

# GETTING PUBLICITY FOR YOUR CARE SETTING

There are lots of opportunities for your care home to generate positive publicity, particularly special events that encourage resident participation. And publicity is a great way to get involved with your local community and show how well you are caring for your residents.

This easy-to-follow guide will give you some great tips to help you make the most of these opportunities and build your reputation, by celebrating the great work you do.

**Good publicity can help your care home:**

-  Stand out from the crowd
-  Be seen as a welcoming place with lots of fun activities for your residents
-  Keep you 'top of mind' with your audience

# How to get the media to cover your event

Most local newspapers are printed on a Monday or Tuesday, so the end of the week before is the best time to get stories to your local paper.

**top  
TIP**

1

## Call them

The contact details of your local newspaper's editorial desk can normally be found on their website. Don't wait until after your event to give them a ring. If you let them know when, where and why you are holding your event, they might send a journalist along.



2

## Book a photographer

If your local press can't make the event, book a professional photographer. They'll know how to get those shots journalists are looking for, so you can concentrate on hosting your event.



3

## Write a press release

Keep it simple, write as if you're telling a friend about the event. You can use our handy guide to writing a press release overleaf.



4

## Send your press release

Email your press release along with photographs over to the editorial desk of your local newspaper. Make sure you copy the text of your press release into your email as well as attaching it. And check your photos aren't too big or too small for the email to send – 3MB is a good guide.





## A quick guide to who's who

Knowing who to talk to in the press will not only save you time, it can be the difference between the media covering your story or not.

**EDITOR (OR PRODUCER IN RADIO):** The editor or producer makes all the decisions about what stories will be covered.

**FEATURES EDITOR:** The features editor is in charge of all the longer more in depth stories within a publication. Very useful if you are considering writing an advice piece. Not so useful for events.

**NEWS DESK:** A journalist on the news desk is a key contact to talk to about events you are holding or news stories from your care home, e.g. a new wing or fundraising activity.

**PICTURE DESK:** The picture editor will decide which events are photographed. The picture desk is responsible for all the photography taken for the paper or magazine.



Don't rely on news@ or editor@ email addresses - they are rarely viewed. Instead, send information to a named contact e.g. John.Doe@bbc.co.uk

**top TIP**

You can often find this by going to the publication website or by calling the editorial desk



## Talking to the right people

Think about which publications and websites you want to target. Where will your prospective residents and their relatives be looking or listening? They are likely to read the local press or listen to the local radio. But think about which care home magazines and websites you'd like to appear on too.



**DON'T FORGET:** Upload news stories, photos and videos to your own website too. It's a great way to keep all your content in one place.



# How to write a press release

A press release is the best way to share your news with a local paper. Keep it clear, concise and to the point, no more than two pages. Sentences should be punchy and paragraphs normally no longer than four sentences.

## 7 SIMPLE STEPS

- 1. GRAB ATTENTION WITH THE HEADLINE:** It needs to catch the eye of the journalist and capture the essence of the story.
- 2. THINK OF THE FIVE Ws:** The basis of every news story is: who, what, when, where, and why? These should be spelled out in the first paragraph or soon after.
- 3. PUT FACTS FIRST, DETAILS SECOND:** Your lead paragraph should outline the facts. Succeeding paragraphs should provide additional details – most important first.
- 4. INCLUDE QUOTES:** A quote will add weight and interest to your release – but only if it really says something. Try adding quotes from residents' families or local dignitaries. Just remember to check they're okay with it first.
- 5. USE HEADED PAPER:** All releases should be on your own business letter-headed paper with your logo so the journalist knows straight away who it has come from.
- 6. REMEMBER YOUR DETAILS:** Include a brief summary of your care home at the end, and your name and contact details, so the journalist knows who to contact with any questions.
- 7. SEND PHOTOS TOO:** Photos and captions to bring your press release to life. If you are attaching an image make sure it's big enough to be printed but small enough to send by email (less than 3MB).



**REMEMBER: Get permission from any residents for photos or quotes you want to use!**

## Use social media

Friends and relatives of your residents can have a huge influence on your reputation by tweeting or blogging about you and sharing photos of your care home online. If you're not listening to the conversations you won't know what's being said or get to respond.



### 7 in 10 online adults use Facebook\*

It's an opportunity for you to join in the conversation and share news, photos and videos of all the great work you do.



### Short and simple

Twitter lets you communicate in short bursts of 140 characters, known as 'tweets'. It's great for announcing news and driving people to your website.



### Sharing videos

Videos are increasingly popular and easier to make than ever. You can share videos of your residents having a great time with their friends and family.

\*Ad Week (2014)