

Guide to conducting media interviews

Part 2. Conducting media interviews

2. Preparing for an interview

Going ahead with an interview

Good preparation is essential. You may not be given long between the first contact and your interview, so keep your core media information up to date. This is an opportunity to showcase your organisation and its work, or to promote your cause or campaign

- **Review** the type of information you have been asked for and prepare your answers
 - Decide on the key messages you want to put across
- **Take time** to think about what you are being asked and who your information may be passed to
- **Find a quiet place** where you won't be overheard or interrupted
- **Arrange to call the journalist back** if necessary or appropriate
- **Agree how long is needed for the interview** and stick to it

#1

Before the start of an interview, ask what is the first question you will be asked

- **If you don't know the answer**, don't improvise
- **Paint pictures** and provide stories (case studies) relating to real people with RMDs who are in relevant situations
- **Put it in context** – how common is the condition
- **Review your key points** at the end of the interview
- **Keep notes** on the conversation and record it with a dictaphone/mobile phone if possible

Guide to conducting media interviews

Part 2. Conducting media interviews

2. Preparing for an interview continued...

Interview essentials

(For press, radio or television and other key audiences, e.g. staff or public briefings)

Do's:



- **Do review the type of information you have been asked for** - prepare your answers
- **Do ask what the first question will be** – this gives time to prepare your answer, but you may not always be told!
- **Do keep information factual** – do not speculate
- **Do acknowledge and then use questions to bridge to your key messages**
 - An interview is about delivering packages of information that meet your agenda
 - Try 'dangling' a new piece of information
- **Do try to leave the reader, listener or viewer with something new** they did not know about RMDs or your organisation before your interview

Don'ts:



- **Do not use jargon** – it alienates audiences – keep your message simple
- **Do not pretend** to know an answer
- **Do not offer personal opinions or try and attribute** personal opinions or comments to others, including your organisation
- **Do not speculate or stray outside your area of expertise**
 - Say if you don't know an answer, but offer to find the answer or an expert to comment
- **Do not repeat negative, or inflammatory words or phrases put to you by the interviewer**
- **Do not treat an interview, or a pre- or post-interview chat, as a conversation**
 - Nothing is ever 'off the record' whatever a journalist or researcher may say!