



Media toolkit for World Hospice and Palliative Care Day

Funded by



help the
hospices

What stories are interesting to the media and why?

The media is an industry like any other. This means that it is competitive and looking for results. The media survives on a constant input of news and information, and as the news industry is under pressure to attract readers and viewers, it has to produce stories that are compelling, short and easily understandable to a general audience.

All news has to meet two key criteria: it must be current, and it must mean something to people. A story about an airline crash and a story about the problems of dealing with an ageing population can both be newsworthy, for different reasons.

So, the first objective of all news is to inform the audience. It is the job of all the news media to tell people what is going on in their community – locally, nationally or globally. In this way, the news media provide an essential public service.

There are three main media outputs: print, broadcast and the Internet.

Print media

■ **National newspapers:** broadsheets and tabloids. In general, broadsheet newspapers are physically larger in format and are seen as being more intellectual in content than their tabloid counterparts, using their greater size to examine stories in more depth, while carrying less sensationalist and celebrity material. Tabloids are usually a smaller format, with more of an emphasis on sensational crime stories and gossip about the personal lives of media celebrities and sports personalities.

- **Local press:** local media tend to focus on topics relevant to a geographically defined readership, and will be interested in stories that make links between national issues and the local community.
- **Magazines:** consumer and trade press. Consumer magazines are targeted to specific topics such as fashion, health issues, sports, computers and gadgets, gardening, etc. Trade press is published by industry groups and can cover any industry topics, from medicine and healthcare to software innovation, the jewellery trade and architecture.

Bearing in mind these differences, it is always important to consider the editorial focus of a particular publication when selecting it for information you wish to send. A scientific journal will expect any material submitted to be supported by hard facts and data. A tabloid is unlikely to be interested in demographic statistics showing how particular illness rates are affecting healthcare provision, but they may well cover a ‘human interest’ story that illustrates a family’s struggle to get care for a sick relative.

Articles can be divided into two main categories: **news** and **features**. Straight news stories deal with the timeliness and immediacy of breaking news, while feature articles are news stories that deal with human interest topics.

A **news article** reports current or recent news of either general interest (ie daily newspapers) or on a specific topic (ie political or trade news magazines, club newsletters, or technology news websites). News stories tend to be much shorter than features and contain only facts rather than analysis or opinion. However, they can include accounts of eyewitnesses to the event as well as

photographs, statistics, graphs, recollections, interviews, polls, etc.

Feature articles are intended to inform, teach, or amuse the reader on a topic. They are in-depth pieces that cover an issue or event from different angles – including evidence, debate, opinions and case studies. They can take days to research, write, record, edit and produce. Features offer journalists the opportunity to spend more time exploring issues, and to present them in a thoughtful way. When approaching media it is always a good idea to think long in advance about what sort of feature items they might be interested in, and how you can help them to construct an article by providing a topical angle and backing it up with background information, spokespeople and case studies.

Generally, the longer the ‘lead time’ a publication has and the less frequent its issue dates, the less it will be concerned with news and the more it will be interested in features (the same is true for broadcast media). In other words, quarterly publications and most monthly publications will be almost entirely made up of features which may be put together over several weeks, often up to four months in advance of publication.

Weekly publications will in general have a mix of news and features. They will put together news stories up to one week in advance of publication, but most likely just before they go to press. They will usually work on features around four to six weeks in advance of publication.

Daily publications such as national newspapers will be largely news driven but will often have a daily features section, often concentrating on a different general area on different days (eg education every Monday or healthcare once a month). Features may be planned up to six weeks in advance, and will usually relate to something happening in the news at the time of publication, such as the publication of a report, or a special commemorative date.

Broadcast media

Broadcast media covers radio and television. News and features are handled in a similar way to print media, but broadcast offers the additional opportunity of live discussion, panel debates and chat shows.

The Internet

The Internet provides another medium for communicating news and opinion; both print and broadcast news and features can be transmitted on the Internet, and it also hosts bulletin boards and chat rooms for debate and discussion on topical issues. A **weblog** or **blog** is a user-generated website where entries are made in journal style. Blogs often provide commentary or news on a particular subject, such as food, politics, or local news; some function as more personal online diaries. A typical blog combines text, images, and links to other blogs, web pages, and other media related to its topic.

How to approach the media

You will need to target the different media types in different ways – all require patience and persistence. Nevertheless, there are common elements in all media relations:

- Do your research – get to know the journalists who report on the issues you are interested in. Most reporters are assigned to specific areas, such as health or the environment, so know which ones to contact for the issues you want them to cover.
- Don't be intimidated when calling reporters – remember, they are always on the lookout for story ideas. They are busy people, but they can only survive on new information.
- It is best to start compiling a list of potential publications as early as possible and long before you will need it.
- Be patient – building a media presence takes time. The initial contact with the publication might not immediately result in a story about your project. However, once reporters and editors know you and your organisation, they will be more likely to approach you in the future.
- Find out the 'lead times' for each publication. This means finding out when they will need all the information from you to meet their deadlines. Try to give them enough time to put the story together within their deadline – don't leave it until the last minute. Journalists will have more time to talk to you if they are not right up against a deadline.
- Don't waste time sending your press release to magazines that do not cater for your audience.

National media

The larger a media outlet is, the more difficult it is to get its attention. However, with some planning and determination, you can get it to notice you. 'Lead times' are critical when dealing with national newspapers, but there is always the possibility that if there is a major international incident that happens on the same day that your item was going to be included in the newspaper, that extra pages will be cleared to cover the breaking news, and your story does not get included.

Think about what kind of people its readers are and what subjects are of interest to them specifically. Only approach newspapers whose readers will be interested in your proposed topic, and/or adapt your approach to suit the readers of each newspaper.

Local media

Read your local newspapers and watch/listen to local news broadcasts. Get to know which stations and newspapers report on the issues you want to draw attention to – these outlets may be more willing to listen to you.

Highlight the local element of your story, showing them how it relates to their particular geographical area.

Broadcast media

Broadcast media work to tight deadlines and short timescales. Your research will have identified which is the right 'slot' in their programming for your story. You need to react quickly to what is happening in the news and then be ready to supply the news teams with relevant information that will support the issues they are covering.

To achieve good radio or television coverage of your story you will need to have a senior member of your organisation available to act as spokesperson. They need to be personable and be able to communicate clearly, and not everyone at the top of an organisation can do this. Your representative or spokesperson will need to be available at short notice. They will have to be fully informed on the type of programme that they are appearing on, and will need all the facts and figures explained in advance so as to avoid making factual errors when being interviewed (see 'How to prepare for interviews').

It is also helpful to put forward someone who is able to tell their own story in their own words, to complement the expert 'scientific' opinion. This could be a member of the public who has experienced your services at first hand and is able and willing to talk with passion about what a valuable difference it made to them.

Television also provides the opportunity for panel debates and chat shows. You can propose a senior member of your organisation takes part in a panel discussion on a topic. This positions them as an authoritative figure on the topic, and thereby draws attention to the issues you are campaigning to raise in the public awareness. Once a television station knows that you can provide a reliable 'expert', they will be keen to invite them to air their views either in interview or amongst a group of related experts.

To summarise:

- Persistence pays.
- One size does not fit all.
- Build a relationship of mutual trust with the publication or broadcast station.

Who does what in the media?

Large news organisations have many employees who perform many specialised jobs. However, when it comes to getting coverage for your story in the media, the key contacts you need to know are reporters and editors.

Editors

Editors make the decisions as to which stories are newsworthy and which are not.

Editors oversee reporters, and they are responsible for the content of the newspaper or news show. It is their job to keep track of what is being covered, and how.

Most newspapers, magazines, and radio and television stations have assigning editors who assign story ideas to reporters. They often determine what angle reporters should take, and even who they should interview.

Editors also evaluate what their reporters write, and have the power to approve it before it gets published or goes on the air.

Sub-editors

Sub-editors are journalists who work in the print media.

They are responsible for ensuring that the tone, style and layout of final copy matches the publication's house style and target market.

The role involves processing all the copy before it is published to ensure that it is accurate, makes sense and reads well. They also lay out the story on the page and may also be involved with overall page design.

Sub-editors may change the copy of an article after it has been submitted by a reporter. They may cut it if it is too long or if the news agenda

changes, or if for some reason it no longer 'fits' in the overall content of the issue. Reporters themselves often do not have final control over their articles.

Reporters

Reporters are responsible for coming up with story ideas, researching them and interviewing for them, and writing the stories in an interesting way. They are often assigned a field or subject on which to report, such as Politics or Consumer Affairs.

In most newsrooms, reporters are given story ideas by their assigning editors. They are expected to follow up the idea by identifying and contacting sources and doing background research.

Reporters are also open to suggestions for story ideas from readers, viewers or other sources. Journalists always want to beat other news outlets to a good story, so they are particularly interested in new ideas or unexplored angles.

Freelance Journalists

Some publications and broadcast media outlets employ freelance journalists who work for several different publications or programmes. Freelance journalists may be able to use one story in more than one place.

How to deal with journalists

Journalists are busy people who work under pressure to tight deadlines. They can seem intimidating but this is usually because they have to quickly assess whether the information they are being given is of value to their publication.

Research

You need to target where your press releases are going to ensure maximum impact. Your first step is research. Read the newspapers, listen to the radio, watch local TV and browse websites if you have access to the internet. Note down the names of those journalists who cover the areas that you are working in or who you think might be interested in your work. In the short term you are looking to approach them directly with your story. In the long term you are building a directory of contacts which can be reused by you and your colleagues as your campaign develops.

Establishing a dialogue

Once you have found your journalist, source their contact details. Once you have their mailing address and telephone number, get in touch with your journalist. Try to be prepared when you speak to them. Think about the aspect of your story that is likely to be most interesting to them and put that point first. Have facts at your fingertips – write a script if you feel it will help. Your ultimate goal is for them to know what you are all about and what you have planned for the future as well your current activities.

You could send a brief email introducing yourself and your campaign. Make it interesting and informative. While there may be no reply to this email, it will help the journalist to remember you when you take the next step of calling them.

Follow up

A typical follow up call might go as follows:

“Hello, I am [your name] from [your organisation], I'm calling about [event/story]. Did you get the email/information I sent you a couple of days ago?” Even if the journalist does not remember your email, your introduction has been made. Repeat your name, what organisation you represent and what you are going to be doing. Your main objective is to get your name and your organisation or campaign into the journalist's mind. If you can do this, your chances of them writing something about you are so much the greater.

Do not be afraid to ask for a meeting if you think that you will make a better impression by meeting face-to-face; just establish a personal link. However, bear in mind that journalists are only likely to agree to a meeting if they will come away with something substantial that they can use, as they have precious little time to waste.

Do not assume that journalists are experts in your particular field. Even if they are, it is their job to translate technical information into language that a lay-person can understand, so it will help them if you explain things simply and clearly, as you would to any intelligent person who is not overly familiar with the subject matter.

Always bear the following in mind when dealing with journalists:

What journalists want

- News
- Exclusivity where possible
- Relevance to their audience
- Authoritative comment/expert opinion
- Controversy
- Individuality
- Facts and figures
- Real life stories, anecdotes and examples
- Debate
- Analogies
- More time in the day to do their work!

What journalists don't want

- Time wasters
- Sales pitches
- Stories copied from other publications
- Old news
- Material that is too slick or too bland
- Material that is too 'corporate'
- Jargon and acronyms
- Anything their audience doesn't want!

Creating a PR plan

Before starting a publicity campaign, it is necessary to create a plan. This will ensure that the correct activities are carried out in the right order for maximum effect. It can also help to make best use of limited resources.

A PR plan should expand upon the following areas:

- Aims/objectives
- Target audiences
- Key messages
- Timeline
- Strategy
- Target media
- Tactics
- Success metrics

It may also be helpful to start with an introductory paragraph or 'overview' providing the context for the campaign. This might include information about previous activities, partnerships and joint initiatives or any other relevant information.

Aims/objectives

What do you want to achieve? Objectives should be defined as precisely as possible, and should include all the diverse aims that the campaign might be seeking to achieve. Examples include:

- mobilising the local community to actively support the hospice;
- increasing understanding of the nature of palliative care among members of the public, government and healthcare budget holders, and decision makers;
- communicating the specific achievements of the hospice over the past twelve months;
- supporting fundraising activities by encouraging people to participate in the event.

Strategy

This need be no longer than a single sentence. It should provide a top-line definition of the campaigning approach without going into details about tactics to achieve it. An example is:

'Use a major regional event as a platform and news-hook to communicate wider messages about hospice care'.

Target audiences

Remember that one campaign may be seeking to communicate with numerous different groups within society. It is helpful to write down all the different groups the campaign seeks to reach (and subsequently, in 'key messages', what it is trying to tell them).

Examples:

- The general public
- Local and national government
- Medical professionals
- Potential donors
- The business community

Target media

Think about which media the target audiences read, listen to or watch, and which media are going to be interested in the campaign (use the 'Approaching the media' section to work out which media are likely to be open to you). Each will require a different kind of approach, in other words, different tactics.

Examples:

- National papers
- Local papers
- Local radio
- National TV
- Local TV
- Medical press
- Business and management press

Key messages

What exactly do you want to communicate to people? It is advisable to have no more than three key messages for any particular target audience or they may become unclear and confused. Key messages are not intended to be supplied verbatim to members of the public or media, but they should inform every aspect of the campaign. The purpose of writing them down is to clarify and agree them, and to keep them on file to refer to them whenever they are needed, eg when writing press releases and other materials, or when preparing for media interviews. Key messages should be brief and concise. Examples include:

- ‘The right to high quality end of life care is a universal human right’;
- ‘World Hospice and Palliative Care Day is a unified day of action to celebrate and support hospice and palliative care around the world’;
- ‘People of all ages need access to hospice and palliative care, either as patients, carers or as a result of bereavement’.

Tactics

This is likely to be the longest section of the plan, in which a detailed outline is given of exactly what needs to be done to realise the campaign. Break each activity down into component parts as far as possible. It may also be helpful to identify who will be performing each task. Examples include:

- contacting local papers by telephone to advise them of the event and invite them to send a photographer. Follow up with a written invitation;
- drafting a press release about the event and distributing it to forward planning listings and what’s on guides;
- identifying hospice users who would be happy to participate in media interviews and interviewing them to find out their story. Write up a case study (three paragraphs) about each person’s situation to use as background information to give to journalists when setting up interviews;
- contacting the comments page of The Times national newspaper in June and proposing an article by our patron on problems relating to the availability of morphine and what that means for patients. Discuss and agree the content with the editor. Draft the article and supply for publication on 6th October;
- contacting local celebrities to invite them to attend the event and participate in advance media interviews and a photoshoot.

Timeline

Work out in advance exactly what needs to be done and when. Give a precise and realistic start point and deadline for each activity. Bear in mind that some activities will need to take place several months before the launch of the campaign, and that some media work up to four months in advance of publication or broadcast. For this reason, the timeline is a very important part of the plan as it should help to prevent opportunities being missed. It may be useful to draw up a weekly calendar showing what will be done and when.

Examples include:

May – agree PR Plan, and communicate plan to everyone involved;
research local celebrities and contact details;
draft press release about the event and issue to forward planning publications;
identify hospice users for case studies.

June – approach celebrities;
interview hospice users and draft case studies;
approach monthly magazines about the event, offering case study interviews.

July – approach The Times about comment article;
arrange celebrity photo shoot.

Aug – approach weekly magazines about the event, offering case study interviews and celebrity pictures;
issue event press release to listings, what's on guides and weekly publications;
contact forward planning departments of broadcast outlets;
draft Times article.

Sept – follow up TV and radio programmes and arrange interviews where possible;
draft and issue an update press release about celebrity involvement, expectations of an event, etc. Offer pictures from the photo shoot;
contact features editors of daily publications to suggest story ideas, offering expert interviews and case studies;
contact local papers to invite them to the event and follow up.

Success metrics

This section identifies how you judge whether the campaign has been successful. Examples of success indices include media coverage targets:

- one article in a national newspaper;
- four pieces of local press coverage;
- three radio interviews.

There may be other ways of measuring success, eg:

- at least one celebrity supports the campaign;
- five per cent increase in event attendees/ donations compared to last year;
- meeting secured with local health authority.

How to prepare for interviews

An interview with a journalist is an excellent opportunity to get your message across. However, if you know you are going to be interviewed as part of your story, you have to be prepared. Interviews can go wrong if you have not planned what you want to say. Interviews can either be face to face or by telephone, and the following suggestions will help you prepare.

Preparation tips

- Have evidence and data at your fingertips.
- Have up to three key messages you want to get across.
- Prepare some colourful soundbites – comments the journalist will remember.
- Prepare case study contacts (check with the individuals beforehand), pictures, illustrations, etc. A good picture can make a story.
- Anticipate questions that might be asked and plan how you might respond to difficult questions.
- Prepare ‘bridging’ phrases to take you from areas you don’t want to talk about back to areas you are comfortable with, eg “That is an interesting point but I think the real issue here is...”.
- Rehearse before the interview – ask a colleague to help.

Good interviews – Do’s

- Make your point as soon as possible.
- Listen attentively but keep sight of your agenda.
- Be assertive, correct any inaccuracies – including your own.
- Be clear, concise and sincere.
- Make statements rather than giving opinions.
- Steer the interview back on track if necessary.
- Stick to what you know.
- Paint pictures, quote statistics, draw diagrams.
- Recap – check that you have been understood.
- Be aware of body language.
- Make eye contact.

Good interviews – Don’ts

Don’t:

- wait for the ‘right’ question – it may never come;
- say “no comment”, but keep things positive, eg: “I don’t have that information right now but what I can tell you is that...[reiterate key message]”;
- cross your arms, avoid eye contact, scratch your head, etc;
- go ‘off the record’ or say anything you don’t want to read in print;
- discuss unpublished financial results, legal cases in progress, forthcoming announcements;
- mention organisations/individuals without prior permission.

Realistic expectations

Media relations are an ongoing process and they take time to develop. There are occasions when even the most carefully planned news event fails to appear. Your news item can be pushed off the page if there is a sudden global catastrophe or other sensationalist item.

Bear in mind that it is not the journalist's job to cover your story, but to cover stories of interest to his or her audience. Media relations activities are not the same as advertising; you cannot control how an item appears in print or on the radio or TV, you can only seek to influence it. The journalist is under no obligation to show you their article or footage before it is published or broadcast. If you have built a strong relationship with them they may allow you to view it, but unless the material is factually wrong they are not obliged to make any changes. Remember that the journalist him/herself often does not have control over how the item will finally appear and indeed whether it is used at all (see 'Who does what in the media').

Always remember that tight deadlines are a fact of life in journalism; newspapers and news shows are usually distributed/aired daily. A television or radio reporter may be given an idea for a story at 9 am, which must be ready to go on air for that day's newscast at 6 pm. Newspaper deadlines are a little longer, since many newspapers are printed overnight.

For this reason, and if you are trying to highlight awareness of an ongoing situation, developing a feature with a publication can be a more reliable option. This gives the opportunity to set up interviews and develop case studies. In the context of raising awareness of hospices and palliative care, case studies can be developed with accounts from patients, carers and the bereaved who

have benefited from the care given to their loved ones at the end of their lives. Interviews can be arranged with the healthcare professionals within the hospice movement, such as nurses and social workers.

Always remember that although most journalists try to be objective and factual in reporting events, there is no such thing as a news story without a point of view. Every news story is influenced by the attitudes and backgrounds of the reporters, photographers and editors who select and edit the images and information they offer us. This might result in a slightly different message from the one you were hoping to communicate.

Stereotypes can be a side effect of tight deadlines. As reporters often have to research, write and present a story in one working day, they may not have time to present several sides of an issue. They may need a quick, convenient, pre-packaged image, and a stereotypical word or headline can provide that.

As well as providing a public service, the media are also businesses, and like all businesses they have to make money to keep going. Audiences today can get news and information from many different sources. This increased competition is putting pressure on media outlets to attract advertising revenue to keep them running, and in order to do this they need to attract high audiences. This is especially true for privately owned media, but it is also a concern for publicly owned media that need to attract audiences and advertising revenues to survive. All the above considerations can affect your relations with the media.

How to construct a press release/media pitch

What is a press release?

A press release is a statement prepared for distribution to the media. It can be sent by post, email or fax. The purpose of a press release is to give journalists information that is useful, accurate and interesting.

Press releases should have the look and feel of a news item you would read in a publication. At first glance, most press releases look simple but it can be tricky to get them right.

Make sure the wording is correct, the message is clear and direct and the correct information is provided so that a journalist will be able to use it even if they do not contact you directly.

Your release should convey a sense of importance but not seem over-exaggerated. It needs to be factual, not opinion.

If possible, press releases should not be sent cold. Phone calls should be placed first, the release should be sent and a follow up call should be made to confirm if the journalist wants to pursue the story. All press releases should be as specific and targeted as possible to an individual at a publication/radio or television station.

Structuring your release

Every journalist sees dozens of press releases every day (on national publications the daily figure may be several hundred). It is important that your press release looks professionally produced and follows the 'normal' structure. This will allow any journalist to make a judgment on the strength of your story immediately. As such, press releases are written to an easy to follow formula.

All press releases should answer the journalist's five basic questions of:

- What?
- Who?
- Where?
- Why?
- How?

This will require you to put yourself in the shoes of a journalist, and by answering those questions it will give you a clearer idea of what you want to write.

Firstly, say what it is

At the very top of the page, the title 'PRESS RELEASE' should appear in capitals and in bold.

Grab their attention

Below the title is the headline. It should also be in bold. The headline is a one line description of the event and matches the press release's first sentence. It should be short (less than ten words), snappy and factual, intended to capture the reader's imagination, impressing them enough to read on and help the journalist to 'see' the piece in print.

A dateline follows the headline. The dateline is usually in bold or capitalised and tells the journalist where and when it is being released, eg: London, October 6, 2007— —.

Facts and figures

The next two paragraphs present the useful, accurate and interesting body of the press release. The first paragraph of the press release should contain in brief detail what the press release is about. The second paragraph explains in detail:

- what the event is for;
- who the event is for;
- why the event is happening and why people should care;
- where and when the event is happening.

The value of a quote

The message can be given further authority by the inclusion of a quote. A quote or recorded statement from someone involved with the project will give the press release a personal touch. Name your source, say what their involvement with the project is, and be certain to get their permission to be quoted and that they are happy with the content of the quote. Most journalists will seek their own quotes by following up releases with interviews, but having a quote gives journalists the option to use it. Bear in mind that journalists may want to contact the person quoted for an interview, and they should be aware of this when agreeing to their quote.

About you

The release should close with an editor's note paragraph that describes your organisation, where it has offices, and its main activities.

Get in touch

Always end with contact details. Again these should be in bold. A single clear name and phone number and/or email address is what a journalist will need if he or she wishes to follow up the story.

Overview and checklist

All the content of your press release should be typed in a clear, basic font, and double-spaced for clarity. Try to keep your entire release on one page. But if you really must go to a second page, and if you are sending the press release on paper rather than email, make sure you indicate 'page two' in the upper right-hand corner. When you are finished, run this checklist:

- **Press release** – in bold and all capitals
- **Dateline** – in bold
- **Headline** – in bold
- **Body** – what, who, when, where and why
- **Quotation** – the personal touch
- **Contact** – name and number in bold
- **Proofed** – basic font, double spaced, check spelling, page numbers, etc.

How to hold a media event

Your publicity plans could include holding a media event to draw attention to an issue or story. The most common type of media event is the news conference, but if you really want to attract attention, you might want to host a more original media event.

Media events are usually held to announce an important event, activity or campaign. However, they can also be held in response to an event or news story. A media event should be designed to highlight your cause, and should be timed so that the reporters attending can still make their deadlines.

- Remember that morning (between nine and 11 am.) is the best time for reporters, as it gives them time to prepare their stories for that evening's newscast or the next day's paper.
- Choose a day as early in the week as possible, and avoid Fridays. If you plan to hold your event on a Monday, make sure your news release is out by the previous Friday.
- Give journalists and reporters at least one week notice of the event (more for 'longer lead' media such as weekly magazines). Send your invitation to the media a few days before the event, and call reporters the day before to confirm. This gives them enough time to book equipment, schedule photographers, etc. But don't tell reporters too far ahead of time – by the time your event comes up, they may have forgotten about it.
- Have extra copies of your news release on hand. If you have the time and resources, you can even put together a press kit. This might include your news release, one or two pages of information about your organisation, any articles written about you, short biographies of any important speakers and contact information such as business cards.
- If you are inviting television media, try to have something visually appealing for the cameras. If you are organising a more traditional press conference, have any graphs, tables, charts and posters ready.
- If needed, check the availability and location of electrical outlets for microphones and lights.
- Provide enough chairs at the front for reporters, and enough room for their equipment, such as cameras and lights.
- Start your event on time – no later than five minutes late. Reporters have tight deadlines, and they may have other events to cover that day. If you keep them waiting, they may leave.
- Make sure your spokesperson is prepared to answer questions, both during and after the event. Always remember to follow up with reporters. Reporters may ask for information that you do not have on hand, so be sure to send this material to them as soon as possible. They may also need photos or camera footage. Before they leave, double-check with them to make sure they have everything they need for their stories.

Using images

It is said that pictures can say much more than words, and it is certainly true that when scanning a newspaper or magazine, the eye naturally falls on interesting images before reading text. It is also true that a good picture can 'sell' a not very exciting story to a publication when they otherwise would not use it.

It is worthwhile thinking about some interesting and creative images that you could use to illustrate your event or story. Powerful portrait shots of people can also be very arresting and effective. It will also be helpful to research target publications and see the kinds of images they use.

When using pictures, bear in mind the following issues:

- Permission must be sought from everyone appearing in a photograph to be photographed, and for their picture to be used for publicity purposes (see 'Image and case study consent form').
- Wherever possible, a professional photographer should be used to take pictures in order to ensure a high enough standard for publication.
- If commissioning a professional photographer it is a good idea to have a conversation about who owns the copyright to the pictures and any restrictions on how each party can use them now and in future.
- Images need to be of 'print quality'. If they are digital, this means they must be high resolution (at least 300 dots per inch or DPI). If film, they must be on good, clear, unmarked prints or transparencies.
- If you are sending images by email with a press release, it is a good idea to send only a 'thumbnail' (small file size) version of the picture in the first instance to avoid clogging up journalists' in-boxes with unsolicited large files. Only send the full-size image file on request.
- Larger publications such as national newspapers have picture desks. If you have a very strong picture it is worth sending it to them with a caption and your contact details for more information.

6th October 2007



Media toolkit for World Hospice and Palliative Care Day

Compiled by Help the Hospices

© Help the Hospices 2007

Help the Hospices

Hospice House

34–44 Britannia St

London WC1X 9JG

Tel: 020 7520 8200

www.helpthehospices.org.uk

Registered Charity in England
and Wales, Help the Hospices

No. 1014851

Company Limited by Guarantee
registered in England

No. 2751549. Registered office

Hospice House as above.