



Researcher Media Guide

Making the most of media opportunities

How stories make the news:



- News releases / story pitches
- Media relations (public relations firm, relationships with media)
- Government debate / new legislation
- Current events – positive or negative (e.g. personal stories about disease, trial shows promising result)
- Conference/event coverage
- Journalist with personal interest / feature article
- Sidebar to a related story

What they are looking for?

- Significant developments / discoveries that impact their target market
- Results from clinical trials that will change health care (e.g. new diagnostic tool, therapy , treatment, prevention)
- Facts and stats that will engage readers
- Personal stories from patients
- Research related to current events / issues
- Reliable/credible sources for future stories, quotes

You should know....



You don't control the story

- Your point /focus may be different from the reporter's perspective or goal
- You don't get to see a draft before the story goes to print/broadcast/online

Deadlines matter

- Reporters often get story assignments at last minute and expect a quick response

You should know:

Details matter

- It's likely that the reporter covering your story doesn't have much background material – make it easy for them to find it
- Keep it simple and benefit-oriented – your story is more likely to be told if it provokes an emotional response
- Combine storytelling (e.g. patient stories, anecdotes) with facts and stats from your research so that the reporter can easily refer to your work

Media Opportunities:

Broadcast

- Commentary re: a current news story related to your research
- Breaking news on a discovery/new program
- Follow-up on a provided news release quote
- Daily/weekly news program (radio/tv) – feature story





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Media Opportunities:

Print

- Responding to /commenting on a current news story
- Follow-up on a news release quote
- Feature article: expert opinion
- Editorial submission /opinion articles
- Letter to the Editor

Media Opportunities:

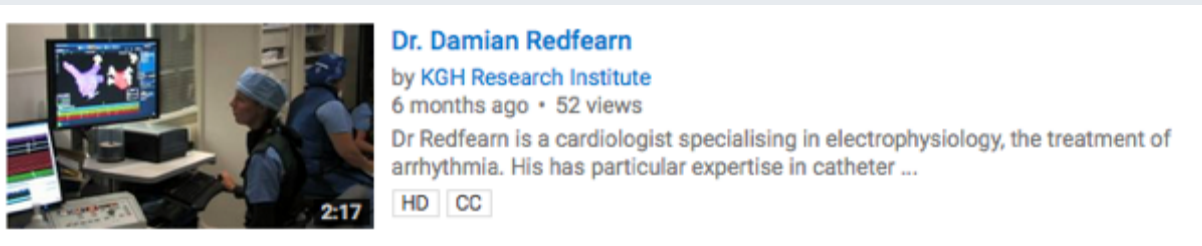
Social Media

- Personal and professional accounts (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Youtube) provide opportunities for disseminating your findings, linking to stories, driving traffic to a website, etc.
- Social chats – Facebook chats, Tweetchats, etc. provide opportunities to connect with new followers, share information about your work
- Remember to tailor your message to the medium (e.g. Twitter is 140 characters - need to engage readers quickly)

Media Opportunities

Other online opportunities

- Participation in webinars
- Blogs – guest blogs on related website (e.g. disease-specific association)
- Profiles/articles in institutional newsletters (e.g. Queen's Gazette) or websites
- Youtube video profiles



What to say?

- Keep your key messages in front of you when being interviewed or writing an article/ response
- Tailor your messages to make them relevant to your target audience
- Include personal stories, images where appropriate
- Avoid jargon and acronyms , explain scientific terms
- Use examples and statistics when possible to strengthen your message (but only if they are relevant and easy to understand)

Interview Tips



- Confidence controls the interview – be positive, smile, and speak only about what you know. If you don't know, don't try to fake it!
- Prepare your notes – stick to your key messages and stats



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Interview Tips:

- Find the human angle – how do your messages relate to your listeners? Will the story resonate with them?
- Know the media outlet and their focus/audience
- Prepare short powerful statements that you can easily repeat and are authentic for you

Interview Tips:

- Keep answers short and powerful – repeat the most important point as often as possible
- Don't fill the silence – answer the question and wait for the reporter to ask the next one
- Don't know the answer?
 - If it's not live, be honest and promise to find out
 - Live? Reroute to something you do know that is relevant to the question:
“I'm not sure I can answer that question, but what I can tell you is that”
- Interview off-track? Find the key message that relates and bring the conversation back

After the interview.....



- Media relationships are important - thank the reporter and be aware of the potential for any follow-up stories or future feature articles
- Story is wrong? If minor details are wrong, don't worry about it. If there are major errors, contact the reporter to ask about a follow-up to clarify
- Track results – let KGH RI know when you've been interviewed, quoted, re-tweeted etc. so that media efforts can be measured and followed up on .



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Questions?

We're here to help!

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