

You are the best person to share your reasons for wanting to mobilize and help implement the *Guidelines*. Personal stories help illustrate the need for change and can help you connect with your audience; people often remember stories better than they do data.

In order to be effective, a story should be relevant for your audience and well thought out. Do your homework. If you are asking for a specific action, make sure your story illustrates the need for that action and how it could be carried out.

Tips:

- > Consider the story you want to tell and write it down beforehand. It may be helpful to jot down a few key points and bring them with you.
- > Make sure your story has a logical flow – beginning, middle, end.
- > Be brief and specific, keeping in mind your purpose for telling the story.
- > Describe the facts of the situation as clearly as possible, then explain how that made you or your family member feel. Don't cast blame.
- > Try to focus on the positive or lessons learned. Even a negative situation can be a positive if something can be learned from it.

SOME QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER WHEN TELLING YOUR STORY

1. Why are you telling this story? What do you hope to accomplish? Does your story give a compelling reason for implementing a specific recommendation?
2. Based on your experience, how do you think your purpose can be achieved? What have you seen done well and what needs improvement?
3. Who do you think needs to be involved in making this change? Will your story reach them?
4. In your experience, did someone help you or your family in a memorable way? Can their actions be copied, or improved upon, to help implement a specific recommendation?

GETTING STARTED TELLING YOUR STORY

The first step in telling your story is to get down your initial ideas on paper. The template below will help you gather your thoughts. Think of it as a rough draft and don't worry too much about the wording. Once complete, you will have an outline of your personal experiences which will provide you with the opportunity to think about them and how you felt at the time.

Why is caregiving important to you? Are you a caregiver? Do you work with caregivers? Do you have a relationship with a caregiver?

Talk about an experience that made you want to promote the *Guidelines*? What happened? What was your role?

How would you have liked that initial experience to occur?

What would you most like to see changed? Which recommendation from the *Guidelines* addresses that?

Can you think of someone who helped you the most or in a memorable way?

What was helpful in supporting efforts towards recovery?