

American Heart Association.
EmPOWERED to Serve™

You're the Cure

#EmPOWERChange

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Kick off your program with a warm welcome and your opening remarks. This could include an inspiring quote or reading or share with the group why this topic is important to you and your reason for offering to host this lesson.



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YOU'RE THE CURE | Lesson Overview

Welcome

- What is EmPOWERED to Serve™?
- Program Topic and Urgent Community Need

Health Lesson: *You're the Cure*

- What is *You're the Cure*?
- *You're the Cure* Key Issues
- Make a Difference in Your Community

Closing Thoughts

- Your Voice Matters
- Online Resources



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Get everyone focused by reading through the lesson overview.

Let participants know that the lesson takes 30 minutes to complete.



WHAT IS EMPOWERED TO SERVE?

EmPOWERED to Serve is a movement inspiring those who are passionate about driving change through health justice in their communities.

We are catalysts for change, empowering the equity equation.



AHA's Mission Statement:
To be a relentless force for a world of longer, healthier lives.

Read the introduction to ETS.

Share why you joined the ETS movement.

Encourage anyone who has not joined ETS to go online after the program and sign up for this national movement.

Note that ETS is a platform of the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association and works in partnership with community organizations across the country.

Highlight the American Heart Association's Mission Statement.

POINT 1: WHAT IS *YOU'RE THE CURE*?

It's a grassroots effort to address important health issues.



Heart disease
is America's
No. 1 killer.



Stroke is
America's
No. 5 killer.



You're the Cure
helps you
promote healthy
policies.

We are touched by heart disease and stroke every day. Whether it's your health or that of family, friends or co-workers, there's a lot at stake when it comes to fighting America's No. 1 and No. 5 killers.

Ask: "How many people present have been affected in one way or another by heart disease or stroke?"

For more than 30 years, *You're the Cure* – the American Heart Association and American Stroke Association's grassroots network – has been mobilizing people to speak out for policies that help build healthier communities and healthier lives. *You're the Cure* is a community of fathers and mothers, neighbors and friends, researchers and caregivers, passionate about an America that's free of heart disease and stroke. Each day, we work together to advocate for heart-healthy and stroke-smart communities through legislative and regulatory policies in our cities, states and across the country.



CHANGING COMMUNITIES, CHANGING LIVES

- Communicate with decision makers.
- Connect with like-minded advocates near you.
- Stay up to date on ways you can help build healthier communities.



Visit [YoureTheCure.org](https://www.YoureTheCure.org) to join.

The *You're the Cure* website has the tools you need to play a crucial role in the fight against heart disease and stroke. You'll be able to communicate with decision makers at the local state and Federal level to connect with advocates near you and stay up to date on the heart and stroke issues that matter most to you.

You'll also be able to track your impact. You're the Cure's heart points systems allows you to gauge and display your dedication to fight against heart disease and stroke. When you speak out, you'll earn points for the activities you participated in, helping you climb through the AHA's advocacy ranks. As you move to higher ranks, you'll also receive exclusive opportunities to take even more impactful actions.

You're the Cure is all about what matters most to you, how you can make a difference and how people like you are advocating for a healthier, stronger America.

Visit [YoureTheCure.org](https://www.YoureTheCure.org) to join.



VIDEO: YOU'RE THE CURE



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Here's a short video introducing you to You're the Cure.

https://youtu.be/M_Q43MKA8mg



POINT 2: YOU'RE THE CURE KEY ISSUES



Promote healthy policies in our communities



Ensure access to health care



Improve quality and value of care

You're the Cure works on a wide variety of matters, but they boil down to these three community needs: promoting healthy choices and policies in our communities, ensuring access to health care and improving quality and value of care.



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PROMOTE HEALTHY POLICIES IN OUR COMMUNITIES

We are meeting communities where they are to help them live longer, healthier lives, by promoting policies such as:

- Ending tobacco and nicotine addiction by stopping kids from starting and supporting others to quit
- Improving nutrition and physical education in schools like healthier school lunches and more physical activity
- Supporting access to healthy foods through programs like SNAP and access to clean water
- Increasing funding for the CDC's prevention programs



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ENSURE ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE, QUALITY CARE

Healthier lives depend on access to quality, affordable care for all, regardless of race, age, ethnicity or gender.

- Patient protections through the Affordable Care Act
- Helping patients with congenital heart defects
- Bridging the health equity gap
- Closing the gender gap



Review the slide.

Background notes (More info about each of the slide's bullets):

Patient Protections Through the Affordable Care Act

- The Affordable Care Act includes patient protections such as prohibiting insurance companies from denying coverage based on pre-existing conditions. It also added coverage for preventive health services (such as immunizations for kids) and coverage for key benefits (such as maternity care).
- The AHA supports the Affordable Care Act and efforts to strengthen it.
- The AHA also supports protecting patients' access to affordable coverage through Medicare and Medicaid.

Helping Patients With Congenital Heart Defects

Congenital heart defects are the most common birth defect in the United States, and the No. 1 killer of infants. The AHA promotes policies that help people with these heart defects live longer, healthier lives.

Bridging the Health Equity Gap

- Cardiovascular disease is higher than average among many racial and ethnic groups. The AHA supports legislation to help end these health disparities.
- One recent success: Counties in states that expanded Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act had a lower cardiovascular mortality rate than areas that didn't expand Medicaid.

Closing the Gender Gap

Heart disease death rates among men have declined steadily over the last 25 years, but rates among women have fallen significantly less. That's why the AHA supports legislation to improve the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of heart disease and stroke in women.



ENSURE ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE, QUALITY CARE

Cardiac and stroke rehab reduces mortality and hospitalizations while improving quality of life.

At the federal level, *You're the Cure* is advocating for increasing Medicare participants' access to rehab – and doing so now instead of waiting until 2024 under current legislation



An example of how *You're the Cure* is advocating for improved access to affordable, quality care is their push for cardiac and stroke rehab policies.

Heart disease and stroke survivors often face a long recovery, so we're working to enhance their access to rehab.

Cardiac rehabilitation reduces mortality and hospitalizations while improving a patient's quality of life. But Medicare requirements can slow access to cardiac rehab services. Congress has passed changes that would increase access to cardiac rehab – thanks to the American Heart Association's efforts – but as of December 2019 those changes weren't scheduled to take effect until 2024.



IMPROVING QUALITY AND VALUE OF CARE

Improving how patients move through each stage of care can dramatically improve outcomes.

That's why the AHA supports:

- Equipped, trained first responders
- Prompt stroke treatment
- Timely response to cardiac arrest



Review the slide.

Background notes (More info about each of the slide's bullets):

Equipped, trained responders

Many patients don't receive adequate care, so the AHA advocates for:

- A 911 system that provides medical guidance over the phone and quickly dispatches emergency personnel equipped and trained to treat heart and stroke patients.
- Hospitals that use guidelines-based therapies and technologies.

Prompt stroke treatment

If treatment occurs within 3 to 4.5 hours of onset of ischemic stroke symptoms, a clot-dissolving drug can significantly reduce disability. But less than 10% of eligible stroke patients receive this therapy. The AHA advocates for stroke systems of care that stretch across the continuum of care from initial symptoms through recovery.

Timely response to cardiac arrest

Every minute without CPR and an AED means up to a 10% decrease in the chance of surviving sudden cardiac arrest. The AHA advocates for increasing research into the causes of cardiac arrest, training more people in CPR and AED usage, establishing medical emergency response plans in schools, and expanding access to AEDs.



IMPROVING QUALITY AND VALUE OF CARE

Research has led to lifesaving results, but further progress depends on continued funding.

The AHA continues to advocate for increased funding for the National Institutes of Health and CDC Prevention programs. This research is crucial to developing new treatment and prevention strategies.



Review the slide.

More information:

Medical research leads to new ways to prevent, treat and even cure heart disease and stroke. Yet the National Institutes of Health devotes only 4% of its budget to heart research and only 1% to stroke research. Increased funding is crucial to developing new treatment and prevention strategies.



POINT 3: MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN YOUR COMMUNITY

- Join *You're the Cure* and take action on issues in your community
- Spread the word and tell 5 family members and friends about *You're the Cure* – encourage them to join
- Connect with your local advocacy staff to do get involved in local advocacy efforts



Review the slide



YOUR VOICE MATTERS

We all have the power to make a difference by speaking out for policies that help build healthier communities and healthier lives.

Let's work together to advocate for heart-healthy and stroke-smart communities through legislative and regulatory policies in our cities, states and across the country.



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JOIN YOU'RE THE CURE

By joining *You're the Cure*, you will be among the first to know when major policy initiatives pass or when your help is needed to advocate for a healthy future.

Text EMPOWER to 46839 to join today!



Each of us has the power to make a difference in our community. By joining the American Heart Association's *You're the Cure* program, you can be among the first to know when major policy initiatives pass or when your help is needed to advocate for an issue. Text EMPOWER to 46839 to join today!



GET CONNECTED LOCALLY

Connect with your local AHA advocacy leaders to learn about key efforts and events in your community and state.

Visit bit.ly/2ZGrH5l
to find your local representative.



Ambassador – local representative a few days in advance

What matters to you/your community

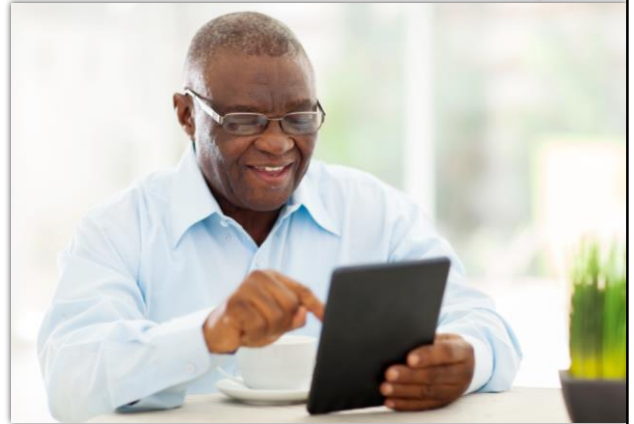
What should AHA/local leaders be focused on in our community?



RESOURCES FOR ADVOCATES

Find more resources at [YouretheCure.org](https://www.yourethecure.org) including:

- Federal advocacy tips
- Meeting leave behind
- Letter to the Editor guide
- Advocate guide
- Sign-up form



The AHA has compiled several resources as part of a grassroots advocate toolkit to assist *You're the Cure* advocates. They're available at [YoureTheCure.org](https://www.yourethecure.org).

- Has anyone here been active in the past in meeting with elected officials, writing letters to the editor and other advocacy? Was it productive? Did you enjoy it?

More information about each item:

Federal Advocacy Tips: This one-page guide teaches you how to advocate for heart-health policies with your federal representatives.

Meeting Leave Behind: This form makes it easy to create a customized document about heart-healthy policies for you to leave with your representatives after meeting with them.

Letter to the Editor Guide: This contains tips for writing a letter to the editor that will get published in your local newspaper – and get noticed by your federal representatives.

Advocate Guide: This guide covers more ways you can get involved as a *You're the Cure* advocate.

Sign-up Form: You can use this form to recruit others to join you as a *You're the Cure* advocate.



TELL 5 FRIENDS

Help the AHA continue to grow advocacy efforts in your community by telling your friends and family about *You're the Cure*.

- Share the text to join with the link.
- Email friends and family with information on *You're the Cure*.
- Promote local advocacy events on social media.
- Host a coffee/tea with close friends.





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USE YOUR VOICE TO CREATE HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES

You can help us work to draw communities together on the path to building a sustainable culture of health.

Go to [EmPOWEREDtoServe.org](https://www.EmPOWEREDtoServe.org)

Sign up to become an ambassador and learn how you can be a part of the movement!

Join us as we impact the health of ALL in our communities!



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Thank you for joining today. Before we close this lesson, we would like to encourage everyone to be active in the EmPOWERED to Serve movement.

Share how being part of the ETS movement helps you embrace a lifestyle of health.

Encourage everyone to come to a future ETS health lesson.



WRAP-UP

We appreciate your thoughts!

Tell us what you liked best.

Email us at:
empoweredtoserve@heart.org



Thank everyone for coming.

Thank all the volunteers who helped coordinate the program.

Take a moment to share an inspirational reading or ask the group to join you in an uplifting song.

WE ARE EMPOWERED TO SERVE

...serve our health, serve our community



The American Heart Association requests that this document be cited as follows:
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Put this slide up as your closing slide and leave it up until all the participants leave the room.