



2020  
WORLD  
SIGHT  
DAY

HOPE  
IN  
SIGHT

**MEDIA GUIDELINES**

Photo submitted by: En Lu for WSD Photo competition



Photo submitted by: Andras D. Hajdu for WSD Photo Competition

# MEDIA GUIDELINES

World Sight Day (WSD) is an international day of awareness, held annually on the second Thursday of October to focus attention on the global issue of eye health. This year World Sight Day falls on 8 October 2020.

This year's WSD call to action is:



## Planning

Consider the following when planning your own local or national media event:



### Objectives

- What are you aiming to achieve from the involvement of the media?



### Strategy

- How will you attract the interest of the media?
- Which are your most important media targets?
- What audience do you hope to reach through these media?



### Media Message

- What are the key messages of the media initiative? (This should be reflected in your press releases, other media materials and by your spokespeople). Ideally you will have three to five simple key messages to convey



### Target Media

- Which media will you be targeting?
- What is the lead-time?
- What is your timetable for sending out media materials and making follow-up calls?



## Spokespeople

- Who are your spokespeople?
- Do they need a formal media training session or a simple briefing on the facts?
- When are they available for interviews?
- Are other spokespeople available if your primary contact is unavailable?
- Do you have their contact details for emergencies?



## Media Materials you may need:

- Basic national, regional and local press pack material
- National press release – members can either create their own outlining local activities, or use the materials provided in the implementation pack
- International press release
- What is World Sight Day (WSD)?
- Global IAPB Fact Sheet
- Photograph(s) or other high quality images
- IAPB video footage (Youtube)
- For IAPB members only, IAPB logo – in the correct format and resolution.

## Targeting the Media

Monitor the Local Press, TV, Radio regularly before any event that you have planned. Try to find out contact names so that you can ask for them directly. You can address news releases to “The Editor”; however with the volume of press releases received every day, Editors may miss yours. Do you have a contact from a previous event? If not, a quick telephone call may save wasted effort.

### **Contact your organisation’s National or Global Media Officer prior to contacting media**

- The Media Officer may offer advice on how to get the best possible results
- The Media Officer could have plans to contact the same media – avoid duplication!

### **Timing: what is the ‘lead time’?**

- Be careful to not target media too early or too late
- Monthly magazines often have a three-month lead time
- Ascertain copy and photograph deadlines for local media – they may not ‘carry over’ stories and you may need to prepare a different press release if this happens
- Likewise, arrange photo calls for the morning to avoid missing evening news deadlines
- Often, it will be necessary to stage a press call the day before the event, to secure coverage on the day

**Telephone to ensure the event has been diarised by both the news and picture desk.**

- Encourage attendance and offer interviews, photographs etc
- Invite photographers to attend the event, even if you are taking your own photos
- When offering interviews, make sure you have a willing and available interviewee
- Ensure that whoever is interviewed is fully briefed and prepared

**At World Sight Day events, make sure you make the WSD logo visible in photographs wherever possible.**

- Organisations should use the WSD logo as much as possible at WSD events, along with their organisational logo
- Encourage colleagues and spokespeople to display WSD material
- Make a note of which media attend and ask them when the coverage will appear
- Have press packs on hand

## Contacting the Media

Below are some basic tips for calling the media, particularly when selling news stories:

### **Newspapers**

Ask for news desks and picture desks

- Some news or picture desks may service several newspapers OR some papers may not have separate news and picture desks. Always check!
- Say what date and time your event is taking place and ask if it is diarised. Check they have your press release
- Ask for the name of the person it should be sent to and their fax number/e-mail
- Call again to make sure the fax/e-mail was received and that the event is in the diary. Ask when they will decide if they are covering the event
- Call again when the decision is about to be made
- Always try and get newspapers to attend the event. If they cannot attend, offer one of your own photographs. Ensure it is received before the picture deadline



## **Radio and TV stations**

- Never call at bulletin times
- Ask for the forward planning desk
- Say what date and time your event is taking place and ask if it is diarised. Check they have your press release
- Ask for the name and e-mail of the person it should be sent to
- Call again to make sure the e-mail was received and that the event is in the diary
- TV only – Offer to send video footage, in case they decide to carry the story
- Ask when they will decide if they are covering the event
- Call again when the decision is about to be made
- Remember – from the very start offer a spokesperson for an interview, either before or on the day of the event
- Ideally, radio stations should record something with your spokesperson the day before the event, so that the story can be carried on breakfast bulletins – push for this every time
- Be flexible! Check your spokesperson's availability first, but say that she/he can come into the studio for an interview or they can do the interview from home if necessary



Photo submitted by: Sandy Winkle for WSD Photo Competition

- Remember to give a contact number for your spokesperson to the radio station, and vice-versa, especially if it's a telephone interview. Make sure to get consent before releasing any contact numbers
- After the interview, call the station to make sure that the interview went OK
- Make sure that someone records the interview
- It is likewise good practice to record any TV coverage yourself. You can request a copy of a feature, within one month of the broadcast, in writing, but a copy of a news item will be harder to get.

## General Tips

- Press releases must carry the issue date and clearly state any embargo dates (dates before which you do not wish the story to be published)
- In general do not call between 1pm and 2pm
- Give only the essential information! Talk briefly and succinctly
- On the morning of the event: Ring media again, one last time, to make sure that the event will be covered/attended
- Keep to your deadlines! Send information on time, or you will lose coverage
- Return journalists' calls immediately
- Put mobile phone numbers on press releases and keep your phone on at all times
- If you speak to a journalist who is negative about covering your event, try calling back later and speaking to someone else who might be more co-operative

## COVID-19 and World Sight Day

Please take adequate precautions and strictly follow government guidelines for your location when planning media events for WSD. Plan for online events and try to engage media with resources that can be accessed without risking crowding, contact, or any potential to spread COVID-19. Take care!

## Tips for Media Interviews

- Brief and succinct answers are the aim. Speak slowly and clearly
- Use answers that stand on their own and are no more than thirty seconds long (soundbites)
- Have a maximum of three key messages which are essential to get across
- To bring your interview alive and make the issues seem real, it is essential to paint a strong visual picture of your organisation's work and the people it helps
- Avoid jargon and abbreviation, and simplify complicated language:
  - Avoid technical names/medical terms for the things you are describing, for example onchocerciasis can be referred to as River Blindness
  - Avoid acronyms: WHO is always the World Health Organization and IAPB is always the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness
- Bring figures alive by using comparisons such as: 'Eighteen million people, equivalent to the entire population of Australia, are infected with River Blindness'
- Do not overload your interview with too many statistics – 'headline' figures only
- Do mention IAPB and World Sight Day wherever possible

**Be prepared for wider questions about IAPB's work:**

- Think about how listeners/viewers could help IAPB
- Ask for clarification if unsure about a question, or to give you more thinking time
- Don't let the interviewer lead you away from what you want to say. Use the subject of the questions to make the points you want to make. For example:
  - "Yes, I am glad that you asked me that, but did you know the real problem is..."
  - "Before I can answer that, can I tell you about the real benefit of..."
- Be prepared for the interviewer to get it wrong and ask you questions based on inaccurate information! Journalists can make misinformed assumptions
- Stop when you have said all you need to say. Don't feel you have to fill gaps of silence – this is the interviewer's job

### **The pre-recorded interview**

- Be accurate but don't get flustered if you make a mistake. Ask to do that part again, or just do it again. If you correct yourself, start a new, full sentence so the wrong answer can be easily edited out
- Don't be afraid to repeat, repeat and repeat your main points – remember that your interview will be edited

### **The television interview**

- Dress appropriately, ideally in plain colours (never fine stripes or polka dots)
- Where possible, include the logo, e.g. WSD logo in the background
- Look at the interviewer, not the cameraman
- Sit still! Avoid playing with pens, jewellery etc, which draw the viewers' attention away from what you are saying



**Mention IAPB and  
World Sight Day  
wherever possible**



Photo submitted by: By Nguyen Thi Quynh Nhu



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