WORLD HOSPICE AND PALLIATIVE CARE DAY

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World Hospice and Palliative Care Day Media Toolkit 2026

Theme: Pain Management: An Essential Part of Palliative Care

Working with the Press

National and local media can be extremely effective in spreading the word about hospice and palliative care. Personal stories told by people with lived experience of pain and palliative care are often the most powerful way to get the message across; they turn statistics into something a reader or listener can feel.

You may already have built up relationships with your local media, or you can take this opportunity to start. Reach out to people in your networks who meet the criteria for this year's theme — patients, families, and caregivers with experience of pain management in serious illness — and work with them, with their full and informed consent, to reach out to the media. You can find some of the relevant group information here.

Here are some tips for writing a good press release and maximising the chances that the media will pick it up:

- Remember that journalists are busy, and you are competing for their attention with many other stories. The easier you make it for them to pick up a story, the more likely they are to do so. Keep this in mind when writing your press release.
- Make sure you have an eye-catching headline. This year, lean into the emotional clarity of the theme — for example: “No One Should Die in Pain When the Medicine to Prevent It Exists.”
- Include the key information in the first paragraph. Remember the five ‘W’s: What is your news? Where will it happen? When will it happen? Who is involved? Why should people be interested?
- Include numbers, facts, and statistics to strengthen your claims. You can find the World Hospice and Palliative Care Day Key Messages in the main toolkit, and a wealth of facts and statistics in the Global Atlas of Palliative Care.
- Make sure your news is relevant to a wider audience than just you and your colleagues. Link your World Hospice and Palliative Care Day event to the urgent, universal need for adequate pain relief in palliative care.
- Use quotes from recognised experts and people with direct experience to illustrate your point.
- Keep it short. Press releases should be one page long.
- Include photos. Even if you don't have photos yet for this year's World Hospice and Palliative Care Day event, include photos from previous years, or of your organisation's recent work. Always make sure you have signed consent for photos.
- Remember to proofread your press release to make sure it is grammatically correct and contains no typos.
- Include your contact information.

- Include a link to the World Hospice and Palliative Care Day page on the WHPCA website: https://www.thewhpca.org/world-hospice-and-palliative-care-day/about
- Create a contacts list. Identify which publications are most likely to pick up your story. Have they covered palliative care, pain management, or related health issues in the past?
- Make sure the press release is approved by the appropriate people in your organisation before you send it out.
- Keep an eye on the media for your story to be published, then keep a record of your success. If you find it online, share the link.

If you would like to use the WHPCA media release template rather than writing your own media release, you can do so. Feel free to adapt it, but please do not change any quote attributed to WHPCA leadership.

How to Write to Your Local Newspapers

We've created a template press release (Word) which you can send to newspapers in your local area. How to use the press release:

- Fill in all of the blanks in the press release.
- Don't forget to include your full name.
- Include a clear location of where you live, including the exact area if you live in a town, or the city you live in.
- Add your contact details (including a phone number) in the 'notes to editors' — journalists will often want to check the details with you.
- Local journalists like to know about you — if you can, mention your job, and what you do in pain management or palliative care.
- Look for the newspaper's contact details online.
- Copy the press release into the body of the email itself before you send it — avoid sending it as an attachment.
- Include a picture of yourself, and colleagues (with their permission), perhaps at a campaigning activity you've taken part in. The picture needs to be good quality — preferably around 1MB in size.

We'd love to hear from you if you're going to write to your local newspaper. Email us: info@thewhpca.org