A guide to ‘Remember my Story’
Contents

Step one—
Getting started 4

Step two—
Securing a meeting 5

Step three—
Preparing for your meeting 6

Step four—
Before the meeting 7

Step five—
Following up 9

Checklist 11
What is ‘Remember my Story’ about?

The Remember my Story engagement strategy provides a meaningful way for the T1D community to maintain relationships with elected officials.

Advocates schedule and conduct meetings locally with politicians in the areas they represent to share their personal connections to T1D – articulating the financial, medical, and emotional costs of the disease. These meetings serve as an opportunity to highlight the lived experiences of our community and to inform politicians of the essential role they can play to raise awareness of T1D and to support policies that improve the quality of life for those impacted by T1D, until we find cures.
Step one—
Getting started

Who is responsible for health funding?
The first step is to identify who is responsible for making decisions around health funding in your area. Health funding is sometimes decided at the national level, by the health minister, but state or local governments may also play an important role in allocating health funding.

As a voter, you’re very important to politicians, – in fact, they got their job because people voted for them! That means they have a responsibility to represent you and want to hear your story.

If you’re not sure who the right politician is, you can usually find them through a quick search online.

How to engage with politicians?
There are many ways you can meet with and engage politicians, depending on your circumstances. Here are just some of your options:

- **In person** – You could meet up with them in person, either at their office or another appropriate location like your local coffee shop.

- **Virtually** – If you live in a remote area or have other constraints affecting your ability to travel, you could organize a video conference or phone call.

- **At an event** – Politicians are often out and about at community events. Don’t be afraid to strike up a conversation with them at one of these occasions - you might even want to extend them an invitation for a follow up meeting!
Step two—

Securing a meeting with the politician

Now you know how you want to meet with a politician, you need to lock in a time and date for your meeting and make sure it’s in the Calendar! A good place to start is usually your government’s website or a quick search online. Type in the name of the politician and find their contact details.

Contacting the electorate office

• **Ring the politician’s office and ask to speak to their scheduler.** They will know when the politician is free to meet.

• **Introduce yourself as a constituent** and say you’d like to meet with the politician to talk to them about you and your family living with type 1 diabetes.

• **Aim for a face to face meeting**, but let them know you’re also prepared to conduct the meeting over the phone or via video conference.

• **Mention you’re a T1D Advocate** and share who will attend the meeting. If you’re a parent of a child with type 1 diabetes, take your child along with you, too!

• **Find a time that suits** and, if the person you speak to says they’ll get back to you, take down their name and give them your contact details.

• **Be persistent** and make a diary note to call them in a couple of days to follow up.

• **Often, you’ll be asked to put your request in an email – this is quite normal.** Confirm the email for the person you are speaking with and follow up with an email as soon as you can. Start by thanking the person you spoke to on the phone for the conversation, and mention any details they may need to take into account.

• **If you don’t get a meeting right away, don’t give up!** Remember to remain friendly, polite and respectful and you’ve got every chance of securing a meeting in the future.
Step three—

Preparing for your meeting

Meeting a politician might seem scary, but there is nothing to be afraid of. Remember, your politician is concerned with helping members of their community so a meeting with you is very important to them. Remember your, and your family’s votes count.

Know your politician

Knowing who the politician is and what they believe in will go a long way in forming a great relationship with them. To get a solid background, you can:

- Do your homework. Ensure you know which party the politician belongs to, whether they hold any special positions in that party, and how long they’ve been in politics. You could even do a quick search to check whether they’ve made any public comments about type 1 diabetes.
- Take a look at their website, Facebook page and even research whether they have a blog.

Know what you want

The most important reason you’re meeting with your local politician is you care about an issue about which you’re an expert: living in a family with type 1 diabetes. Head into the meeting with purpose by doing the following:

- Be confident about what you do know and offer to get back to them on anything that you don’t. Saying “I don’t know” is better than making points you’re unsure about or can’t back up, and it gives you a reason to follow up.
- Be clear on what you want, and don’t be afraid to ask for it! This could sound something like: “Access to test strips has changed my life. Can I show you how it works so you can understand why it’s so important for my T1D management? It is one reason I am asking you to support making access to test strips free for everyone with T1D. Please Remember Me and my story when you are thinking about health funding.”
Step four—

Before the meeting

Before you meet

- **Create a document or some notes** outlining key points you can share with the politician.

- **Beforehand, write a few notes for yourself, outlining your key arguments and facts and figures you want to use.** It’s easy to fall into the trap of writing out a speech which you then read to the politician, but we would encourage you to keep these notes brief and focus on telling the politician your story. Coordinate your points with other advocates if they are joining the meeting to ensure everyone has a role and the key issues are covered.

- **Find out how many people in your country have T1D** by going to the T1Dindex.org site and getting the statistics.
Getting down to business

- **Introduce yourself and your family member**, thanking the politician for taking the time to meet with you. Allow other advocates to introduce themselves if they are joining you.

- Your politician might not know much about type 1 diabetes, or they may have been a champion for many years. **Listen carefully and tailor your message to your audience.**

- **Tell the politician what you want them to do.** Give compelling reasons to take the action you are requesting and ask them to remember you when considering funding for health research or policies to improve the lives of those with T1D. Think of all the people you know in your electorate that support your issue – the more support you can show, the more likely they’ll think of your issue as a vote winner.

- **If the purpose of the meeting is to say ‘thank you’,** be up front about that and have your points lined up about why you’re saying thank you.

- **Try to secure a commitment from the politician.** For example, will they agree to publicize why people in their electorate should get access to free insulin and test strips.

- **Ask them whether they’re happy for you to take a picture of your meeting** and ask whether they’d be interested in seeking some social or local media coverage about it.

- **When the meeting comes to an end – whatever the outcome – make sure you thank the politician once again for meeting with you.** Let them know you’d welcome the chance to keep them posted about your issue and keep in touch.

**Remember...**

- **Know when to back off** – If the politician isn’t being responsive or interested, be direct, get your message across, but ensure you don’t get too forthright or argumentative. Should you feel the politician wasn’t listening, please relay that to us. If your ask isn’t getting a solid positive response, ask once more and then back off.

- **Know who has the politician’s ear** – The politician will have staff, and the more senior they are, the more they will have. So if one is being brought along to your meeting, understand they often hold the information for the minister/politician – so don’t be afraid to direct some of your story to the advisor and ensure they understand your points.

- **Be respectful of the time allotted for your meeting.**

- **Know what to do if the meeting doesn’t go the way you planned** – If the politician has a negative view of the issue you present, that gives us something to work on. So remain polite, thank them for their time and feed this information back to us.
Step five—
Following up on your meeting

No matter how your meeting goes, the follow up can be just as important. Here’s a checklist of things to keep in mind after your meeting:

• **Follow up with a thank you email to the politician and their staff**, alongside the summary document you’ve compiled. This is also a great way to reiterate our asks.

• **Send a photo if you have one.** If you don’t have a photo, you could even send something else that could be a memento from the meeting, for example, a drawing that your child does about the meeting could also work well.

• **Share the event across social media** (some tips and tricks on the next page).

• **Hold the politician to account** if they promised to do something as a result of your meeting. Make sure you follow up with them to do exactly that!
Your social media plan

Social media is a valuable and accessible tool which will get your message out there. We have developed a six-point plan for you to get the most out of your social channels:

1. Photos are key – Make sure you capture a good photograph of the meeting – and double-check the local politician gets one on their phone – so they have no excuse not to post.

2. Tag, Tag, Tag – Across Instagram, use hashtags such as #T1D #T1DAdvocacy and #T1DIndex, and on Facebook, tag your politician in any photos you post.

3. Share your experience – Post your photo, screenshot or recording with us to encourage other advocates to get involved.

4. Ask them to do the same – If the politician hasn’t posted on their social channels within 24 hours of the meeting, follow them up and ask them to.

5. Let us know – Tell us about any posting so we can repost it to our page. In fact, encourage family, friends, or anyone else engaged in the T1D story to also like, comment and share.

6. Keep up the conversation – If the politician makes good on their commitments, use social media to thank them, commend them and encourage them to keep up the good work.
Your Checklist

☑ Share your story. This is your chance to build your relationship with the politician, so don’t be afraid to get personal.

☐ Get a photo of you with the politician

☐ Be realistic, persuasive and most of all, be brief. Just because a meeting is short, doesn’t mean it’s unsuccessful

☐ Have your talking points ready

☐ Be clear on your ask – and make sure you remember to ask it

☐ Remember your meeting etiquette - be polite, friendly and a good listener

☐ Know what you want to get out of the meeting before you go inside

☐ Agree on a follow up meeting or action/touchpoint
Thank you

For any questions contact hello@t1dindex.org

Visit t1dindex.org for more information