

# What Rural Community Members Should Know about Working with the Media

**2011 RPAP Annual Conference –  
“Engage the Community, Retain the Physician”  
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# Workshop Objectives

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What is news?

Preparing a news release

How to pitch a story

What to do when the phone rings

Handling a media interview

What if the media get it wrong?

# What is news?

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# How the Media Works

Media is a business

Media sees itself as purveyors of truth

Realities of the newsroom

# What is in the Public Domain?

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What is?

taxpayer's money; activities of elected/appointed officials; where legislation there is; have rules been broken

What isn't?

personnel matters; medical matters

questionable conduct?

intrusion of privacy with deaths at fires, accidents

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# Good and Bad Journalism

... to reporting

... think they understand but don't

... come with preconceived ideas

... look for facts to match

# Transparency

Open, honest and accountable

Stakeholders can see what actions you're taking

But you don't have to let the media get too close

# How to Work with the Media

Put yourself in their shoes

Understand their needs

Be a credible source of information

Be accessible

# Preparing a media release

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What is the focus?

Focus on key messages

The first two paragraphs have most important information

Highlight the local angle and newsworthiness

Keep it short

# How to pitch a story

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Show your story!

Provide lead time

Make your pitch like “elevator” speech

Provide “news”

Follow up

Be available

# What to do when the phone rings...

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ask questions

d, negotiate if needed

re for the interview

# Preparing a Media interview

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Be in “work” mode. Your job is to be understood. Turn off phone and close door.

Show your main points. Respond to reporter’s questions and bring back to one of your key points. Provide supporting data.

Be yourself. Be conversational

If you don’t know, say so

# Surviving a Media Interview

DON'T:

speculate

comment on behalf of others

use jargon

go "off the record"

say "no comment"

talk to a reporter. EVER

# What if the media get it wrong?

**Goal: Provide correct/useful information to community**

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Minor factual error occurs,

Call reporter and outline the problem

- ❖ what is factually incorrect,
- ❖ what is correct
- ❖ “just wanted to set the record straight”

Glaring error occurs, ask for correction in next issue

Minor factual error occurs,

# Appreciate Your Local Media

Consider the media an ally in helping make your community physician-friendly