



Engaging with the Media: Guide to Media Types and Contact

Who to contact – preparing your media list

A good media list contains the names of media (newspapers, magazines, television news, online news sites, radio programs etc.) that you want to contact. Also, the list includes details of the journalists you should preferably contact, including their titles, phone number, email address etc.

When developing your media list, remember to always do your homework. Watch the programme, get a few copies of that particular paper, listen to the radio program or read the old articles on the particular website. Consider the stories you have read and see if health or awareness days are something they have covered before – and make a note of the department or journalists listed who have covered similar stories. If you cannot find this information, have a look for a health or news desk and try that first. There is usually a list of contacts within each printed edition, or listed on the media's website. Always try to find the right contact before you call to talk about your story.

Introduction to different types of media

Daily newspapers

These are the ones that you buy or have delivered on a daily basis. They will contain a variety of stories, typically national events/news, politics, crime, finance, health etc. Depending on your country there may be broadsheet newspapers focusing on more “highbrow” stories and tabloid newspapers, which would carry more “every man” stories. These types of papers are going to be most interested in the biggest health stories, new data, new products, political decisions impacting on health, health scandal etc. As they focus on stories, which have a national interest, they may not feel a story on hae day :-) will appeal to their readers. Unless you have high profile support for your event or a very compelling story from someone with HAE, they may not be interested. The editorial board determines and writes the paper's official position on various issues. Some daily newspapers offer special sections on certain days of the week. These sections will have different contacts to the daily sections.

As the turnaround for stories in national daily newspapers is very quick, you should most likely plan on contacting these media close to hae day :-) or your event (if on a different day than 16 May 2020). However, for the weekly specialist sections initial contact should be at least two weeks before your event.

Weekly non-national newspapers

These are usually local or regional newspapers, which strong focus on news of interest to their primary geographical area. They will have a smaller staff than the national papers and often one reporter will cover more than one area. As their focus is on things of interest in a local/regional area, they are more likely to be interested in hae day :-) events being organized locally/regionally and could be a great way to raise interest in your event before it happens. They might also have a picture desk and be happy to send along a reporter and photographer to cover your event on the day. As the turnaround for stories in these newspapers is longer than that of the daily newspapers, plan to contact them at least a week or two before your event.

Magazines

There are lots of different types of magazines, for instance women's interest, hobbies, culture, music, health, living etc. They will be published on a less regular basis than newspapers, e.g. weekly, monthly or even longer. As a result they will plan their issues weeks or sometimes months in



advance. As a result they focus less on news events, as these can be out of date by the time they go to press. Instead they normally contain longer, more in-depth features on less time sensitive issues. You should try to contact the magazines well in advance of your event.

Broadcast – radio/TV

Radio stations vary hugely in their focus and audience. A general broadcast station will usually have a mix of current/topical stories and programs and then feature stories or programs. It is a broadly similar approach for television news programs/channels. In the same way that there are national and local newspapers, there may also be national and local TV channels/programs or radio channels/programs that you can target. The approach here is a mixture of the approach for daily newspapers and magazines. If you are targeting a national news program follow the daily newspaper approach. If you are targeting a local news program, a non-time sensitive program or a news channel use the local newspaper approach.

Medical media

There may also be specialist medical publications targeting physicians, nurses, and other healthcare professionals. These types of publications often focus on new data, or changes to health law/political approach and management strategies. If you are interested in targeting medical publications it might be worth discussing this with your doctor and nurse to hear what specialist medical magazines they read and if they have a copy you could see.

Online media

As online outlets are not working to a print or broadcast deadline, they often publish more content on a more frequent basis. Have a look online at what sites have covered an awareness day or health story in your country and build a list of contacts for those sites. You might find that the online part of a particular media has different contacts to the print or broadcast side so always check this out.

Pitching your story – your talking points

Always prepare what you are going to say to the journalist before you actually contact them by email or phone. Think about the reasons you are contacting them: who, what, why, where, when, how.

Focus on what makes the hae day :-) important for their audience now by including timely information about an upcoming event or activity surrounding the awareness day or tying the story into current events and media trends. It is also important to think like the journalist's readers, listeners or viewers while crafting your pitch. Look for trends or themes in previous coverage and capitalize on those in your pitch.

Once your media list is completed, simply start making phone calls and/or sending out emails. If calling, ask whether a reporter or editor who specializes in health issues is available. If not, ask to speak to a reporter or editor specialized in human-interest stories. When in contact with the right person, make a passionate appeal that your story is of great value to all readers/viewers – and do not forget to highlight the 2020 hae day :-) as a global HAE education and awareness effort.

Keep an active outreach list

Each time you speak to or exchange emails with a journalist, take thorough notes and keep them all in one place. A spreadsheet is a useful tool to use to track them. This will help you stay organized



and you will always know where you stand with an opportunity. It will also remind you of the last correspondence so as not to follow up with a journalist too frequently or infrequently.