

Ten Principles for a Healthcare Activism Aimed at Policy Change
(Derived from ACT UP's Early Successes with Shaping AIDS Drug Research & Regulation)

I can list some of what AIDS activists did to win our treatment victories:

- We made sure our initial demands of the medical establishment were simple and concrete. Those demands in skeletal form served in rallying our troops and informing the press of what we wanted.
- We quickly expanded those simple demands into full-blown policies we wrote as if we had the power to put them into effect.
- We targeted the people in the medical establishment (in our case, the US Food & Drug Administration, National Institutes of Health and the Centers for Disease Control) that could make real change and quickly.
- We found friends in the government healthcare agencies who would speak up and act in our behalf.
- We invited local caregivers to contribute to the policies we were writing and become advocates for their implementation.
- We found sympathetic journalists to get the word out, and did it ourselves with all available media.
- We found politicians who would support us.
- We embarrassed the medical establishment into addressing us and our concerns.
- We convinced the medical establishment they needed us: People living with a difficult medical condition, their loved ones & their caregivers are the experts on the condition, and as such, an indispensable resource to a medical establishment that hopes to address it.
- We made clear to the medical establishment that we wanted not just a place at the table but seats on all relevant (medical research and regulatory) committees, and that we would not be mere observers on those committees: We would be full partners in changing existing policies and making new ones that addressed the real-world epidemic we knew so well.

— Jim Eigo