

## **1. GENERAL**

### **Two most popular media calls**

- promoting health programs, services, good news and disease prevention - where you would use the ABC technique
- crisis situations - where you would use the RRR technique

### **The top things reporters will ask in all interviews**

WHAT - WHY - HOW

### **Four elements to consider when developing key messaging:**

- interesting (will the public find it interesting or useful)
- news worthy to target audience (will it build on our reputation)
- element of surprise (something that the reporter may not know like facts or research data)
- do the key messages pass the “so what” test

### **Key messages – your keys to success:**

- clear and concise
- bite-sized chunks of information that may stand alone
- easy to say and easy to understand
- persuasive, strong and powerful tone

### **Interviews - preparation is key**

- think about the top three questions the reporter may ask
- have your facts ready
- focus on understanding the questions
- prepare your key messages; have your key messages in front of you and rehearse them; use bridging to keep it ‘your message’
- make the call in a quiet space
- buy yourself time at the start of your response
- don’t interrupt the reporter
- sound passionate and energetic about the topic
- if you misspeak - start over
- keeping in mind that nothing is ever off the record
- never use “no comment” (this may end up as your quote)

### **Calling the reporter to conduct the interview**

- ask to speak to the journalist who requested the interview
- be quick - introduce yourself and say what you are calling about right away
- stick to the facts (newsroom staff do not have a lot of time, they want the information and they want it fast)
- thank him/her regardless of the outcome for their time and be polite

## 2. TECHNIQUES

### ABC formula for using Key Messages to tell your part of the story

- answer the question
- bridge that answer
- communicate by inserting your 'key messages'

### Bridging Techniques

During the interview the journalist or reporter will often provide you with the opportunity to answer the question and expand. This is where the technique of bridging can be used. Bridging is a transitional method used whereby the interviewee can move from the reporter's angle to your key message easily. It is particularly effective because it enables you to steer the interview and to really focus on those key messages you want to communicate to the audience.

Transitional Phrases to use include the following:

- *The real issue is...*
- *But just as important is...*
- *Let me explain...*
- *But equally important...*
- *It's important to tell your viewers (readers, listeners)...*
- *You know, I think it's equally important to know...*
- *I am also frequently asked...*
- *We might be overlooking...*
- *A common concern is...*
- *You can go a step further...*
- *I am proud to be able to tell you...*
- *Let me give you the facts...*
- *You should also know...*

## 3. CRISIS EVENTS

### Crisis simple 3 R's formula when responding to a crisis

- Regret
- Reason
- Remedy (remedy may be followed with a positive key message)

### Example of crisis event key message

- *Southern Health-Santé Sud is deeply saddened by this tragedy. We wish to extend our condolences to the families involved. The \_\_\_\_\_ has occurred at \_\_\_\_\_ (health centre/property) and has activated a comprehensive emergency response. Southern Health-Santé Sud health care employees have diligently prepared for incidents of this nature. The \_\_\_\_\_ was contained within one facility.*
- *All other Southern Health-Santé Sud facilities are in full operation. We wish to reassure the public that the safety of the patients, residents and employees are our number one priority. We are handling the matter in cooperation with the RCMP/Fire Department/Community. We are grateful to our employees for their cooperation and their courage. We will continue to update you as more information becomes available.*

**Note:** When planning a media response during a crisis, show compassion and protect Southern Health-Santé Sud image and credibility when conveying information to the media.

#### 4. INTERVIEWS – COMMUNICATING OUR CORE VALUES

**When participating in an interview, take the opportunity to weave our Southern Health-Santé Sud core values within key messaging:**

Communicating and engaging with uncompromising integrity means:

- being transparent when sharing information, behaving with honesty, openness and truth and providing balanced, clear, consistent and objective information
- responding to internal and external communications to enquiries in a timely manner, including media enquiries
- being intentional and valuing diversity in engagement activities

Communicating and engaging with the pursuit of excellence means:

- aligning communications and strategic directions with provincial developments regarding transformation of health care in Manitoba
- sharing the responsibility of ‘communications’ and community engagement; this requires the support, cooperation and interaction of various staff throughout the organization, involving staff at all levels who must carry out the requirements of this Plan in all aspects of their work. Sites, programs and services must integrate communications and community engagement into processes and procedures
- recognizing that ‘communications is indeed a spectrum of public participation which encourage use of best practices in inform, consult, involve, collaborate and empower
- ensuring communications activities are meaningful
- recognizing the importance of learning from best practice

Communicating and engaging with respect for all means:

- understanding and embracing diversity, inclusivity and equity, i.e. providing access to information and education using different communication strategies to target different groups
- encouraging two-way communication and feedback
- responding to our legislative responsibility to support the delivery of bilingual health care services according to the Province’s French Language Services Policy/The Health System Governance and Accountability Act

Communicating and engaging with healing compassion means:

- using ‘communication tools’ to enhance human relationships
- observing principles of plain language and accessibility in communication, acknowledging that ‘health’ is a complex and vast sector where health terminology is an important part of sharing information
- listening to people without judgment or defensiveness

Communicating and engaging with purposeful innovation means:

- exploring new and meaningful ways to engage with staff and stakeholders
- utilizing new technologies and social media platforms to increase awareness of Southern Health-Santé Sud sites, programs and services
- providing a diverse range of communication methods and measuring their effectiveness
- continuously strive for improvement to ensure we are meeting the needs of our audience
- utilize provincial and partner SDO assets and resources to create efficiencies and enhance information sharing capacity
- effectively promote innovation within the organization