship
- ▶ Schools
- ▶ Get creative

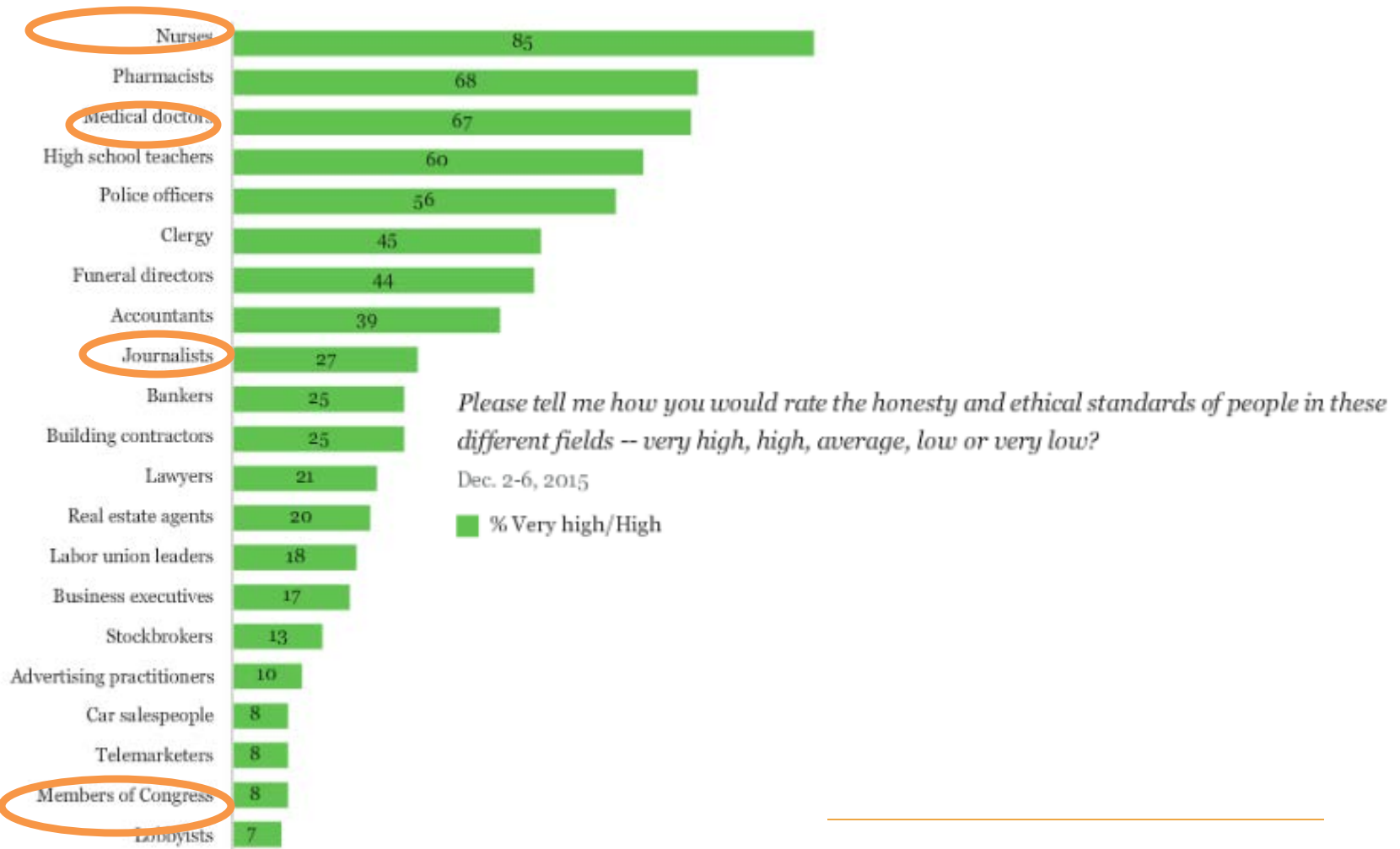


# Why me? Why us?



- ▶ People trust you
- ▶ Useful skill set
- ▶ Stories to tell

# Healthcare AND THE PUBLIC TRUST



# INNATE PROFESSIONAL SKILLS

- ▶ Technical and scientific knowledge
- ▶ Access to and understanding of research
- ▶ Experience with advocating for individual patients
- ▶ Effective communicators
- ▶ *Treasure trove of personal and patient narratives*

# Stories/Narrative

“After a presentation, 63%  
of attendees remembered  
**STORIES.**

Only 5% remember  
**STATISTICS”**

(source: Made To Stick p143 – Based on Stanford University Experiment)

# Facts Vs. Feelings

## Facts Tell, Stories Sell

### Know how to use facts

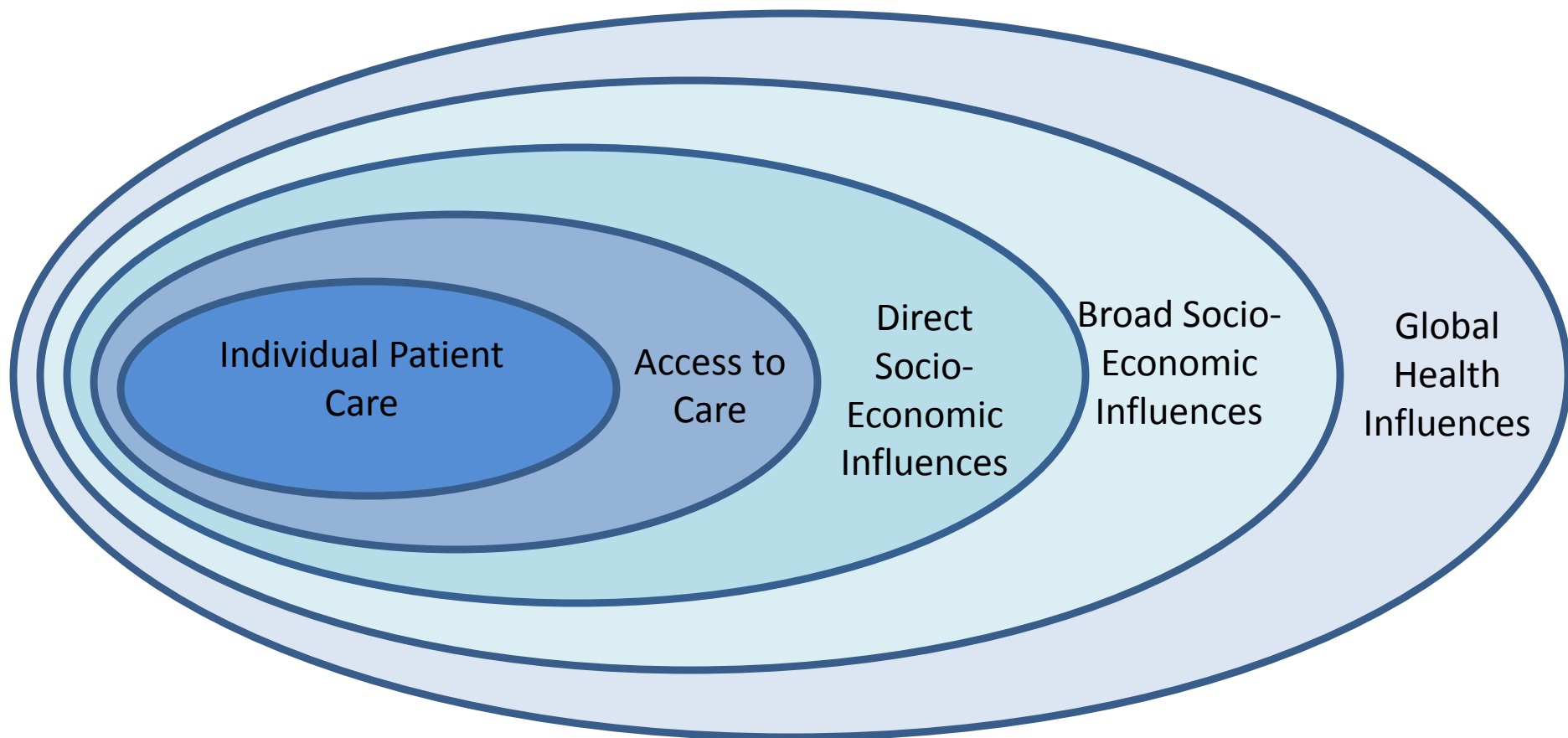
- Facts are provable data points that generate awareness or understanding of a problem/issue
- Facts appeal to reason (Left-brain); accordingly they illicit an intellectual response (i.e. agreement or disagreement)
- Facts can be selectively dismissed by the listener or lost among other facts; so they should be used with purpose and intention

### Know how to use stories

- Stories are extremely powerful ways of emotionally connecting people to new ways of thinking in a way that they will remember
- Stories are experiential and therefore can't be disputed via argument
- If you want someone to internalize a thought or be persuaded by new information you offered them—tell them a story

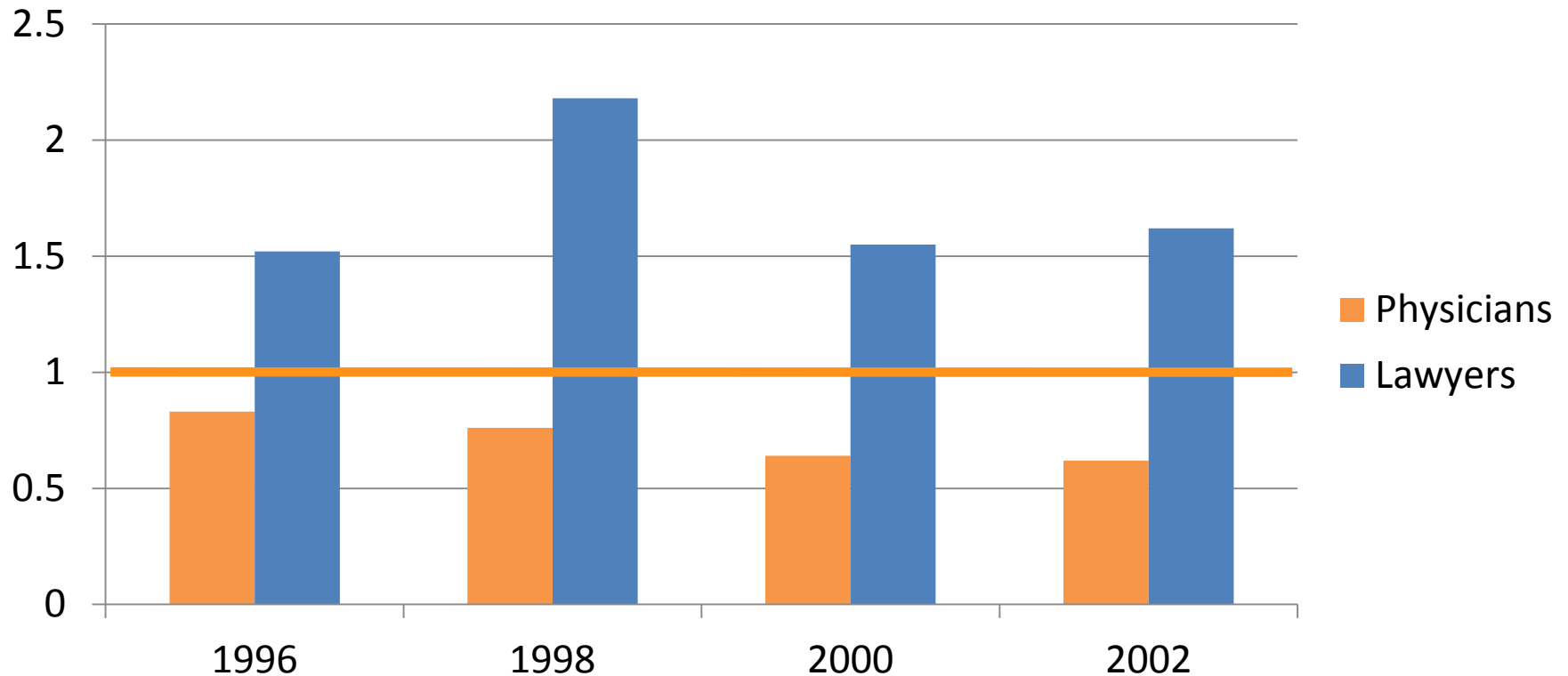
*AMA: “advocate for social, economic, educational, and political changes that ameliorate suffering and contribute to human well-being.”*

# OUR PATIENTS



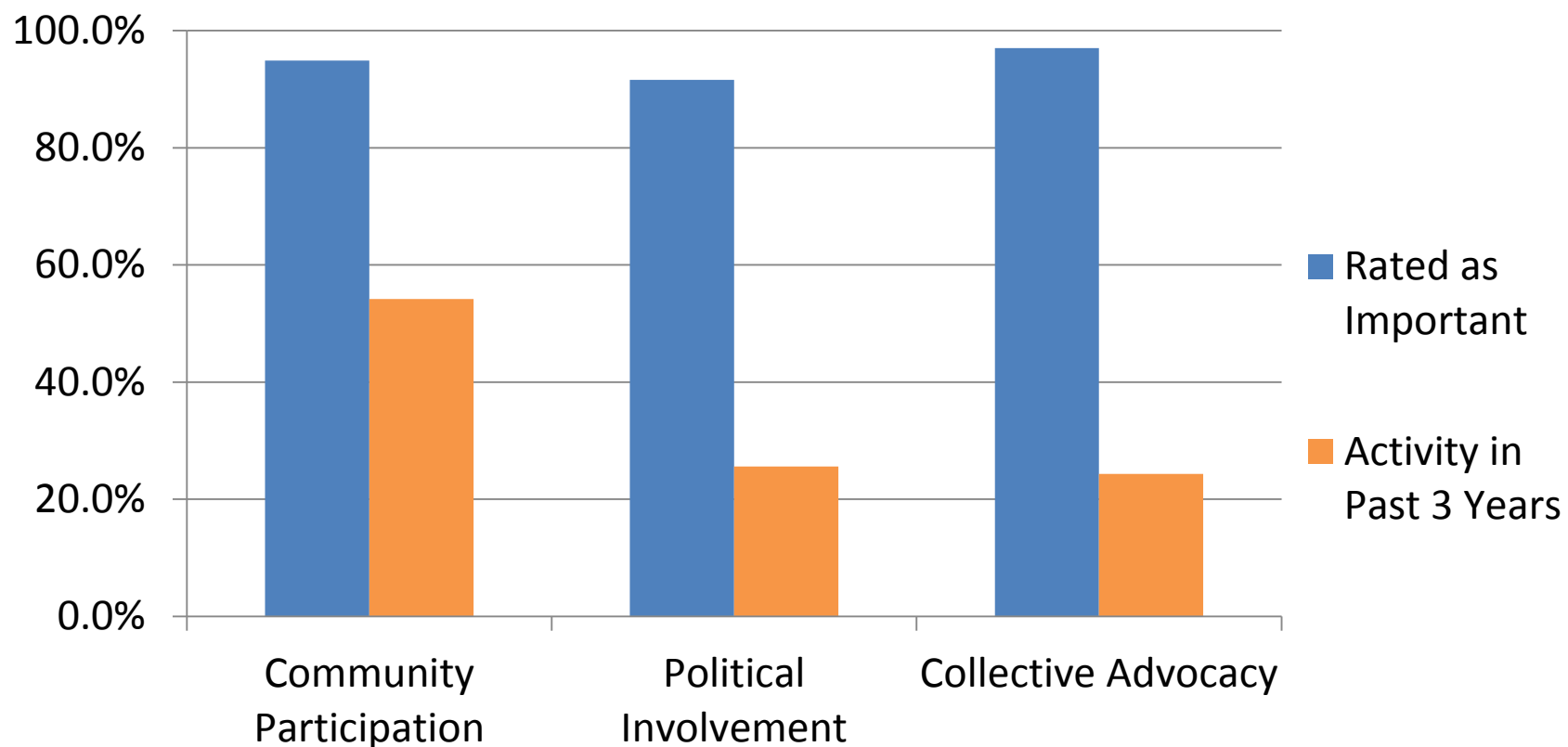
# DON'T LET THE LAWYERS WIN!

Adjusted Odds of Voting Compared to General Population





# BARRIERS



# FINDING TIME

| Activity                       | Estimated Time   |
|--------------------------------|------------------|
| Voting                         | 10 min - one day |
| Signing a petition             | One minute       |
| Writing email to legislator    | 1 - 15 minutes   |
| Calling your legislator        | 5 - 10 minutes   |
| Writing a letter to the editor | 15 - 60 minutes  |
| Testifying                     | Half - whole day |

# SKILLS TO DEVELOP

- ▶ Defining your goal and your audience
- ▶ Crafting personal stories to frame your issue
- ▶ Developing and sticking to your message
- ▶ Recognizing opportunities for advocacy
- ▶ Developing relationships with partners, media, legislators

# TAKE AWAY MESSAGES

- ▶ Healthcare professionals are effective and sought-after advocates
- ▶ Advocacy is strategic, learnable, and builds on existing skills
- ▶ Variety of opportunities available – work with others
- ▶ Stick with it – long-term process of speaking truth as doctors

# CHANGE TAKES TIME



The story in American history I most like to tell is the one about how women got the right to vote 90 years ago this month. It has everything. Adventure! Suspense! Treachery! Drunken legislators!

But, first, there was a 70-year slog.

Which is really the important part. We always need to remember that behind almost every great moment in history, there are heroic people doing really boring and frustrating things for a prolonged period of time.

# References

- ▶ Gruen RL, et al. JAMA 2004;291:94-98
- ▶ Weinberger, et al. N Engl J Med 2012;367:1557-1559
- ▶ Winner B, et al. N Engl J Med 2012;366:1998-2007.
- ▶ Jones RK, Jerman J. Perspect Sex Reprod Health 2014;46:3-14 doi: 10.1363/46e0414
- ▶ Jones RK, Jerman J. J Women's Health 2013;22:706-713
- ▶ Gruen RL, et al. JAMA 2006;296:2467-2475.
- ▶ Grande D, Asch DA, Armstrong KA. J Gen Intern Med 2007;22:585-589.
- ▶ Marty R, Pieklo JM. Crow After Roe.
- ▶ Bearak JM et al., *Contraception*, [Feb 2016](#) Volume 93, Issue 2, Pages 139–144
- ▶ Obama, B. JAMA. 2016;316(5):525-532.
- ▶ Finer, L and Zolna, M. N Engl J Med 2016;374:843-52.
- ▶ Firearm-related injuries affecting the pediatric population. Pediatrics 2012;130:e1416 –e1424
- ▶ Linberg, L et al.. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 2016, 1-7.
- ▶ Sheldon, W, Winikoff, B. Contraception 92 (2015) 182–185
- ▶ Cleland, K, Smith N. *Contraception* 92 (2015) 179–181
- ▶ Upadhyay UD. PLoS Med 13(8):  
<http://kff.org/disparities-policy/issue-brief/beyond-health-care-the-role-of-social-determinants-in-promoting-health-and-health-equity/>
- ▶ <http://www.guttmacher.org/media/nr/2013/12/19/index.html>
- ▶ [www.guttmacher.org/pubs/gpr/14/1/gpr140107.html](http://www.guttmacher.org/pubs/gpr/14/1/gpr140107.html)
- ▶ <http://www.guttmacher.org/media/inthenews/2013/07/08/>
- ▶ <http://www.guttmacher.org/media/inthenews/2014/01/02/index.html>
- ▶ <http://www.guttmacher.org/media/infographics/barriers-to-access2.html>
- ▶ <http://www.businessweek.com/articles/2013-11-27/abortion-clinics-face-shutdown-spiral-as-republicans-push-restrictions>
- ▶ <http://www.gallup.com/poll/1654/honesty-ethics-professions.aspx>
- ▶ [http://www.slate.com/blogs/the\\_slatest/2014/04/21/scientific\\_poll\\_most\\_americans\\_question\\_big\\_bang.html](http://www.slate.com/blogs/the_slatest/2014/04/21/scientific_poll_most_americans_question_big_bang.html)
- ▶ <http://ap-gfcpoll.com/poll-methodology>
- ▶ <http://www.ama-assn.org/resources/doc/ethics/decofprofessional.pdf>
- ▶ <https://www.acgme.org/acgmeweb/Portals/0/PFAssets/ProgramRequirements/CPRs2013.pdf>
- ▶ [http://www.acgme.org/acgmeweb/Portals/0/PDFs/common\\_guide/CompleteGuide\\_v2%20.pdf](http://www.acgme.org/acgmeweb/Portals/0/PDFs/common_guide/CompleteGuide_v2%20.pdf)
- ▶ <http://www.usnews.com/opinion/articles/2016-09-30/its-long-past-time-to-remove-abortion-pill-restrictions>
- ▶ <http://www.guttmacher.org/media/nr/2013/12/19/index.html>