



The Miscarriage Association

Information for media volunteers

Thank you for offering to become a media volunteer. By working positively with the media – TV, radio, newspapers, magazine and online – we can put a spotlight on the issues surrounding miscarriage and pregnancy loss across the UK (and sometimes beyond). Raising awareness of the Miscarriage Association means we can let people know we are there to help them through – and helps us to reach people who can help us, too. In the longer-term it also increases opportunities to secure funds to help us continue our work, whether from public bodies or individual donors and fundraisers.

Here is some insight to help you (and us!) get the most out of your interview(s).

What the media want

The media usually want human interest (personal) stories that will chime with their particular audiences/readership. They'll often want to speak to you to get a personal angle on a news story – such as some new research or statistics or a press release or announcement from the M.A., such as the launch of a new pregnancy loss resource. We will speak to you before passing your details to any media outlet and we can talk through what we expect a particular journalist, publication or broadcaster is likely to be looking for.

To share or not to share ...

Prior to agreeing to any interview, think about how much of your story you feel comfortable sharing – it's your choice how much you divulge. Are there loved ones you may want to speak to before an article appears or an interview is broadcast? If during the interview you feel like you are being drawn into a conversation you are not comfortable with, or into giving more information than you would like, it's absolutely fine to say 'I'd rather not answer that' and move on.

Practicalities

Consider how you will do any interviews. Are you happy to speak in person, or would you prefer to do this over the phone? Is it OK for the media to come to you? (This doesn't have to be your home – it can be at a public place). Are you OK to be on camera? What about live interviews? Are you happy to have your photograph taken – or supply one? If you've thought about these things in advance, you won't be taken by surprise with any requests.

It's OK to say 'no'

We really don't want or expect you to do anything you don't feel comfortable with. So if there is a particular publication or programme you don't trust or dislike, then you might decide not to be interviewed for that outlet – or maybe talk it through with us first. We all have preconceptions about different media, but it's worth remembering that, on the whole, journalists want to get things right and do a good job. Some media

may have political leanings that you might not be inclined to agree with – but they probably also have a large audience which it would be useful to reach. In the end, it's your decision, and we fully respect that.

Dos and don'ts

Don't feel you have to answer medical questions - in fact, it's generally better that you don't. Refer them back to the M.A. website or ask them to get back in touch with us. Do also avoid naming professionals who you feel gave poor treatment or care; we cannot afford libel cases! On the other hand, do give positive publicity to professionals, hospitals etc who gave good care. Do consider the consequences of criticising friends, family or colleagues, too.

The finished article

Sometimes, you might not be entirely happy with the final piece. It might be much shorter than you'd imagined (especially considering it might have been a fairly lengthy interview), or you might even get cut altogether. It's hard not to be disappointed when this happens – particularly as you might have changed an appointment or overcome nerves to do the interview – but it's something you might need to be prepared for. Occasionally you might get misquoted in an article – or they might print something you would rather they didn't. If you do say something in an interview that you would rather they not use, be really clear at the time and ask that they remove it. You can ask to see an article before it goes to print – whether they will share it or not depends on the policy of the publication.

A mention for the M.A.

We hope the media will ask about the Miscarriage Association – but they don't always! If you can include a mention, that would be really helpful. It might be useful to have a sentence or two prepared about how the M.A. supported you – and how we are there to help others.

We hope you have found this useful and don't forget if you have any queries or concerns, do contact us to talk it through.

Thank you again and we really hope you enjoy being a media volunteer for the M.A.