

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On March 14, 2023, 86 volunteer COPD Foundation patient and caregiver community members representing 34 states participated in IMPACT Lung Health 2023, a virtual advocacy event designed to encourage the United States Congress to support critical policies that would improve the lives of people affected by chronic lung conditions and would ultimately lead to cures.

IMPACT Lung Health 2023 marked our fourth IMPACT event that has taken place 100% remotely from all over the country. We had more volunteer advocates this year than ever before that met virtually with elected officials and their staff from the House of Representatives and Senate. There were 145 total meetings, with teams of advocates grouped together by states and regions anywhere from Hawaii to New England to Florida.



“I appreciated the opportunity to speak about the needs related to COPD.” - *IMPACT 2023 Lung Health Advocate*

The full IMPACT 2023 program focused on building participants’ advocacy, storytelling, relationship-building skills, and knowledge about the COPD Foundation’s policy priorities for the lung health community through a series of advocacy training webinars. Our advocates culminated in the IMPACT Lung Health 2023 virtual Congressional meetings on March 14, 2023.

In advance of the virtual meetings, the COPD Foundation sent any member of Congress and their staff with whom advocates had scheduled meetings a document outlining the COPD Foundation’s critical policy priorities and facts about COPD, along with individual state prevalence statistics.

IMPACT 2023 participants focused on three critical policy priorities and asked their elected officials to:

1. Increase funding and prioritize COPD, bronchiectasis, and NTM research through the NIH National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) as the FY 2024 appropriations bills are developed.
2. Extend and make permanent Medicare coverage for all virtual pulmonary rehabilitation.
3. Act to ensure that all individuals requiring supplemental oxygen have access to medically appropriate oxygen.

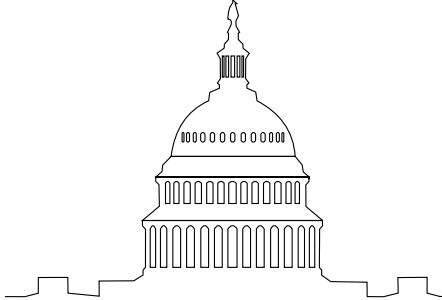


Initial feedback indicated participants felt their virtual meetings went well overall, their interactions were positive, and their voices were heard. Elected officials and their staff expressed interest in the COPD Foundation's FY 2024 appropriations request, bill numbers and text for our legislative priorities, learning more about COPD in general, efforts specific to their state, and sharing their connections to individuals impacted by COPD. IMPACT participants followed up with their Congressional staff by thanking them for their meeting, resharing our 2023 priorities, and solidifying their constituent relationship as lung health advocates. Because advocacy is such an urgent and sustained process, it's critical to continue dialogue, identify opportunities for connecting, and build ongoing relationships with elected officials and their staff.

After the program's conclusion, participants were asked to complete a feedback survey from the IMPACT 2023 planning team. Of note:

86%
had a
BETTER UNDERSTANDING

of what the
COPD FOUNDATION
does to help the
COPD community

95%
would participate in future

"HILL VISITS"
with their elected officials

90% Said because of
IMPACT 2023,
they are *Excited* to participate in
more activities
with the
 **COPD FOUNDATION®**
in the future.

Participants were also asked to describe what advocacy means to them in three words, resulting in the following:



“The best part about IMPACT Lung Health 2023 was getting to work with a peer partner, learning new information about our goals, having the experience that my COPD could make a difference in future lives.” - IMPACT 2023 Lung Health Advocate

IMPACT 2023 demonstrated that no matter your location or experience level, with passion and teamwork, you can be an effective advocate for lung health. Because of the virtual nature of this year’s program, many advocates could participate who otherwise would not have been able to do so due to physical or financial limitations. The past four years have highlighted that meeting with elected officials virtually is efficient, attainable for our advocates, and should continue to be considered a valuable means to effect change for the lung health community.

We are thankful to all who participated in and supported this very important virtual event. THANK YOU for joining us for IMPACT 2023!

The COPD Foundation would like to thank our corporate partners for providing the funding to deliver this important program.

