

WORKING WITH THE MEDIA...



Personal relationships with your local media are an important part of promoting your pharmacy. Now that you are “Tobacco-Free”, let your local newspapers and radio stations know about your dedication to the health of your patients.

The Do’s and Don’ts of Effective Media Relations

Do visit the reporter who covers pharmacy and health issues. Nothing is wrong with an introductory phone call as long as it does not conflict with a deadline.

Do learn the deadlines of publications you want to approach and don’t call reporter during this time. Begin all calls by asking if it is a good time to call or if they are on deadline. In any event, be prepared to present you message briefly.

Do know what you want to say to the editor/reporter. Get straight to your point.

Don’t be disappointed if your story isn’t used. Timing is everything, and they may be too busy. If it is not used now, it may serve as introduction to your next story idea, or your information could be used by the reporter as background or future story idea. At the very least, you will have initiated a relationship with a reporter.

Don’t ask the reporter or editor to send copies of stories written about your pharmacy. They don’t have time.

Don’t expect or request the editor to notify you if your release is used. Don’t ask to check a story before it goes into the paper or on the air.

Don’t oversell the idea -- know when to quit. It is not worth jeopardizing your future relationship. Be courteous and wait for a new opportunity.

Never try to get your story published as a personal favor.

Typical Deadlines:

A.M. daily, local - For general news, 4:00 pm the day before publication. For features, several weeks before anticipated publication.

P.M. daily, local - For general news, 8:00 am - 4:00 pm the day before publications for features, several weeks before anticipated publication.

Sunday local - For section news and features, usually 5:00 pm Wednesday deadline for preprinting on Friday.

Sunday magazine, local - At least six to eight weeks before publication.

Weekly - For all material, four days before publication’s own deadline.

Newswire services - For all material, 9:00am - 4:00 pm weekdays; they are generally short staffed on weekends.

Trade publications - Contact the pharmacy journals or newsletters that you plan to target to inquire of their deadlines. Many journals need to be notified at least three months in advance of the actual event. Newsletters, however, have a shorter lead time.