



National Blood Clot Alliance

Stop The Clot[®]

Toolkit:

Publicizing and Promoting Your Special Event

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Introduction

The National Blood Clot Alliance appreciates your interest in learning how to publicize your special event fundraisers to benefit our organization.

Fundraising activities aimed at raising awareness and financial support help NBCA fund its overall mission – to prevent, diagnose and treat thrombosis and thrombophilia through research, education, support and advocacy.

Local volunteer organized special events such as a Stop The Clot® Walk, Golf Tournament, Auction (silent, live or online) or other activities are tremendous opportunities to rally support for National Blood Clot Alliance, while providing valuable information about blood clots and clotting disorders.

We look forward to working with you in ensuring the best possible outcome for your fundraising activities!

With Thanks To:

We are most grateful to founding board member, Stephanie Davis, for her inspiration and creativity in developing these guidelines. We extend our appreciation also to the members of the National Blood Clot Alliance's Development Committee:

Mike Hefron, Chair – Justin Barch – Kate Gray – Traci Wilkes Smith

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Publicizing and Promoting Your Event

The Media

There are many different ways to reach people and let them know about your event. The media is one of the best means for reaching the largest audience possible. Before you begin to approach various reporters, decide on a spokesperson for the event—someone who is knowledgeable about all the details and can speak with confidence and enthusiasm.

1. Newspapers

More than one newspaper is probably read in your community. In addition to a major daily newspaper, there may be other dailies as well as community-based papers. Some papers cater to the interests of specific religious, political or other group, but will also list general events. Don't overlook free circulars at supermarkets and pharmacies as well.

2. Magazines

While there may not be any magazines specifically devoted to news about your community, there are regional magazines that are interested in events and stories pertaining to the city, state, or part of the country where your community is located.

3. Television

Your local news stations may be very interested in sending a camera crew to film your event for broadcast on the daytime or evening news. Think visual! What would appeal most to viewers? Also, think in advance about participants who would be best for interviews. Keep in mind community cable stations that serve your area and are specifically interested in reporting on local events.

4. Radio

Radio stations are interested in community issues and events, especially those open to the general public and that benefit a charitable cause. You'll want the on-air personalities to announce your event in advance, repeatedly and possibly interview one of the participants. Radio stations often run on-air promotions and giveaways, as well.

5. Websites

Many communities have websites that include community calendars. You should take advantage of this opportunity to promote your event. Also, check into websites maintained by newspapers, radio and TV.

6. Social Media

It's always a great idea to publicize your event through your personal Facebook and/or Twitter pages. In addition, the National Blood Clot Alliance has a Facebook page and will be happy to post your information on that as well.

7. Hospitals and Anticoagulation Clinics

Ask for support from your local healthcare professionals by having them an announcement about your event to their patients who have blood clots and clotting disorders. Do not ask for their patient mailing lists because that would be a violation of patient privacy rights established under law.

Compiling Media Lists

Creating current media lists can be the most laborious part of any public relations campaign, but the accuracy and breadth of your lists will make a big difference to your success in receiving media coverage.

How To Approach The Media In Writing

When you want to interest the media in your event, it's best to provide the reporter or on-air personality with something in writing. The following is a description of the variety of publicity materials that you can provide to the media.

1. Calendar Announcements

A calendar announcement is a brief write-up of an event that is sent to the community calendar editors of newspapers, magazines and TV stations for listings in their calendar section. Include any pertinent information that would inform someone of how to become involved in your event, including location, date, price, and phone number. Calendar announcements generally should be sent to newspapers *four weeks prior* to the date of the event.

2. Public Service Announcements (PSAs)

Radio stations reserve a portion of air time for public service announcements, which are really a form of free advertising for non-profit organizations. PSAs should be sent to the public service directors or the head of community affairs (titles vary from station to station) *four weeks prior* to the date of the event. If you have the talent and resources, taped radio PSAs are quite effective.

Television stations also reserve air time for public service spots and, like radio stations, have public service or community affairs directors. TV PSAs should be 30 or 60 seconds in length and should be sent to stations at least *six weeks prior* to the event, as it takes time for the station to put the tapes "in rotation." Like radio PSAs, television PSAs also must include "the who, what, when, and where" of the event.

3. Press Release

A press release should entice a reporter into wanting to cover your event. The first paragraph should include who, what, where, why, when, and how of the event. In addition to the straight facts, try to include human interest aspects of the event: Who is participating? Do they have a dramatic recovery story to tell? Quotes by people involved in the event used in subsequent paragraphs add life to a release.

Cite specific statistics of how many people have blood clots and how many die each year in your, city and/or county and/or state. This brings the message home and attracts attention. Contact NBCA Director of Regional Development and Education, Judi Kaplan Elkin, at jelkin@stoptheclot.org to help you make those calculations for your geographic area.

A press release typically runs one to two pages, double spaced. Please see page 9 for a sample press release.

In addition to the press release, items 4 and 5, below provide ideas of other press materials you may include.

4. Media Advisory / Event Fact Sheet

Unlike the press release, which is written much as an article would be, the media advisory / event fact sheet is simply a summary of all the key facts and figures relevant to the event. Please see page 10 for a sample media advisory.

5. NBCA Fact Sheet

This is found on National Blood Clot Alliance's website at http://www.stoptheclot.org/about_natt/about_natt.htm

6. Photo/Caption

Visuals quickly convey a concept and can go far in attracting the attention of the media. Photos might be of a celebrity involved, a "staged" version of the event, etc.

Media materials should be distributed *four weeks prior* to an event, and resent the week before with follow-up emails and phone calls (see D, below).

Some additional rules apply to media materials:

- Always include a contact name and phone number so that if a reporter has a question, he/she knows whom to call.
- State "For Immediate Release" at the top left of the news release, along with the release date.
- Use double-spacing for easy reading.

How to Approach the Media by Phone or in Person

You've finished writing the media materials, created a comprehensive mailing list, and sent out the media kits. You may think your job is complete, but the next phase is just beginning!

Follow-up with the media is perhaps the most important part of a PR campaign. Why? Because for every piece of information you send a reporter, s/he receives hundreds of others, each competing for attention and coverage. By calling and speaking to the reporter, you are verbally reinforcing the messages contained in your pitch letter and raising the reporter's awareness of and interest in your event.

If you are nervous about approaching the media, prepare a written statement that you can rely on. Try to accomplish the following in the course of your conversation:

- Be concise and brief. If the reporter/editor says s/he is busy, ask when you can call back. Don't take it personally; remember they are on a deadline and their time is precious.

- Convey excitement about the event and emphasize that it benefits National Blood Clot Alliance.
- Clarify location and times.
- Emphasize human interest stories and photo opportunities.
- Try to arrange advance interviews.
- Find out the best time to call back to see if they will attend the event.

Handling Media Attention

Once you've gone to the effort of inviting the media to do a story and to attend your event, it's important that you pay special attention to reporters/camera crews *during* the event so that you can assist them with whatever they need to make their story a good one. The following are suggestions on how best to handle media attendance:

- Provide them with a press release and/or fact sheet.
- Have a list prepared in advance of reporters you are expecting and give it to the ticket-taker so he/she knows to allow them in.
- Be on hand to greet reporters and offer them assistance.
- Keep a list of which reporters attend.
- Prepare a list of people you want to be interviewed by the media.
- Escort reporters to people to be interviewed and stay while interview takes place.
- Prepare shot list in advance for photography and offer to assist photographer in setting up shots.

Post Event Publicity

Send out follow-up news release or photo captions listing amount of money raised, number of people attending, or some other newsworthy fact.

Sample Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE:

CONTACT:

Your Name

Your phone numbers (include a cell phone so you can be reached the day of your event)

Your e-mail address

HEADLINE

(Write a brief headline that tells the whole story. Make the editor realize instantly that this press release is newsworthy. No more than 2 lines.)

SUB-HEADLINE

(If you need more space for a headline, write a sub—headline with additional important facts so that headline doesn't look cramped. This is optional.)

YOUR CITY, STATE (Month, Day, Year) This is the opening paragraph. It should contain all the details of your event. Include information on who, what, when, where, how and why in this paragraph. Keep it short and to the point. This most important information is at the top, in the first two paragraphs.

Use this paragraph to go into more detail. Explain the importance of the event and why it's taking place. Add statistics about blood clots and related deaths in your community to make a point. Contact NBCA Director of Regional Development and Education, Judi Kaplan Elkin, at jelkin@stoptheclot.org to help you make those calculations for your geographic area.

It's important to make your story interesting to your local community. Local papers and broadcast stations want to provide information that is relevant to their audience. How does this affect them or help them? Include vital information in this paragraph to help reporters and editors find all the important information quickly. Make it compelling.

Include a quote from an important person who is part of your event. Your quote should add material, it should have substance and it should be interesting. Don't repeat information already provided in the lead (first two paragraphs) or on the headlines.

Finish with a quote stressing the importance of having your community support your event. Give it a sense of urgency. Keep it short and punchy.

Sample Media Advisory / Photo Opportunity

Headline

WHEN:	<Month> <Day> <Year> at <Hour>:<Minutes><AM or PM>
WHERE:	<Location name and address: include directions if necessary> Include landmarks if it helps.
WHAT:	<Clearly state the news.> Is your event in honor of someone? Describe your event with interesting details—what makes it unique and fun. Let the media know of anything that would be a good visual.
WHY:	<Why this event is relevant to your community.> Make this a compelling paragraph. If possible, tie statistics to your story. Contact NBCA Director of Regional Development and Education, Judi Kaplan Elkin, at jelkin@stoptheclot.org to help you make those calculations for your geographic area.
WHO:	<List who is speaking and what they will discuss.>
NOTE:	If you will have speakers at your event, let the media know who is available for interview. If you are patient with a clotting disorder, make yourself available for interview. It makes your event more meaningful and interesting to local media.
CONTACT:	<Media Contact Name> <Phone/Pager/Cell to call <u>before</u> the event> <Phone/Pager/Cell to call <u>during</u> the event>

Note: Media advisories are straightforward memos to editors, requesting their presence at an event. Keep it at one page. If you are going over a page, revise what you've written and see what information is not indispensable. Your message will be newsworthy if the editor/reporter realizes that your event will interest and benefit your local community.