

Build a relationship with your local media outlets

- ✓ Identify **your local outlets** – newspapers, both daily and non-daily; news websites, radio stations, including public radio; and television stations.
- ✓ **Find out who covers health care, consumer issues and small business** at each outlet. Often, this information can be found on the outlet’s website. If you can’t find it, call or email and ASK. **You need a name and contact information.**
- ✓ **Follow these reporters on social media accounts.** But before you do, make sure your social media profile identifies you as a pharmacy owner and that you link to your website. **Make sure your website is up to date.** Your website is your public business card – it tells anyone who visits who you are and what services you offer. And it establishes you as a LOCAL EXPERT. Introduce yourself and offer your expertise on matters related to pharmacy – opioid misuse, for example. If your story is covered, be sure to link to it on your Facebook, Twitter and website – exposure’s a win-win for you and the outlet.
- ✓ **Let reporters know of any pharmacy events or services you offer.** Examples: Immunizations, diabetes education, med sync, etc. Link the service to something that is beneficial to the public. Post an article on your site about how med sync improves health outcomes and Tweet a link. During flu season, promote shots – and WHY you need one.
- ✓ **Pay attention to the news.** When national media made a big splash out of CVS’ \$8.99 same-day delivery, it was a good opportunity to let your local media know that you’ve offered FREE delivery for years. Watch *qAM* for marketing tips and ideas you can use to craft a local story.
- ✓ Remember that reporters look for **stories that affect a lot of people** (their readers, listeners and viewers). That’s the angle they’re looking for. For example, DIR fees are a huge issue for pharmacists. But why should the public care about your business problems – they have work problems too. So, flip the story around. The public should care about DIR fees because if they’re eliminated, Medicare costs will be lower (taxpayer benefit), we’ll have greater drug transparency in drug pricing (greater budget predictability for seniors), and we’ll preserve access to community pharmacies (consumer choice and convenience). **Always consider how the public will benefit and how the average person is affected.** That will be more likely to pique a report’s interest. If your story pitch is “me-me-me,” they’re not likely to be interested.