

## Media Relations Policy

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### Intent

The intent of this policy is to provide a consistent approach when dealing with the media. Doctors Nova Scotia also strives to offer information in a time sensitive fashion, recognizing the media's responsibility to provide the public with accurate, complete and timely information.

Doctors Nova Scotia values a strong relationship with members of the media in order to position doctors as the leaders they are in health transformation. The association will provide accurate and up-to-date information on positions taken by the association in consultation with members and on the association's programs and initiatives.

The President of Doctors Nova Scotia is the principal spokesperson for the association and will be supported by a cadre of other physicians and senior staff, where appropriate.

As delegated by the president and chief executive officer, the director of communications is responsible for the release of information to the media and for advising the association's executive, board members, and staff on appropriate media responses.

To ensure the media receives timely responses to their inquiries, all media calls should be directed to the communications department.

The association's staff and members are asked to follow the association's **media relations policy**, when speaking on behalf of Doctors Nova Scotia.

The communications department liaises, as necessary, with the Canadian Medical Association (CMA) regarding the release of information with the media.

### Procedure

#### Spokespersons:

- The President is the principal spokesperson for Doctors Nova Scotia.
- Recent past-presidents, board members and committee members will be leveraged as appropriate on board related activities, positions and as project specific spokespersons.
- The CEO and Director of Health Policy and Promotion may be called upon, where appropriate, to speak with the media when the President and physician representatives are unavailable.

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- Other physicians and staff may be asked by the communications director to speak with the media in relation to specific topics.

*(Bylaws will be revised in 2015 to reflect the expanded use of spokespeople.)*

### **Physicians receiving media requests**

Physicians receiving a media request on Doctors Nova Scotia business are asked to contact the communications department prior to speaking to the media. As well, Doctors Nova Scotia members (section chairs, board members, committee members, etc.) speaking on non-association business is encouraged to contact the communications department for information and/or support.

Physicians are viewed by the public and media as a trusted source of information. Like all health care providers, it is difficult to separate personal views from professional views, whether it is the association, a district or a hospital. When sharing personal views, physicians are encouraged to clearly state to media opinions expressed are solely those of the individual.

Physicians serving on the association's executive, board of directors, or committees should direct media calls to communications and solicit support prior to an interview.

**When speaking on behalf of Doctors Nova Scotia business, it is important statements reflect those of the association not the individual.**

Doctors Nova Scotia will compile and maintain a list of physicians interested in speaking with the media on non-association related topics. Communications will maintain a media tracking document as a record of media requests.

### **Members of the media**

Media representatives acting in a professional capacity must clearly identify themselves as a member of the media to Doctors Nova Scotia employees and members.

All requests for information, interviews, photography/video shoots must be placed through the Doctors Nova Scotia communications office. Requests will be evaluated based on whether the topic is appropriate for the association to comment and availability of spokespeople.

Doctors Nova Scotia cannot guarantee exclusivity of any story.

### **Public relations opportunities with patients/clients/minors**

Patients/clients/minors who are approached by communications to be interviewed, recorded, photographed or videotaped by the news media whether for Doctors Nova

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Scotia publications or for the news media are required to sign the Communications Consent Form (attached to this policy) prior to the media contact.

Doctors Nova Scotia will work with the appropriate district health authority, if the patient/client is in a hospital or community program setting.

### Communications Consent Form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email : \_\_\_\_\_

I \_\_\_\_\_ give permission to Doctors Nova Scotia and or the following media outlet \_\_\_\_\_ to use images and information about me for educational/promotional purposes.

*Provide information on how images/information will be used and through what specific method (social media, website, magazine, etc.)*

I have been made aware of the nature, purpose and intended uses of this information.

In consent to be:

- Interviewed
- Photographed
- Videotaped
- Tape-recorded

I have confirmed:

- My name may be used
- My name may NOT be used

I acknowledge that I have read and fully understand the above consent.

\_\_\_\_\_

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Signature Date

(dd/mm/yy)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Witness Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
(dd/mm/yy)

If signed by someone other than the model, please indicate relationship

\_\_\_\_\_.