

P143

HOW TO GET 50 POSITIVE PRESS STORIES ON YOUR HOSPICE A MONTHYasmin Jeffery *St Nicholas Hospice Care, Bury St Edmunds, UK*

10.1136/bmjspcare-2011-000105.143

Introduction Working effectively with the press can improve local understanding of the work of the hospice and its need for donations.

“Market the hospice more” was one of the first things asked of the marketing department; it was felt that many local people did not understand the work of the hospice or its need for donations.

Aims This paper explains how we have maximised the use of newspapers to achieve this. Success also depends on the cooperation of staff and the press.

Methods

Staff first Make sure everyone is aware of the need to access patient/family stories – staff and volunteers are walking newspapers. Explain what a good story is and flag up recent coverage - ‘have you seen our article in the Mercury’ and display it throughout the hospice. Distribute ‘have you a story’ cards for patients, visitors and staff to help break the ice.

The media Implement a media strategy, monitor all local press; and ensure you have a functional press office. Organise public open events, invite all media, make sure the press see all new publications and always send an invitation to visit.

Get to know your editors – understand what they want and send through weekly stories and pictures that are topical, well timed and well written. Supply a mixture of fundraising and clinical stories.

Hospice stories can help sell newspapers; the hospice has a huge following which could drive up sales.

Offer exclusives and ‘page ready’ copy and negotiate media partnerships for flagship events.

Conclusion Our profile has increased significantly. More people know what we do, why we do it and want to support us. Regular and positive newspaper coverage opens the doors to the Hospice, and supports fundraising and patient and family care.