



Public speaking is often difficult or not a priority for health care providers. But with health care and health policy such a big part of the national discussion, medical professionals can have valuable things to say.

If health care providers might seem nervous about approaching the podium, they have plenty of company in the wider public. More than 70 percent of the population has some type of anxiety about giving a speech.

Here are some keys to success for anyone when speaking in public:

- Have a clear and concise intro that leads you through, with thematic ties in the middle and a conclusion that hammers home the points you initially made.
- Feel free to personalize your story with an anecdote that might help your audience remember key facts. Affirming stories can trigger the release of dopamine in listeners,

making it more likely they'll take the message to heart.

- Keep your language as clear and simple as possible. This is especially important with health care information, which can be complex and confusing to a listener outside the field.
- Use appropriate body language that demonstrates your interest in the subject and your command of knowledge.
- Remember to speak clearly.
- Record yourself while practicing your speech, or practice in front of a group of people.

- Know your material well enough that you're not forced to read every word directly from the paper or resort to filler words, such as "like" or "um," to carry you through.
- Avoid using words that aren't part of your usual vocabulary. The result can sound inauthentic.
- Look into the audience and find a friendly face that makes you feel relaxed.

You don't have to be famous or a top health official to give a great speech. Just be prepared — and be you.

## A GOOD SPEECH CAN HELP YOUR AUDIENCE REMEMBER KEY FACTS

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