

Step-by-Step Guide to the Media

How do I get my local media involved?

Thank you for taking part in this important part of New Zealand's International Communication Project 2014 activities. Media coverage can seriously increase the number of people that hear about the ICP 2014 and communication disorders in NZ. By putting together a few simple story elements, you will have the makings of a story that your local newspaper or radio station will want to run.

Below is a guide on how to put together a story about the ICP 2014 for your local media. Remember, local media is interested in local issues affecting local people.

Getting media coverage – A step-by-step guide

STEP 1: Know your media outlet

Read, listen, or watch your local newspaper, radio or TV station to get an idea of the kind of stories they like to run.

the difference that access to the right sort of service makes.

Key messages – are crucial so that we are consistent around the country. They are:

STEP 2: Putting together the story

Create a story remembering these elements:

Newsworthiness – outlets are looking for what's new, different, or ground-breaking, as well as what will matter most to their audience. For your local media, these are things that affect their listeners/readers/viewers. If you find yourself telling the same story to more than 2 people, it might be a good one to pitch to the media.

Identify possible stories – that clearly show how communication disorders have impacted on someone's life, as well as that of their families and carers. We want to illustrate the devastating and far-reaching impact that communication disorders have, as well as how access to the right services can turn some of those consequences around.

A local spokesperson – you! You are the local expert about communication and communication disorders. You see the disadvantage your clients face and you know

Communication is vital to life

Communication disorders limit a person's ability to participate fully in family life, their community, education, and employment.

Communication professionals make a vital difference

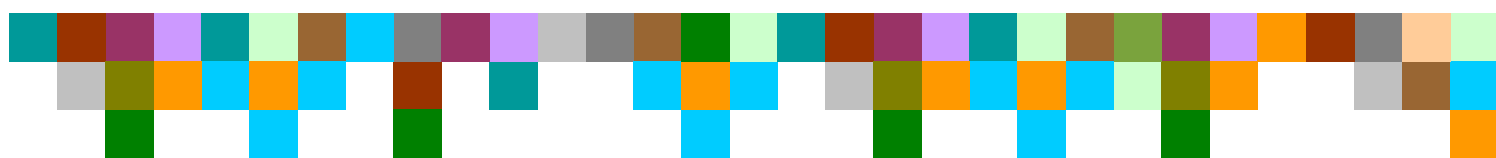
Without access to key services, people with communication disorders are at a lifelong disadvantage.

Early intervention is key

Research shows that early identification and intervention programs create positive results over a lifetime for people with communication difficulties and society as a whole.

A local client story – does most of the work for you. People's stories help us translate the numbers and figures behind this whole concept into something engaging that people can understand. Stories change minds.





Facts and figures – use the ‘killer stats’ located in the toolkit – and localise them where you can, or provide local statistics. Having the numbers to back up why you’re campaigning makes your story more powerful.

Check with your employer - to make sure they approve of you approaching your client/s. Check with your manager and/or Communications Department to make sure they are OK with you and your client/s taking part in ICP 2014 activities. Make sure you follow any internal workplace procedures too.

Talk to your client and their family – to see if they are willing to take part in your ICP2014 activities. Client’s families are just as important and their stories are just as powerful. Make sure you have all the right consent (refer to the Step-by-Step Guide to Consent).

Check how comfortable they are being involved – speaking with journalists, having their photo taken, speaking on radio, or being filmed for television.

STEP 3: Pitching the story

Work out the name of a journalist at your local media outlet from their articles or segments, or contact NZSTA. Email your media release to the journalist, noting that you will follow up the next day with a phone call.

Call the journalist the next day to talk about your story, explaining what you are doing, why, and the number of people in your local community living with a communication disorder. Talk to them about your client’s story and let them know if they are available for a photo opportunity.

Work out with the journalist where and when you will meet, and make sure your client is comfortable with the arrangements. A photo opportunity may take place at your workplace or the journalist may prefer photos of your client in your community.

STEP 4: The interview

Talk to your client to make sure they are comfortable speaking to the journalist, as well as practising some responses (if needed). You will have an idea of what the journalist will want to speak about from your earlier conversation, so think about what you want to say and make sure you’re familiar with the ICP 2014’s key messages. You can always refer back to them if you get stuck.

Remember, it doesn’t have to be a perfect performance. The journalist is there to listen, and you can always follow up with facts and figures later. If they ask anything you can’t answer just say you make a note of it and get back to them after the interview.

When the interview is finished, check with the journalist as to when the story will be published or broadcast and let NZSTA know.

We’re here to help! If you need any help or advice putting together and/or pitching a story to your local media, contact us at icpinnz@gmail.com and we can talk you through each step.

Good luck!

