

Media Outreach: Getting Started

Outreach to local media can be more successful by following some tips and tricks of the trade. Below is an overview of some best practices in engaging with reporters to increase awareness of benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH) and the important role Rezūm™ Water Vapor Therapy plays in treatment.

When to Reach Out to Reporters

There are three primary opportunities for reaching out to the media:

- To announce news at your practice such as a new procedure or product you offer to patients.
 - Reporters are often most interested in a story when you can put them in contact with local patients who can make the story “come alive” by providing interesting or unique perspectives. *(Please consult with your legal counsel about obtaining signed patient consent before sharing the patient's name with a reporter and see the “Engaging Local Patients for Interviews” section of this toolkit.)*
- To build upon or “piggy-back” on national news or other trends receiving media coverage.
 - If a story is popular in the national news, local reporters are often looking to cover how this news affects the local area.
- To coincide with a health awareness month, such as Men’s Health Month in June or Prostate Cancer Awareness month in September.

How to Contact Reporters

- Make a list of media contacts at your local newspaper, TV and radio stations and update it periodically.
 - Include information such as the reporter’s “beat” (i.e., topics he/she typically covers). Medical, health and science editors/reporters and feature editors/reporters are typically most interested in healthcare stories.
 - If you cannot reach the editor or reporter, call the general number and ask for the assignment editor who will direct you to the best contact for the story angle.
- The best way to identify local reporters is to follow the news. Watch local TV, listen to the radio and read the local newspaper to identify the reporters who cover the kind of medical stories most relevant to your practice and your patients.
- Do online research. Nearly all newspapers, television and radio stations have a website with general contact information.

Tools You Can Use to Contact Reporters

- Press Release
 - A press release is used to inform the media about a newsworthy topic, trend or interesting information.

- The best way to distribute a press release is via email so you can reach the reporter as quickly as possible. It's best to send a link to the release or copy it in the body of an email vs. as an attachment to the email.
- Pitch Email
 - A pitch email is targeted to a specific reporter and offers news or a story idea tailored to the reporter's interests, media outlet and the outlet's audience.

Interacting with Reporters

- Some outlets plan their editorial calendars months in advance. To increase your chances of securing coverage, plan to reach out to a reporter one month before a pertinent awareness month.
- Call the reporter within a day of sending the press release or pitch email to gauge their interest level.
- If you email information to a reporter, don't send an attachment unless the reporter has requested it.
- Be persistent, but polite. If a reporter declines your story, ask them what would be of interest to them then ask if it's okay for you to stay in touch in case anything changes.
- Consider timing media outreach after a few cases; once your hospital has refined its processes and can accommodate increased patient flow.

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