



PUBLICISING FABCHANGE DAY 2016 A MEDIA TOOL KIT

A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO GAINING MEDIA COVERAGE

This step-by-step guide sets out some tips and hints on using template media materials, sourcing press contacts, contacting the media, being interviewed and the best ways to follow up.

It is designed to help you let other people hear about your action(s) and be inspired to make their own mark on FabChange Day.



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INTRODUCTION

FabChange Day 2016 will be on October 19th .

FabChange Day is our opportunity to come together and harness our collective energy, creativity and ideas to make a change. Together each of our small actions will make a big difference in improving the care and wellbeing of those who use the NHS. What will your action be?

This guide — based on last year's successful guide — will give you all the tools you need.



1. CONNECTING WITH YOUR COMMS TEAM

If you work for the NHS or a local authority, the chances are your organisation will have its own Communications team or Press Office. They are not hard to track down — they'll usually be the people who do your internal magazine or newsletter, and they'll most likely have a 'press contact' number on your external website. If you can't find them, contact the Chief Executive's Office and they'll point the way.

The Comms team or press office will be your best friend if you've got a good change story, but it's important to go about things in the right way. Most organisations will have a formal policy that all contact with the press goes through the Comms team.

Before you contact your Comms team it's helpful to have a clear idea of what story you want them to help you with. Be prepared to have answers to the following questions:

- What made you decide to get involved in FabChange Day?
- What action are you taking and why?
- Did you pledge last year and if so did you complete it — what was the result?
- Is anyone else involved in your action or will anyone be affected by it?
- Is your line manager aware of what you're doing?
- When do you plan on completing your action and how long will it take?
- Why do you expect the effects/benefits to be a) for patients b) for colleagues c) for your organisation?
- Do you think any patients would be prepared to talk about what your action means for them?
- Is there a visible element to your action? Is it something that can be filmed or photographed?

Having answers to these questions will help your communications team decide how strong the story is and which kinds of media might be interested.



2. MANAGING YOUR OWN MEDIA RELATIONS

If your organisation doesn't have its own communications function, there are a number of things you can do to maximise your chance of getting your story picked up by the media:

STEP 1: CREATE A LOCAL MEDIA LIST

This should list all relevant press that you want your FabChange Day news to reach, and should include individual contact names, phone numbers and email addresses for:

Print (all local newspapers, any professional media read by your peers)
Online (all local and professional relevant websites)
Radio (all local radio stations)
TV (all local television stations)

You might be familiar with some of your local media, however, to compile a complete list successfully, use online search engines to find all outlets.

Once you have a list of outlets, you will need individual contacts. For regional print and online outlets, the best contact will be a *health correspondent* or *health editor*. If the publication does not have a dedicated health section, it is best to seek details of the *news editor* or *news reporter*.

For radio and TV, the best contact will be a member of the planning team. To find this information, in the first instance, check the outlet's website and if it is not available online, phone the organisation directly.



STEP 2: UNDERSTAND THE STORY YOU WANT TO TELL

The fact that you are taking a change action won't necessarily be newsworthy in itself – but there are a number of things you can do to make your story more interesting and appealing to others.

First, you need to think about why you've decided on your action and what you hope to achieve by doing it. Ask yourself:

- What do I want to change and why hasn't it been done before?
- What are the barriers to completing my action and how will I overcome them?
- Is anyone else involved?
- Do I want or need to get anyone involved? What will success look like?
- Who will benefit and how will they notice?

Remember, the real power of FabChange Day goes beyond the action you take – it's about inspiring others to make a difference and making tangible improvements to care. The media will want to know the positive effects your action will have/have had.

STEP 3: IDENTIFY CASE STUDIES

Case studies are used in the media to bring a story to life and help the public to understand the reasons behind the changes you make.

Case studies usually take the form of patients or service users who have benefitted from a particular action but sometimes it could be a colleague or a team within your organisation.

Once you have identified your case study, you need to find out:

- If they are prepared to tell their story publicly;
- Whether they are happy to be photographed/filmed;
- Whether they are happy to be interviewed or would prefer to give a written quote;
- Some personal details such as their family circumstances, age, where they live etc.
- It is important to get their written permission before sharing any personal information with the media.

STEP 4: USE SPOKESPEOPLE

Another way of strengthening your story in the eyes of the media is using a spokesperson who is prepared to go on record with their support for your action.

Who you approach to act as a spokesperson will depend on where you work, but could include:

- Ward/Line manager
- Medical director
- Chief nurse
- Senior consultant
- Executive director



- Chief executive

You will need to brief your spokesperson fully about why you chose a particular action, how you plan to make it happen and what you expect the benefits to be.

Also, find out about their willingness to take part in interviews and their availability before contacting the media.

BUT — don't forget that if you're passionate about what you are doing, you will often be your own best spokesperson. There's a common myth that the press are only interested in particular kinds of people: doctors, nurses, senior staff. It's not true: anyone who is passionate about what they're doing and can tell their story is interesting as far as the press is concerned.



STEP 5: ENGAGE THE MEDIA

Once you have everything lined up and a clear story to tell, you can reach out to the media.

The main tool for doing this is a press release – a single document containing all the information a journalist would need to write a story or decide if it is interesting enough to send a reporter/film crew along to find out more.

Main press release

A couple of weeks prior to the main event(s), make contact with journalists on your media list and tell them about your plans for FabChange Day.

Some journalists prefer you to ring up first and tell them about your action and the upcoming news you will be releasing. You can follow up by emailing them the tailored press release. Local papers, though, especially weekly locals, are happy just to receive a press release by email — do check the format at the end, though: it's a standard and ensures that everything is included that needs to be.

The objectives of this initial contact are to:

- Get the story in the diary — TV and Radio stations have extensive forward planning calendars. Local journalists snowed under with work may just be keeping a few notes, but, either way, they all love to know what's going on ahead of time.
- Make them curious — journalists are by nature curious, so this isn't difficult, though if you ring up round deadline time they can sometimes be a little short with you.
- Let them know there's a story to tell — journalists love stories, but they have to prioritise their time.



If the journalist...

.....is interested in the story but cannot attend: Ask if they are willing to cover the story prior to the event and alert them of both the one-the-day news story and post-event release.

.....is not sure if they can attend or cover the story: Inform them that you will send the information in an email and follow up by phone. (Give the journalist 24 hours to review the information you send before following up by phone)

.....is not interested in the story: Check if there is a more relevant journalist within the outlet that you can contact

.....is interested in attending: Ask what specific requirements they have for the day and inform them that you will send information in an email and that you will call prior to the event as a reminder.

After every phone conversation, email the journalist a summary of your call, the press release, details of the event(s), and case studies/spokespeople that you have available for interview.

Follow-up press release

There will be a lot of media coverage around FabChange Day, both in the run up to the event and on the day itself.

If you are carrying out your action on FabChange Day, most of the activity is likely to revolve around that. If you are planning to complete your action afterwards, however, there is the potential for a follow-up press release.

In the case that journalists attended on the day, email them as soon after the event as possible with the customised post-event press release, giving key outcomes from your action, images, case study materials and anything specific they may have requested. Follow up with a phone call to confirm they have everything they need to write the story.

If journalists did not attend the event(s), telephone them in the first instance to let them know of its success. Let them know how many people got involved; offer them an interview with a case study and/or spokesperson to see if they will do a post-event story. Send an email to follow up and if there is no reply by the next day, telephone the journalist to confirm their interest.



3. ADDITIONAL IDEAS TO PUBLICISE FABCHANGE DAY

ARRANGE A PHOTOCALL

A photo call is when you invite media along to secure a newsworthy image for publication.

Depending on the nature of your action, there might be things that lend themselves well to a photograph. Questions to ask yourself include:

- Can I get a patient/case study involved in the activity?
- Is there a large group who can come together to show the power of FabChange Day?
- Are there any celebrities or VIPs such as local politicians who could be invited along to a photocall?
- Does the action involve eye-catching equipment or machines?
- Would senior members of the organisation (e.g. Chief Executive or Chair) get involved?

SPREAD THE WORD ON SOCIAL MEDIA

News and media has changed radically in the last few years. Even if the mainstream media can't be tempted to cover your event/action, there are other ways to share your news with others and inspire them to take action.

If you have a **Facebook** page you can upload details and pictures throughout the day.

If you have a **Twitter** account you can take part in the live action as it happens throughout the day. Remember to include the hashtag #fabchangeday to ensure you are part of the wider conversation.



4. TOP TIPS FOR TV AND RADIO INTERVIEWS

- Prepare for your interview. Think about what message you wish to get across. Note down any key points, facts, figures, examples you'd like to include. Brainstorm possible questions and think about how you would respond. Thinking ahead allows you to be more confident in your message and in what you'd like to say. Practice your answers out loud. Grab a friend or use a mirror to practice saying your answers.
- There's no harm in practicing answers, but don't stick to a 'script'. Scripting what you are going to say looks unnatural and it can leave you feeling less relaxed if you forget your words.
- Try not to use jargon. Remember, you are talking to the general public who may not understand jargon or acronyms.
- Smile. FabChange Day is a good news story. You're celebrating your fantastic action(s) with the public, so enjoy it. Even on radio, smiles will be heard.
- Most journalists will not discuss the actual questions before an interview, as they want your response to seem natural rather than rehearsed. However, they will be happy to discuss the topics you are going to talk about.

SPECIFICALLY FOR TV

- Relax. Everyone wants you to look good – including the interviewer. An overly nervous person does not look good on TV, so the interviewer will probably do what they can to make you feel comfortable in front of the camera.
- Most interviews are pre-recorded and if you really do not feel you answered the question well, you can always ask to answer it again. Though your interview may last for a few minutes, the programme will probably only use a 10 to 20 second clip of you.
- If your interview is live, the interviewer will work very hard to make sure you are aware of what is going to happen and that you are comfortable talking on TV. They will probably only do a live interview if they are filming a live event, such as a concert, and they want you to talk about what is happening and why.
- Don't look directly at the camera. Talk to the interviewer who will position themselves where they want you to look.
- Try to look presentable. Don't wear spots, stripes or very obvious logos – as they can be very distracting (unless your logo is related to your project). Unbrushed hair, shirts sticking out, badly creased clothes can be really distracting on screen. Try not to fidget or sway. Just act naturally.

SPECIFICALLY FOR RADIO

- Radio interviews tend to be slightly longer than TV interviews and on average will last about three minutes.
- Radio interviews are either pre-recorded and edited, or done live via a phone or studio interview. If you can, go to the studio as your interview will sound better and you'll probably be on for longer; but if you are on the phone, make sure you are on a land-line in a quiet location.
- Take a breath before you answer a question, as this will help you to talk more slowly and clearly.



- Talk to the interviewer like you are talking to a friend. Look at them and answer their questions.
- Remember, people are listening because they want to be entertained as much as they want to be informed. So make sure you sound like you are enjoying yourself and not like you are being questioned by the police.
- If your interview is live, then try and listen to as much of the show preceding your interview. You'll get a feel for the station and if there is something relevant that has been discussed to reference that in your interview. Just remember to switch off the radio before you go on air, otherwise you'll created a horrid sounding feedback loop.

When it's over – congratulate yourself. Being interviewed is quite a scary thing to do. Then ring everyone you know to make sure they are watching or listening to your starring moment.

