Promotional Toolkit

International Infection Prevention Week
October 16-22, 2016
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International Infection Prevention Week (IIPW)

IIPW, part of the Infection Prevention and You campaign, helps patients, families, and healthcare professionals better understand their role in preventing infections.

Join your friends, family members, and healthcare colleagues in celebrating International Infection Prevention Week (IIPW), October 16-22, 2016. IIPW, which takes place the third week of October each year, raises awareness of the role infection prevention plays to improve patient safety.

This document includes the tools for you to advocate and promote IIPW, the materials to give infection prevention special visibility, and the locations for conversations about why infection prevention matters. Explore these resources and incorporate them into your IIPW celebration and activities.

History of IIPW

Established in 1986 by President Ronald Reagan, IIPW is celebrated the third week of October. APIC spearheads the annual effort to highlight the importance of infection prevention among healthcare professionals, administrators, legislators, and consumers.

Over the years, this week of recognition has vastly expanded to every corner of the globe, including Australia, the United Kingdom, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia. As the reach of IIPW widens, more patients benefit from safer healthcare practices and reduced threat of healthcare-associated infections.

About APIC

APIC’s mission is to create a safer world through prevention of infection. The association’s more than 15,000 members direct infection prevention programs that save lives and improve the bottom line for hospitals and other healthcare facilities. APIC advances its mission through patient safety, implementation science, competencies and certification, advocacy, and data standardization. Visit APIC online at apic.org. Follow APIC on Twitter: twitter.com/apic and Facebook: facebook.com/APICInfectionPreventionandYou. For information on what patients and families can do, visit APIC’s Infection Prevention and You website at http://www.apic.org/InfectionPreventionandYou.
How to get involved

IIPW 2016
The 2016 theme for International Infection Prevention Week is “Break the Chain of Infection.” This year, APIC wants spread the message about how the public and healthcare professionals can help “Break the Chain of Infection” in healthcare settings and in the community.

Break the Chain of Infection
There are many different germs and infections inside and outside of the healthcare setting. Despite the variety of viruses and bacteria, germs spread from person to person through a common series of events. Therefore, to prevent germs from infecting more people, we must break the chain of infection. No matter the germ, there are six points at which the chain can be broken and a germ can be stopped from infecting another person. The six links include: the infectious agent, reservoir, portal of exit, means of transmission, portal of entry, and susceptible host.

- **Infectious agent** is the pathogen (germ) that causes diseases
- **Reservoir** includes places in the environment where the pathogen lives (this includes people, animals and insects, medical equipment, and soil and water)
- **Portal of exit** is the way the infectious agent leaves the reservoir (through open wounds, aerosols, and splatter of body fluids including coughing, sneezing, and saliva)
- **Means of transmission** are the ways the infectious agent can be passed on (through direct contact, ingestion, or inhalation)
- **Portal of entry** is the way the infectious agent can enter a new host (through broken skin, the respiratory tract, and mucous membranes)
- **Susceptible host** can be any person (the most vulnerable of whom are receiving healthcare, are immunocompromised, or have invasive medical devices including lines, devices, and airways)

The way to stop germs from spreading is by interrupting this chain at any link.

**Healthcare professionals** can break the chain by cleaning their hands frequently, staying up to date on their vaccines (including the flu shot), covering coughs and sneezes, staying home when sick, following the rules for standard and contact isolation, using personal protective equipment the right way, cleaning and disinfecting the environment, sterilizing medical instruments and equipment, following safe injection practices, and using antibiotics wisely to prevent antibiotic resistance. For other ways to protect patients, visit the APIC website: [http://professionals.site.apic.org/10-ways-to-protect-patients/](http://professionals.site.apic.org/10-ways-to-protect-patients/).

Download the [Break the Chain of Infection infographic](http://professionals.site.apic.org/10-ways-to-protect-patients/) and share it to raise awareness on how to stop the spread of infection.

**Healthcare consumers** can break the chain of infection by speaking up for their care, cleaning their hands regularly, asking about safe injection practices, asking to have their room cleaned, asking questions about medications, asking about vaccinations, knowing about infection preventionists, and becoming familiar with healthcare-associated infections. For other ways to stop germs from spreading, visit the APIC website: [http://consumers.site.apic.org/infection-prevention-basics/break-the-chain-of-infection/](http://consumers.site.apic.org/infection-prevention-basics/break-the-chain-of-infection/).
How to get involved

Podcasts/vodcasts
APIC has created a series of infection prevention podcasts for consumers and healthcare personnel. If you have two minutes to spare, you can learn about how to break the chain of infections in various healthcare settings. These podcasts/vodcasts are posted to the Infection Prevention and You website as well as APIC’s YouTube page. Topics include ambulatory care, hemodialysis, acute care, and long-term care settings.

Twitter chat
On Monday, October 17 at 2 p.m. ET the American Hospital Association and APIC will host a Twitter chat using #IIPWChat to discuss how healthcare providers, patients, and families can break the chain of infection in hospitals and other healthcare settings. Follow @APIC on Twitter (www.twitter.com/apic) and use the hashtag (#IIPWChat) to join.

Thunderclap
By joining APIC’s Break the Chain of Infection Thunderclap campaign, our message will reach as many people as possible at the same moment. Donate a Tweet or Facebook post to stop the spread of germs by educating everyone on ways they can break the chain of infection. On Wednesday, October 19 at 12 p.m. ET, the message will be shared simultaneously online.

The pledge: Infection prevention starts with me
APIC has two online pledges (one for healthcare professionals and a companion pledge for patients/families) to show your support for infection prevention. Sign the pledges for healthcare professionals or patients and families and encourage others to do the same. Both pledges are available in English and Spanish.

Polls and quizzes
Lighten up your day by taking our quiz to find out what germ best matches your personality. Ever wonder if your infection prevention views are similar to your peers’? Take our polls and quizzes to find out where you stand! Post your germy results on your social media pages and help others learn more about common germs and infections.

Infection prevention eCards
Brighten a colleague’s day with an infection prevention eCard to thank them for washing their hands (for the 100th time). It’s easy: just choose the image you want to send, fill out the contact fields, add a personalized message, and hit send.

Get social with APIC
APIC is committed to spreading knowledge and preventing infections. What better way is there to spread information about germs than going viral on social media? APIC has created social media memes for you to share on Facebook and Twitter.

Do you want more infection prevention news and tips? Stay in the loop!
Connect with APIC on Twitter and Facebook.
Sample social media posts

This year for IIPW, we want you to join the conversation on social media. APIC has prepared sample Facebook and Twitter posts that you can use at any time leading up to or during IIPW (October 16-22, 2016). We also encourage you to create your own posts.

Don’t forget to tag APIC and use the appropriate hashtags: #infectionprevention or #IIPW and #IIPWChat

Follow @APIC on Twitter: twitter.com/apic.
Like APIC on Facebook: facebook.com/APICInfectionPreventionandYou.
Direct your followers to www.apic.org/InfectionPreventionandYou.

Additionally, you can share APIC’s Facebook posts and retweet APIC’s tweets during this week.

Sample Facebook posts

- International Infection Prevention Week (#IIPW) is October 16-22 this year. One week of recognition, 365 days committed to infection prevention. Learn more about how you can break the chain of infection. www.apic.org/InfectionPreventionandYou

- Do you know how to stay safe from infections while in healthcare facilities? Be an empowered patient. "Like" the APIC’s Infection Prevention and You page and learn how. www.facebook.com/APICInfectionPreventionandYou

- Scary but true: According to the CDC, approximately 1 in 25 hospitalized patients will contract a healthcare-associated infection (HAI). About 75,000 patients who have an HAI will die during hospitalization. The good news: Patients can help break the chain of infection. "Like" the APIC’s Infection Prevention and You page and learn how. www.facebook.com/APICInfectionPreventionandYou

- International Infection Prevention Week (#IIPW), October 16-22, celebrates the importance of infection prevention and patient safety. Raise your voice and spread the word that everyone plays a role in #infectionprevention. www.facebook.com/APICInfectionPreventionandYou

- Break the chain of infection. Donate a Tweet or Facebook post to APIC’s Thunderclap campaign. On October 19 at 12 p.m. ET, you’ll see the message shared simultaneously on everyone’s social media. #IIPW www.apic.org/IIPWThunderclap

- Join APIC and the American Hospital Association for a Twitter chat on Monday, October 17 at 2 p.m. ET to discuss the important roles that patients, families and healthcare professionals play in breaking the chain of infection. Use the hashtag #IIPWChat to join the conversation.

- APIC has polls and quizzes available to test your infection prevention knowledge. Challenge your friends and colleagues to a battle of the germy wits. #IIPW http://consumers.site.apic.org/get-social-with-apic/polls-and-quizzes/

- Clean hands stop germs! Together, we can help make it easier for patients and care givers to talk about hand hygiene and infection prevention. Download, use, share, and
Sample social media posts

have fun with these during International Infection Prevention Week, Oct. 16-22 and beyond! #IIPW http://consumers.site.apic.org/get-social-with-apic/clean-hands-stop-germs/

- Think you are smarter than a 5th grader about #infectionprevention? Test your germ IQ with these quizzes from @APIC - http://consumers.site.apic.org/get-social-with-apic/polls-and-quizzes/ #IIPW

Sample Twitter posts

Please use the hashtag #IIPW in your tweets.

- Break the chain of #infections! Learn more: http://professionals.site.apic.org #IIPW
- Clean hands stop germs! Learn more and prevent #infections http://professionals.site.apic.org/get-social/clean-hands-stop-germs/ #IIPW
- Pledge your support for International Infection Prevention Week Oct 16-22 #IIPW @APIC - http://consumers.site.apic.org/get-social-with-apic/preventing-infections-starts-with-me/
- Check out these cute eCards for #infectionprevention week from @APIC: http://consumers.site.apic.org/get-social-with-apic/send-an-infection-prevention-ecard/
- #Infection prevention is something we can all agree on! Take the pledge to keep the germs away! #IIPW @APIC - http://consumers.site.apic.org/get-social-with-apic/preventing-infections-starts-with-me/
- Don’t be THAT GUY. Get your flu shot! #IIPW @APIC - http://consumers.site.apic.org/get-social-with-apic/
- Think you are smarter than a 5th grader about #infectionprevention? Test your germ IQ with these quizzes from @APIC. http://consumers.site.apic.org/get-social-with-apic/polls-and-quizzes/
- Flex your #infectionprevention muscles with these quizzes. #IIPW http://consumers.site.apic.org/polls-and-quizzes/
- Do you know who infection preventionists (IPs) are and how they keep you safe? http://consumers.site.apic.org/healthcare-settings/know-about-infection-preventionists/
- Sign @APIC’s #infectionprevention pledge for healthcare professionals http://professionals.site.apic.org/get-social/preventing-infections-starts-with-me/
- Sign @APIC’s #infectionprevention pledge for patients and families http://consumers.site.apic.org/get-social-with-apic/preventing-infections-starts-with-me/
- Break the chain of infection. Join @APIC’s Thunderclap campaign. #infectionprevention #IIPW www.apic.org/IIPWThunderclap
- What role can patients play in #infectionprevention? Learn more during #IIPW Oct. 16-22 www.apic.org/IPandYou
- #Infectionprevention starts with you, but it takes a team to protect patients. #IIPW Oct. 16-22 www.apic.org/IPandYou
Sample social media posts

- Think you know the top things patients can do to prevent infections? Test your #infectionprevention knowledge www.apic.org/IPandYou
- #IIPW, Oct. 16-22: One week of recognition, 365 days committed to #infectionprevention www.apic.org/IPandYou
- Show your support for #infectionprevention by participating in #IIPW! www.apic.org/IPandYou
- Patients are essential members of the healthcare team. Learn more during #IIPW #infectionprevention Oct. 16-22 www.apic.org/IPandYou
- Get everyone on board with #infectionprevention – include patients #IIPW www.apic.org/IPandYou

Sample Twitter chat posts

Please use the following tweets to promote the Twitter chat

- Join the #IIPWChat on Monday, October 17 at 2 pm ET and be part of the solution for #infectionprevention
- #IIPWChat Monday, October 17 at 2 pm ET – don’t miss it!
- What can patients and families do to break the chain of infection? Join the #IIPWChat, 10/17 at 2 pm ET
- 1 in 25 hospital patients gets an infection. Join the #IIPWChat 10/17 at 2 pm ET for a conversation on how to break the chain of infection
- Break the chain of infection – protect patients & loved ones from infections. Join the #IIPWChat on 10/17 at 2 pm ET
Break the chain of infection during IIPW 2016

The theme for this year’s observance of International Infection Prevention Week, October 16-22, is “Break the Chain of Infection.” The Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology (APIC) spearheads the commemoration of IIPW each year and has developed a “Break the Chain of Infection” infographic, which pinpoints six areas where healthcare professionals can stop the spread of germs. Visit the campaign website (www.apic.org/infectionpreventionandyou) for infographics, podcasts, quizzes, and other materials that are free to download and share.

International Infection Prevention Week (IIPW) is October 16-22

Led by the Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology (APIC), International Infection Prevention Week (IIPW) focuses attention on actions consumers and healthcare professionals can take to help prevent infections. Visit APIC’s Infection Prevention and You websites for consumers and healthcare professionals to take a patient safety pledge, learn how healthcare professionals can break the chain of infection in healthcare settings, download free ‘Clean hands stop germs’ materials, send an eCard, listen to podcasts, and share germ-themed polls, quizzes, and memes. Join the Twitter chat on October 17 at 2 pm ET using #IIPWChat and contribute to the Thunderclap scheduled for October 19.
Break the Chain of Infection

This year for International Infection Prevention Week, October 16-22, the Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology wants to help healthcare providers break the chain of infection and stop germs from spreading in all care settings. No matter the germ, each chain is made up of six links that can be broken to stop that germ from infecting another person. Download the Break the Chain of Infection infographic and share it to help educate healthcare professionals and others on how to stop the spread of infection.

Learn more at www.apic.org/infectionpreventionandyou.
[NAME OF ORGANIZATION] partners with APIC to celebrate International Infection Prevention Week (IIPW)

In recognition of the important role consumers and healthcare providers both play in infection prevention, [NAME OF ORGANIZATION] has partnered with APIC to promote International Infection Prevention Week (IIPW), October 16-22.

To celebrate IIPW and this year’s theme of “Break the Chain of Infection,” APIC has expanded the resources and activities for both patients and healthcare professionals found on the “Infection Prevention and You” website (www.apic.org/infectionpreventionandyou). The campaign features new informational materials to outline the six major ways at which the chain of infection can be broken.

APIC has also created podcasts and a pledge for patients and families and healthcare professionals that encourages each group to take action and set an example for others.

[NAME OF ORGANIZATION MEMBERS] are encouraged to visit the “Infection Prevention and You” website, share the infographic, and “Like” the “Infection Prevention and You” Facebook page (www.facebook.com/APICInfectionPreventionandYou). Include #IIPW in tweets, and follow @APIC on Twitter to learn more.

On October 17 at 2 p.m. ET, the American Hospital Association and APIC will host a Twitter chat, which will discuss how healthcare providers, patients, and families can break the chain of infection in hospitals and other healthcare settings. To participate, follow the hashtag #IIPWChat.

Established in 1986 by President Ronald Reagan, IIPW is celebrated the third week of October. APIC spearheads the annual effort to highlight the importance of infection prevention among healthcare professionals, administrators, legislators, and consumers. It is now formally recognized in many areas around the world including the U.S., Australia, the United Kingdom, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia. As IIPW expands, more patients benefit from safer healthcare practices and reduced threat of healthcare-associated infections. Learn more about IIPW on Facebook and Twitter (#IIPW).

# # #
Sample press release

[INSERT LOCAL APIC CHAPTER OR ORGANIZATION NAME] supports International Infection Prevention Week

[INSERT CITY], October [INSERT DATE], 2016 – To highlight the importance of infection prevention and raise awareness of everyone’s role in protecting the public, [NAME OF ORGANIZATION OR LOCAL APIC CHAPTER] is supporting International Infection Prevention Week (IIPW), October 16-22.

“We want to engage our community around this important topic and therefore will be hosting several special events to outline the ways in which patients, families, and healthcare providers can all work together to keep patients safe,” said [ORGANIZATIONAL SPOKESPERSON]. “It takes a team to break the chain of infection and we need everyone’s help.”

The 2016 IIPW theme is “Break the Chain of Infection.” Healthcare professionals from all settings and levels play an important role in infection prevention. To help educate healthcare professionals, APIC created a new infographic on the six points at which the chain of infection can be broken.

APIC has provided downloadable resources and activities for patients and families as well, including fact sheets on infection prevention basics, settings of care, and ways to learn more. The “Infection Prevention and You” website for consumers is accessible here: www.apic.org/infectionpreventionandyou.

Local IIPW activities that are planned include: [INSERT SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES AND DETAILS]

Established in 1986 by President Ronald Reagan, IIPW is celebrated the third week of October. APIC spearheads the annual effort to highlight the importance of infection prevention among healthcare professionals, administrators, legislators, and consumers. It is now formally recognized in many areas around the world including the U.S., Australia, the United Kingdom, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia. As IIPW expands, more patients benefit from safer healthcare practices and reduced threat of healthcare-associated infections.

Learn more about IIPW on Facebook and Twitter (#IIPW).

# # #
Logos and web buttons

Logos and web buttons are available for download on the Infection Prevention and You website. Please link to the Infection Prevention and You site by placing these web buttons on your website, Facebook page, blog, or other online platform and link to the site.

Instructions for adding the web buttons to your webpage:
1. Upload image and position as desired on webpage
2. Select “hyperlink” feature on the now uploaded image
3. Hyperlink to: www.apic.org/InfectionPreventionandYou
4. Save and publish the webpage

Traditional IIPW Logo

International Infection Prevention Week October 16-22, 2016

I Heart Clean Hands

I Love Clean Hands

Clean Hands

www.apic.org/IIPW
Logos and web buttons

Spanish logo
Yo Manos Limpias

Arabic logo
I Heart Clean Hands

Hebrew logo
Infection Prevention and You

IIPW downloadable web buttons

International Infection Prevention Week
OCTOBER 16-22, 2016
Help raise awareness about infection prevention.
Learn more.
APIC photo release form

I, __________________________________________________________ (please print), whose address is
____________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________
, hereby grant to the Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology (APIC), as well as
to their respective representatives, chapters, agents, members, and employees, the right to take
photographs of me and my property the right to use such photographs, royalty free, with or without my
name, for any lawful purpose, including but not limited to, for the purposes of publication, illustration,
promotion, advertising and internet content, in any form or medium, in print or electronically. I further
acknowledge and agree that APIC shall own the copyright in the aforementioned photographs.

I have read, understand and agree to the above release.

Signature: ________________________________________________

Date: ____________________________________________________

Signature of parent or guardian if under the age of 18: ______________________________________________

Name of parent or guardian if under the age of 18: ______________________________________________
IIPW by the day

International Infection Prevention Week 2016 runs from Sunday, October 16 to Saturday, October 22. APIC has provided a variety of activities for each day of IIPW.

Sunday
Mark your calendar for APIC’s Twitter chat with the American Hospital Association—it is Monday, October 17 at 2 p.m. ET. Look for the chat with this hashtag: #IIPWChat.

Make sure you have signed up to participate in our Thunderclap. You can join via Twitter, Facebook, and/or Tumblr, and invite your friends and followers to do the same. On Wednesday, October 19 at 12 p.m. ET, you’ll see the message shared simultaneously on everyone’s social media.

Monday
Participate in our Twitter chat with the American Hospital Association to discuss ways healthcare professionals and patients can break the chain of infection. Search for and use #IIPWChat to participate in the chat at 2 p.m. ET.

Peruse the Infection Prevention and You website for educational materials for healthcare professionals and patients, like the Bugs and outbreaks pages for healthcare professionals and the setting-specific infection prevention pages for consumers:
- Acute-care (hospital) infection prevention
- Ambulatory care (outpatient) facility
- Behavioral health facility
- Dental center
- Dialysis center
- Long-term care facility
- Public health facility

Tuesday
Help spread the word to others that it’s IIPW. Encourage your friends, family and colleagues to take the infection prevention pledge. There is one for patients and families and one for healthcare professionals.

Watch and listen to the entertaining podcasts/vodcasts on how to break the chain of infection in various healthcare settings.

Tune into the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC) IIPW webinar at 10 a.m. ET (details coming soon).
IIPW by the day

Wednesday
Make sure to join our Thunderclap via Twitter, Facebook, and/or Tumblr, and invite your friends and followers to do the same! At 12 p.m. ET, you'll see the message shared simultaneously on everyone's social media. Print out the new “Break the Chain of Infection” infographic and share it with healthcare personnel in your organization.

Share the “Break the Chain of Infection” podcasts/vodcasts via social media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn).

Print out the clean hands stop germs fliers or other infographics for consumers and place them in patient care areas.

Thursday
It’s #ThrowBackThursday. Share a memory or moment that made you proud to be an infection preventionist. Or send a fun IIPW eCard to a friend or colleague to thank them for preventing infections.

Friday
Keep the momentum going, the fun doesn't need to end! Back by popular demand, take the “What Germ Are You?” online quiz and share the link with your friends and colleagues. More interested in antibiotic stewardship? Take our “Do You Know the ABC’s of Antibiotics?” quiz.

These are a fun way to educate and interact with others about infection prevention. Please share your result via Facebook or Twitter to encourage others to take the quiz and learn more about common germs and infections.

Saturday
Take the opportunity to talk to a neighbor, friend, or family member about infection prevention and what’s needed to keep patients safe. Whether you supply your child’s little league team with hand sanitizer or share helpful information with someone you know who is receiving healthcare, your knowledge could make a difference. Infection prevention occurs every day of the year, so don’t miss an opportunity to spread the word in your community!
IIPW activities

Activities for community engagement
Here are ideas for events or activities to help raise awareness about the importance of infection prevention in your community.

- Together with your local APIC chapter, reach out to your local health department, hospitals, and schools to organize a joint campaign to promote infection prevention to the public.
- Pass out hand sanitizers and literature about infection prevention to community members at:
  - Bus stops
  - Grocery stores
  - Ball parks
  - Bowling alleys
  - Or any other busy public area.
- Organize a hand washing and “cover your cough” demonstration for students at local schools.
- Plan a flu vaccine clinic for the public and pass out literature on why infection prevention is important.
- “Like” the APIC Facebook page and drive consumers to it to engage them in conversations about the importance of infection prevention.
- Work with the local schools to hold a hand washing poster contest that allows kids to be creative about infection prevention. Then pass out IIPW t-shirts or other merchandise to the participants.
- Use Halloween as a creative theme:
  - Create an “Infection Prevention Haunted House”
  - Dress up as your favorite microorganism
  - Use black light to show germs
  - Give candy prizes or vendor giveaways
- Use the Advocacy Toolkit to help guide your outreach and plan a visit to your state legislature.
- Contact your legislators to advocate on behalf of infection prevention through the APIC “Take action” page.
- Read the Prevention Strategist article titled “Global to Local” for more inspiring ideas.
IIPW activities

Activities for healthcare professionals
Here are ideas for events or activities to help raise awareness about the importance of infection prevention in your healthcare facility. In addition to the list below, check out our get social page for additional ideas.

- Use IIPW logos and other sample materials to create signs, posters, banners, screen savers, and announcements for your facility.
- Print out the Infection Prevention and You infographic, brochures, flyers, and posters to educate patients about preventing infection.
- Draft a letter to your healthcare administration that includes details on IIPW and how infection prevention contributes to patient safety.
- Insert IIPW announcements in employee newsletters.
- Add an IIPW message to your email signature line.
- Use fluorescent hand lotion to educate employees about hand hygiene.
- Order IIPW branded merchandise for booths, displays, or prizes.
- Create IIPW tray liners for cafeteria food trays.
- Create infection prevention quizzes; offer prizes, such as IIPW stickers or other themed giveaways.
- Take a “what’s wrong?” approach. Use photos or posters for staff to identify infection prevention mistakes.
- Organize a group to view the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC) IIPW webinar on Tuesday, October 18 (details coming soon).
- Show vignettes from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) infection prevention video, “Partnering to Heal,” during staff meetings or play videos from the APIC Film Festival.
- Offer employee flu shots during IIPW.
- Promote your safety nurses during IIPW – Have them staff booths/events, give flu shots; display their photos, feature their bios in the employee newsletter.
Media tips

If you’re planning an event to celebrate IIPW, here are tips to help you publicize your event through the local media.

The basics

Newspapers: Pay attention to what the newspaper covers and which reporter writes about healthcare. For daily stories, deadlines for reporters to hand in their stories are usually from 5 p.m. on. So be sure to get important news to the paper well before then. For in-depth feature stories, deadlines will be longer.

Calendars: Use a newspaper calendar column to alert readers to your events. These can be found not only in newspapers but in local newsletters, in community and religious organization bulletins, and on local radio and TV. When calling, ask for the person who handles community calendars.

Television/camera crews: If you want to invite a camera crew to your event, we recommend that you contact the assignment desk first and ask to speak with the assignment editor/producer—they usually assign camera crews to local events. Keep in mind that it is difficult to get a camera crew to show up at your event on the weekend because of reduced staff.

Radio: Radio is an excellent way to reach large numbers of people. Pitch your spokesperson to join the morning or evening show to promote your local event.

Media list: First, make a list of the media in your local city who you think might be interested in your story or event and their contact information (name, beat, phone number, fax number, and email). As you know, email is a very common method of communicating these days but sending a fax is not unheard of. It is important you approach the right reporter or editor. You can often find lists of staff and their responsibilities on the publication or outlet’s website, usually under “About Us” or “Contact Us.” Or you can call the main telephone number and say, “I need to talk to a reporter about attending a local event on infection prevention. With whom do you think I should speak?”

Press release: The press release serves as a prototype story already written for the reporter. Typically, journalists will use the release as an outline. However, at smaller papers, they may also print your release with only minor edits. Email or fax the release to reporters on your media list along with your pitch letter. We have included a sample press release in this toolkit.

Pitch letter: A pitch letter is a way to grab the reporter’s attention. Send a pitch letter via email (often sent with a press release). Written as a short, punchy, bulleted version of a press release, the pitch letter often contains statistics, if applicable, and supporting evidence for your story, listing who is available for an interview. Sending a pitch letter is usually an early step in reaching out to a reporter to determine their interest. Be sure to come up with a short, descriptive subject line that will capture the reporter’s attention. Double check your pitch email for mistakes before pressing the send button.
**Media tips**

**Media alert:** If you want media to cover your event, use a media alert to drive attendance. Media alerts are short and highlight important information such as who, what, where, when and why. You can easily draft a media alert using language from your press release. These are typically sent two or three days prior to your event and should be sent to all media on your list.

**Pitch calls:** When contacting reporters via telephone, it is important not to call when they are on deadline (4 p.m. and after). It’s possible you may get no more than 60 seconds. Boil your pitch down to three sentences that you write down first and which you can expand on if the reporter shows interest. It’s likely a reporter will be noncommittal and ask for more information.

**Spokespersons:** Determine who your chapter spokesperson(s) will be, should the media want to speak with an expert or a chapter representative. Have on hand a brief biography for each spokesperson summarizing their experience.

**Backgrounder/fact sheet:** If a reporter shows interest in your pitch, it is always good to have background documents that you can send to them providing more information (if applicable). The backgrounder or fact sheet is a one to two page document summarizing your topic.

**Interview tips**

Congratulations! You’ve gotten the media interested. Here are tips on how to prepare for an interview with a reporter.

**Be prepared**
- Go over your objectives for the interview again. Memorize your talking points. Anticipate tough questions and your responses.

**Take control**
- Find every opportunity to emphasize your key messages. If the interviewer does not ask a question that lets you do this, bring it up yourself in a tactful way.

**Speak carefully**
- Talk in short, quotable sentences. Give the reporter time to digest and take notes.

**Be interesting**
- Use real examples and anecdotes. Think of a couple of obviously quotable things to say. (“Taking on healthcare issues is like waking up a hibernating bear.”)

**Be honest**
- If you lie or exaggerate, your credibility is shot, and everything you said will be in doubt.

**Speak plainly**
- Use familiar terms and not jargon – speak to the average viewer or listener. Even if the reporter is an expert on your issue, his readers are not.

**Follow up**
- When offering to get back to the reporter with additional information, do so quickly. Information that comes in after a deadline is useless.
Media tips

Things to avoid during interviews

Don’t dodge questions
   Either answer or say you don’t know but you’ll try and find out. Never improvise. Never lie.

Don’t wait for the reporter to ask the right question
   And don’t let him take control of the interview. If he wanders away from the points you want to make, bring him back.

Know when to stop talking
   When you have finished your answer, stop. Do not dig yourself into a hole. An old reporter’s trick is to remain silent in hopes this will rattle you and make you continue to talk; increasing the odds you’ll say something you don’t want to.

Unless you trust the reporter implicitly, never go “off the record”
   Assume that everything you say can and will appear in print or in quotes. Be careful. Do not say anything that could be turned into a negative and never assume a reporter’s friendliness allows you any liberties to go off message. Remember, once an interview is in a reporter’s notes, they can refer back to it not only for the initial story but in the future.

Never say “no comment”
   There is no need. Give an honest reason why you can’t answer. “We haven’t yet worked out our policy on that, so I can’t answer.”
   
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