How to Talk to the Media About Heroin

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Disclosures

- Jeremy Campbell, Erin Gutierrez and Julie Miller have disclosed no relevant, real, or apparent personal or professional financial relationships with proprietary entities that produce healthcare goods and services.
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- All planners/managers hereby state that they or their spouse/life partner do not have any financial relationships or relationships to products or devices with any commercial interest related to the content of this activity of any amount during the past 12 months.

- The following planners/managers have the following to disclose:
  - Kelly J. Clark, MD, MBA, FASAM, DFAPA – Consulting fees: Braeburn, Indivior
Learning Objectives

- Identify the types of stories journalists will cover.
- Design your pitch to help get coverage when you need it.
- Explain ways to connect with the media in a positive way for the community.
HOW TO TALK TO THE MEDIA ABOUT HEROIN & OPIOIDS
JOURNALISTS: Your ally in the opioid crisis

3 Ways to get your story in the news:

1) Better know a journalist
2) Be Persistent
3) Pitch the positives

"My colleagues and I were recently surprised to discover a powerful tool that could be useful in our line of work: journalists. “

- Dr. Sandeep Kapoor in “STAT”
STEP 1: BETTER KNOW A JOURNALIST

- **DO YOUR HOMEWORK**
  - Who's covering this issue already?
  - Read station bios and bylines on stories

- **MAKE CONNECTIONS**
  - Google the journalist. Our contact info is usually readily available.
  - Introduce yourself.
  - Establish relationships

- **PITCH PEOPLE**
  - Go beyond email
  - More on this later!
START WITH US:

**ERIN GUTIERREZ**
**EXECUTIVE PRODUCER**
• Past includes stations in Toledo, Flint, Houston & Atlanta
• Former CNN/ HLN Producer
• Family impacted by the opioid crisis
• Yoga teacher & Sorority Chapter Advisor

**JEREMY CAMPBELL**
**INVESTIGATIVE REPORTER**
• Worked in Louisiana, Alabama, Florida, Georgia
• Former documentary filmmaker
• Focus: long-form storytelling & complex societal issues
• Significant social media following

Jeremy and Erin earned some of journalism’s highest honors for their reporting on heroin and the opioid crisis. Their awards include 6 Emmys, a Murrow, a Cronkite, and the National Association of Broadcaster’s award for Service to America.

#Rx Summit  www.NationalRxDrugAbuseSummit.org
Find A Journalist Check List:

What to look for:
☑ Knowledge of the issues
☑ Has a big megaphone
☑ Works in the target medium (broadcast, print, talk show, etc.)
☑ Responsive to messages

Other Perks:
☑ Investigative Background
☑ Personally invested
☑ Time

***Pro Tip: Check LinkedIn!
It's a geographic region in Atlanta's northern suburbs where we've been tracking heroin-related deaths.
4,000%

Increase in heroin-related deaths inside the Triangle from 2010-2016
We started in 2015 with a tip:

2 teens died of heroin overdoses in Alpharetta, Ga and no wanted to talk about it.
GOOD NEWS:
We care a lot more now!

- Opioids have the media’s attention
- Journalists are training to cover the crisis
- And they’re winning awards for coverage
- Regular people are becoming comfortable talking about it
- Lawmakers are watching now too
- The BIG ISSUE with all that:
  - We think we’ve already told that story. So what’s next?
STEP 2: BE PERSISTANT (This is where you come in)

- SEND US YOUR IDEAS!
  - Journalists ALWAYS need pitches
  - Keep messages to 1 page–NO ATTACHMENTS!

- WHAT TO INCLUDE:
  - Highlight the new & different
  - Provide context
  - Offer solutions

- SEND IT AGAIN
  - A lot of us look at 1,000-2,000 emails per day.
  - News of day gets in the way
  - Reach out by text, Facebook, or phone too
Facts and stats are important, but we need real people to offer options for interviews. Who can best explain the idea or concept? Who or what shows that concept in action?

THE MEDIA IS BIAS: AND THAT BIAS IS TOWARDS COMPELLING STORIES

CHARACTERS
- Facts and stats are important, but we need real people
- Offer options for interviews
- Who can best explain the idea or concept?
- Who or what shows that concept in action?
THE MEDIA IS BIAS: AND THAT BIAS IS TOWARDS COMPELLING STORIES

PICTURES
- Are you willing to be on camera?
- What images go with the idea you want covered?
- Do you have images or video from the past that you would share?
THE MEDIA IS BIAS:
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CONTENT

- Is this new information?
  - If yes, tell the reporter!
  - If not, tell us how it is different from other things we’ve seen in the past

- Is it easy to understand?
  - Data is GREAT! But it can be confusing.
  - Be able to explain it in normal people terms

- Get creative!
  - Help reporters come up with a new way to showcase old information

Late one night, Courtney overdosed again.

“You’re beating on a dead body.”
Want big impact? Use big image.
A FEW OTHER TIPS

- BE CLEAR WITH THE FACTS
  - There are a lot of #s out there.
  - What source are you using and why?

- LANGUAGE MATTERS
  - Explain terms like:
    - User
    - Addict
    - Recovery

- OFFER SOLUTIONS
  - Journalists get hit hard for only presenting the dark side
  - Telling stories about solutions is NEW!
If they’re still alive, there’s hope.

Georgia Overdose Prevention
HIT US UP!

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THANK YOU

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