



National Focal Point Training
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How to work with the Media?

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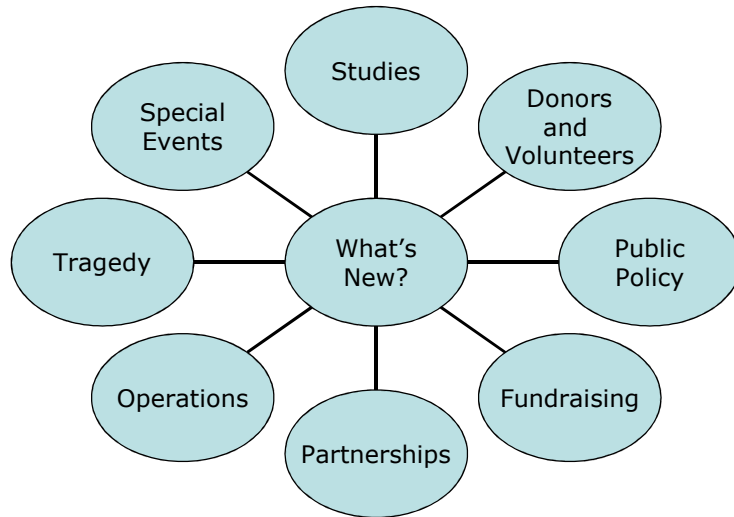
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Working with the media



- Working with the media is essential to promote responsible, fair and accurate information and helps to transform perceptions of mental illness.
- Media coverage of your organization's work and leadership helps to establish your credibility in the community, attracts allies, and sways public opinion.
- Working with the media is an integral part of accomplishing an organization's mission by informing the public and influencing public policy.

What interests the Media? News, News and more News



Building Relationship with the Media



- Working with the media is all about relationship-building.
- The first rule in establishing a relationship with the media is that your communication must always qualify as 'news'.
- Once you create the relationships, you need to communicate on an ongoing basis –through good times and bad.

Building Relationship with the Media: Key Actors



- Appoint a person within your organisation as the contact point for the media (if you do not have a Press/Info/Communications Officer).
- Identify the key persons: editors, reporters, journalists responsible for social and health issues (Emails, Addresses, Telephone numbers) and keep them informed of important activities of your Mental Health Organisation.
- Establish a press list : Make a list of most important newspapers, magazines, websites, radio and television channels in your country (local, regional and national levels).
- Also include the Press Offices of the relevant Ministries (Social Affairs, Health, Employment, Justice, Internal Affairs, Prime Minister,...).

A Few Keys to Success



1. Develop a message or a short set of messages that you constantly refer to. Those messages serve as your guide.
2. Identify one key spokesperson to speak for your organization.
→ Having one media liaison makes it easier for the media to contact your organization and helps avoid sending mixed messages.
3. Remember, with a few exceptions, the media are not “out to get you.”
→ They are people trying to do their job and report the facts on topics about which they are often not experts.
4. Reporters and nonprofits hold a special responsibility to the public to voice opinions and act responsibly based on credible information.
→ The role of the nonprofit sector and the free press sustain free and open dialogue which is vital to sustaining a strong democracy.

Establishing your message



- Contacting the media is about presenting a message, an opinion, or a fact that you think will make a difference in how people think about mental health.
- Make a lexicon/glossary with « good » terminology on mental health issues and the terms that should be avoided
Information available at: www.forum4mentalhealth.com/lexicon
- Be Clear and Concise.
- Clearly articulated statements.
- Always try to provide a case study to make the topic clearer.
- Your answers to the 5 W's are essential to defining your story.

The 5 W's: WHO? WHAT? WHEN? WHERE? WHY?



- 1. Who** are you? Who do you represent? (a concise organization description).
- 2. What** is the news you want reported? When answering this question think carefully about what you want this story to accomplish. Are you inviting people to an event, are you communicating an important fact, or are you stating a position on an issue?
- 3. When** will the event occur?
- 4. Where** will the event occur?
- 5. Why** is this news report important? Why should others care about what you are doing?

How to Establish your message?



| | |
|--|--|
| 1. Who? | |
| 2. What is your news? | |
| 3. If an event, when will it occur? | |
| 4. If an event, where will it occur? | |
| 5. Why is your news relevant? | |
| 6. What is significant about your project, work or event (#5)? | |
| 7. Why is your project, work or event important to your clients (#2)? | |
| 8. What kind of change can be expected from your project, work or event? | |

How to Establish a contact with the Media?



- Press Release
- Press Kit
- Newsletter
- Press Conference (breakfast or lunch meeting)
- Press Point
- Individual contact
- Website

How to Write an Effective Press Release?



- Limit your release to one page. If you need to include more information and facts, send a Press Kit in attachment (Samples of Press Release available at: <http://www.mhe-sme.org/en/news-and-events/mhe-press-releases.html>).
- A press release is brief and highlights an important event, decision, or piece of information.
- Give your press release a « catchy title ».
- The first paragraph of a press release should include who, what, when, where, why and sometimes how.
- Cover the most important facts first and follow with details.
- Be sure to include a contact name and telephone number on the top right corner. List a number that will be answered by a live person.

How to Write an Effective Press Release?



- Don't forget to include the date of your release on the upper left corner of your release.
- Write in the third person. Using the first person will make your release more like promotional material than news.
- At the end of your press release, write "end" or use the symbol "###" centered below the text.
- After sending your release, make follow-up calls to specific reporters, making sure they received your release.
- If you are sending a press release via email, be sure to paste the text of the release in the body of the email NOT AS AN ATTACHMENT.

Press Conference



- The press conference makes an announcement, or delivers information that is of a critical nature.
- An adequate information:
 - Clear
 - Complete
 - Detailed
 - but Summarized
- A conversation with journalists is much more personalized than a press release
 - Invite them to any event your organization may have. They are more likely to remember you after a face-to-face meeting.

Press Conference



- The press conference or breakfast meeting can also be the occasion to discuss one specific mental health/social inclusion issue with the journalists.
- Find out in advance what kind of group you will be addressing, what the group may want you to talk about, if they will want to ask questions after your speech, and how many are expected to attend.
- The advantage of the press conference is to provide a comprehensive, personal and direct information.
- Decide what message you want to convey.
 - Write it in a brief sentence. Decide the key arguments of your message. Include short anecdotes, one or two short paragraphs, to illustrate your points.

Press Conference



- If you think your audience will be likely to disagree with your point of view, list the potential significant objections and write a strong two-sentence rebuttal to each one.
- If your speech is covered by the media, you must have your most important points at the beginning of the speech. Most media have to leave early to catch deadlines and other events.
- Your last paragraph should be a strong finish. Never say “in conclusion” or “to sum up” or anything predictable.
- Now that you have researched, written and given a great speech, use it for other purposes.
→ Publish it in your organization’s bulletin or shorten it and submit it to your local newspaper.

Website



- The Website: The first communication a person sees on your mental health organisation.
- The front page of your website is therefore of primary importance.
- Many non-profit organizations have established web press rooms on their websites to provide immediate information to journalists, at least at the ‘first pass’ level.
- But to capture a journalist’s interest and answer questions, a directory of press releases (which is what most non-profit press rooms are) just isn’t enough.

How to Respond to Questions from the Media?



- When a reporter contacts you, reply back immediately. Be prepared to ask them:
 - What is your deadline?
 - What questions do you have?
 - Who else have you contacted?

Sometimes, if the reporter catches you unprepared, it's perfectly acceptable to say you're on the run and can you call back?

- Know your message
It is important that everyone in your group is clear about the message being conveyed. Your message is where your expertise lies.
- Be prepared for an interview
If you have initiated an interview with a member of the media, provide the interviewer with a fact sheet including information you would like to share and even suggestions of questions he or she could ask.

The Keys to a Successful Interview



- An interview is the basic tool of news gathering, but it is not a conversation → Think of it as a formal debate
- The **3 C's** of an interview
 - **C**onfidence
 - **C**larity
 - **C**ontrol
- At the beginning of the interview, state your objective.
- Summarize your thoughts.
- If asked an unrelated question, bridge to your key messages.
- Provide any information that you may have for an upcoming story.

What not to do with the Media?



- **Use Media Wisely**

It is good generate media coverage on a regular basis; but it is not good to overwhelm the media

- **NEVER!**

- Say "No comment"
- Repeat a negative question or phrase
- Use jargon
- Go "off the record"
- Lie
- Attack other organizations

GOOD LUCK!

For further information



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