



# PITCHING TO THE MEDIA



## THE WARRIOR WAY

Sharing your story with the media is becoming a common opportunity for many SCD Warriors. However, you want to be prepared and ready to adapt. This toolkit will help you think through the best way to break your story.

### DIFFERENT PLATFORMS HAVE DIFFERENT PURPOSES

Which media outlet is the best to share information about my upcoming advocacy event?



**Feature News** will often cover an issue in greater depth than a normal news story would do.

I just donated 300 backpacks to my local elementary schools. How do I get the news out?



**Breaking News** with the media is a great way to inform the locals. Bringing you all the latest breaking news as it happens.

How do I inform others about the letter I wrote to my local hospital?



**Opinions News** features a subjective viewpoint, usually with some social or political purpose.

**Timing is everything!** Most news happening in real time has a lifespan of about 24 hours, so timing is crucial.

### THREE STEPS TO SUCCESSFUL PLANNING

#### 1 KNOW THE AUDIENCE

- **Who** is the story for?
- **Why** should the story be shared?
- Is there a **deadline**?

#### 2 TAILOR YOUR STORY

- **TV:** live or taped
- **Radio:** live or taped
- **Print/Online:** phone or email

#### 3 GIVE THE STORY SOME CARBS!

- **C**onsistent & **c**redible
- **A**udience focused
- **R**esonant
- **B**rief



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## BRIDGING & REDIRECTING



Pitching your story to the media can be overwhelming, but staying prepared is the best way to convey your message. Bridging the gap can help the reporter and storyteller understand each other and help the story get out there.

### REMEMBER TO BRIDGE THE GAP



### COMMON PHRASES TO HELP BRIDGE

- "Great point, let me tell you why I think that matters..."
- "Let me put that into perspective..."
- "What's important to remember is..."
- "The main reason I'm here to talk to you is..."



### SIGNAL PHRASES TO HELP REDIRECT

When you're working with the media, you might encounter situations you don't feel prepared for. Here are some tips to help you maintain control of your story in any situation.

- "That's one view, but your readers would probably be interested to know that..."
- "I think what you're trying to say is..."
- "I don't think I have that information, but let me tell you who does..."
- "I'm not sure I'm the right person to answer that, but you could ask..."

**SIGNAL PHRASES CAN STOP THE CONVERSATION, REFRAME IT, AND BRING IT BACK TO WHERE YOU WANT SO YOU STAY IN CONTROL.**





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## TIPS, TRICKS & BEST PRACTICES

Remember to always say something when asked a question; try your best not to say "no comment." This will leave too much room for interpretation, it can make an interview uncomfortable, and it can steer the reporter in the wrong direction.

### TOUGH QUESTIONS? NO PROBLEM!

This is your pitch, and reporters can throw you off with hard questions or questions that may be off topic. But, confidence is key to making sure your story is shared how you want it to be shared. So, prepare a wall of tricks so your pitch will stick!

Do not repeat negatives

Bridge to key messages

Take control

Stay confident

Be clear

Say you don't know

Correct the reporter

### MEDIA IS ALWAYS CHANGING

The definition of "media" is constantly evolving. It's more than just newspaper and TV reporters – it's bloggers, social media influencers, online reporters, and more.

That means you or your spokesperson need to always be the face of your message, and you have to be both mindful about what you say and creative in the way you say it.



THANKS TO HOLLI HOLSAN AT LIPPE TAYLOR

For more information on sickle cell disease, please visit [www.sickcells.org](http://www.sickcells.org)