

Gathering Petition Signatures



You've put together an amazing petition to save your local hospital, but you're not quite sure how to go about gathering signatures. Don't worry – it's easy!

The best way to get the word out and invite people to sign your petition is to talk to as many people as possible. You never know who might be interested and keen to offer their support. Click on the table of contents below to navigate through the guide.

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Tell Your Networks

The first thing you should do is invite your friends, family, neighbours, and colleagues to sign your petition, and tell them to invite their own networks too.

Email

Start by sending an email to friends and family asking them to sign and share the petition. This is a great, easy way to launch your petition and build interest.

Here's a template email that you can use:



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Hi [insert your friend/s name],

Did you know that many hospitals across the country are at breaking point? Doctors and nurses are warning of an imminent crisis, with longer wait times, fewer health-care workers, and bed shortages.

Meanwhile, in this year's Federal Budget, Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull locked in \$54 billion in hospital funding cuts. These cuts will deprive our local hospitals of the resources they so desperately need.

I'm passionate about protecting our universal healthcare and ensuring it remains affordable and accessible to all, which is why I'm leading the petition to save [insert the name of your hospital here].

Will you support the local campaign by adding your name to the petition, then sharing it with family and friends?

Together, we'll deliver the petition to our local MP and ask for their commitment to restore funding for our hospitals.

This issue means a lot to me, I would really appreciate your support.

Many thanks
[insert your name here]

Facebook and Twitter

Social media is one of the most effective ways to quickly and easily gather petition signatures. Once you've amassed a few supporters, send an email to them via CommunityRun asking them to share the petition on their own Facebook and Twitter.

Follow these easy steps to email your supporters about social media:

1. Make sure you're logged in, then head to your petition page
2. Click Manage
3. Head to the right-hand side and click Email Supporters
4. Scroll down to Templates and Examples and look for a social media template
5. Adapt for your event and send out to your supporters

The more you can encourage supporters, family and friends to share your petition – the wider the reach. So jump on CommunityRun yourself and share the petition!



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Reaching out to the community

You've spoken to your immediate networks, but how should you go about getting the rest of the community involved?

Community Groups

Your local hospital is an intrinsic part of the community. It's ability to run efficiently, support staff and care for patients impacts everyone in your local area. So, the first thing you should do is reach out to other value-aligned community groups who may want to support your campaign. A good place to start is local parent organisations, religious groups or health organisations.

Going offline

Whip out your clipboards and make sure you've got a pen handy, it's time to go offline, hit the pavement and collect some signatures.

As you grow support for your petition, why not take the chance to get out in the community and meet people where they're at. This could be anywhere from your local train station, weekend market, or in front of the hospital you're campaign for (depending on permission from staff at the hospital).

Not only will this be a great way to help raise awareness – it'll be an opportunity to involve your supporters to lend a hand.

All you need to run a signature collecting event:

- A handful of keen helpers
- Clipboards and pens
- Petition sign up sheets – available from the CommunityRun site
- A few Conversation Guides to share with your helpers

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Invite supporters along

Before you hit the streets, why not send an email to your supporters letting them know what's happening and how they can get involved.

Feel free to use the template below:

Hi friends,

Thank you for signing the petition to save [insert the name of the hospital here]. This issue means a lot to me and I really appreciate your support.

On [insert the date when you're planning to go out and collect signatures], we are planning to hit the pavement to raise awareness about health cuts, and collect petition signatures. We'll be chatting to other locals and asking them to pledge their support.

Will you join us?

When: [insert the time and date here]

Where: [insert the location and instructions on how to get there here]

RSVP: Just reply to this email if you can make it.

If you have a clipboard or two and some pens, bring them along.

Thank you for everything you've done so far and hopefully I'll see you on [insert day here].

[insert your name here]



Need help or have any questions?

Email saveourhospitals@getup.org.au

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Pick a location

Make sure you think about these key factors when deciding on your location.

Public vs private property

As a rule of thumb, all private property will require you to get permission. This includes shopping centres, local markets and even some open spaces. Check online, or call up the property owner, to see if you require permission to collect signatures at the location.

Holding your event in a public space can be easier and generally won't require permission – but each city is different so check your local council website. Most footpaths are public property and as long as you aren't obstructing passersby – will be fine. Easy places to set up include outside train stations, the town hall, or the local hospital.

Foot traffic

For your event to be successful, there needs high levels of foot traffic at the location. Think if there are peak moments too, for example train stations are busier around morning and afternoon peak-hour on weekdays.

Have a great conversation!

Use the conversation guide below to have persuasive conversations with people in your community.

Conversation guide

When you're approaching people in public spaces you need to be quick, direct and engaging. Find a snappy opening line that works for you to help get people interested.

Eg. "Help save [insert name] hospital from cuts by adding your name to this petition"

If someone is happy to stop and chat about your petition - you can give them a bit of extra information. You might like to use the conversation guide below.

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Conversation guide

Hi, my name is **[insert name]** and I'm a volunteer for GetUp.

We're out talking to people in the community today because we're concerned about our local hospital **[mention the name of your local hospital]**.

Have you or your family ever been to **[insert name]** Hospital?

[Answer]

The hospital provides a critical service for our local community.

But the government has cut \$54 billion from local hospitals, which will have a serious impact on our local hospital – and the ability of doctors and nurses to provide care for patients.

Do you think our elected leaders are doing enough to protect our hospitals?

[Answer]

In a few weeks time, we'll head to **[insert the name of your local MP / candidates here]** office to deliver this petition, seeking a commitment from them to restore federal funding to hospitals.

Would you like to sign the petition?

[Answer]

Thanks so much for your time today. Have a great day!

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Sign up sheets

Use the printable petition form available on CommunityRun to collect signatures. Then head back to the site after your event to enter the signatures that you gather. By adding the offline signatures you collect to the site you'll be able to reach those people via email, grow your total, and easily deliver the signatures to your target.

Follow these easy steps to access the signup sheets:

1. Make sure you're logged in then head to your petition page
2. Click *Manage*
3. Head to the right-hand side and click *Collect signatures on paper*
4. Click on *Printable blank form* – it should automatically download, open and print
5. After the event, head back to the same page and input your data by clicking on *Enter petition signatures*.

Tips and tricks

- **Set a goal:** Aim for around 5 signatures per hour, per person.
- **Be prepared:** Bring enough pens, clipboards and signup sheets. If you have a GetUp shirt or some signage bring them too.
- **Be friendly and polite:** If someone is being argumentative or combative thank them for their time and move on. Avoid potentially heated situations, remember you're the representative for the campaign. Focus your attention on people who show an interest.
- **Keep it quick:** Keep your conversations concise. Golden rule – don't waffle.
- **Ask everyone:** Hospitals are an issue that impacts all of us – from pensioners to students, CEOs to tradies, so ask as many people as possible.
- **Celebrate your success!** At the end of the day, rally the troops and celebrate the number of signatures you received. Your efforts are helping to fight for a better and more equal future, where quality healthcare is accessible for all!

Share your story with the GetUp community

If you do decided to hit the streets, be sure to send us photos and stories at saveourhospitals@getup.org.au or via Twitter @getup

