

'How to' guide for media coverage: event participants

If you have a story to tell, or want to make people aware of your event or fundraising activities you should let your local media know by sending them a press release.

Many participants in our events want to help raise awareness of what they are doing, how much money they hope to raise and why they are supporting the work of the charity.

You can either adapt a template press release supplied by us (see separate download) or develop your own by following our top tips.

Top tips for putting your own release together

a press release should ideally be no more than one page long
use a headline/title that is short and snappy but also explains the point of the story
other than the headline the first paragraph is the most important and must contain the key information people need to know

try to include who, what, why, where and when:

- who – include your name, town/area you live in or company name
- what – describe the event and what you will be doing
- include details of where and when is the event taking place
- why – tell them why you are motivated to do the event/participate. Have you or your family or friends been affected by the conditions we fund? Is there a personal reason such as a lifestyle change behind your motivation? Tell them how much you are hoping to raise and why you support Action Medical Research.

always include your contact details at the end

use our notes to editors in the template release. This helps to inform the journalist who we are and that we are a registered charity

check your spelling and grammar before you send!

Top tips on sending out your release

Send your release to the main radio stations and newspapers in your local area. If your event is unique or you have a powerful story to tell then local TV may even be interested.

- research the contact details (email address and telephone number) of your local media – you will find them in the actual newspaper or on their website
- email the newsdesks as well as a named journalist, as the emails sent to the newsdesks are checked regularly (if you only send the email to a named person and they are away, their email may not be checked). Send the release in the body of an email, rather than as an attachment. Also it may be useful to send a photograph of yourself as an attachment, as if the newspaper is interested in writing a story before the event, they may want to include a photograph of you in

the article. Many local radio stations and website have community announcements or noticeboards and you may be able to get a mention here

- please tell your contact at Action Medical Research that you are sending out a release
- if you have time, call the newsdesk to make sure they have received your release. You will be able to tell at this stage if they are interested in covering it. Do not hassle them if they are not!
- if they are interested you could invite them to attend the actual event if appropriate
- after the event it is worth sending a good photograph of yourself at the finish or of the event with a short release explaining how much you or your team raised, and anything else of interest from the day.

Top tips for media interviews

If the media are interested in your story/event they may want to interview you. Most local radio and newspaper interviews take place over the telephone unless they want to take a picture. Occasionally radio or TV interviews will be transmitted live, ie they are transmitted at the same time, but most will be recorded in advance.

- plan what you want to say in advance – remember to think of the key messages you need to include from the who, what, why, where and when
- check if it is going to be live or recorded
- ask what type of questions they are going to ask
- ask when it is likely to appear/be aired
- if you are nervous practice with a friend or speak to your Action Medical Research contact for advice/support
- don't tell the journalist or presenter anything that you do not want to appear in print or be heard on radio or seen on TV!
- try to mention us by name and not 'the charity'