

A guide for the media

On weekdays, you can reach Nelson Marlborough District Health Board's media and communications advisor on **03 546 1824** or email Katherine.rock@nmdhb.govt.nz

For emergency inquiries after hours and at weekends, please call **03 546 1800** and ask to be put through to the duty manager.

Communications can save you time and often we can put you in contact with a busy practitioner who may not otherwise understand the demands of your deadlines.

We have an in-house visual communications unit and can provide you with images of our hospitals, and board members suitable for publication.

Our communications advisor is experienced in dealing with the media. Should your enquiry be urgent and you have had no reply within your deadline time, please contact the Board Administrator on 03 546 1233.

What we can say:

- **We do** release condition updates but will not confirm other details unless we have consent from the patient or their parent or guardian.
- While we encourage families to allow the media to share information, we respect their right to decide whether to release details.

We can confirm admission and provide a condition report for the patient, limited to one of the following:

- **Comfortable:** vital signs stable, within normal limits, patient comfortable, indicators favourable
- **Stable:** vital signs stable and within normal limits, patient may be uncomfortable, indicators questionable (Serious but stable may indicate the patient condition is not expected to improve.)
- **Improving:** Usually used after a patient has been serious, or critical. Generally means some vital signs have stabilised.
- **Serious:** Vital signs not stable, patient usually in ICU.
- **Critical:** Vital signs unstable, not within normal limits, indicators unfavourable.
- **Treated and Discharged:** the patient was discharged from hospital after being treated. The patient may have follow-up clinics to attend with their GP or at an outpatient clinic.

If patients/parents agree to pass on additional details to our communications advisor we will obtain consent for this release of information as quickly as possible and report these additional facts.

When patients or their family members decline consent for release of information and request that all information about them or their child remains confidential, we are unable to comment on such patients.

Confirmation of a patient's death occurs only with family consent and after notifying next of kin. Sometimes we will refer you to the police media liaison officer.

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Visiting Nelson Marlborough hospitals or sites managed by NMDHB

- The Communications Unit or Duty Manager After Hours must approve access by the media to any of our hospitals, facilities or DHB property for professional duties.
- At Nelson and Wairau Hospitals, you must sign in at the Main Entrance/Enquiries
- At the other hospitals, you must sign in at reception.
- Please let us know your needs in advance. If your plan includes a photograph of a patient, family or a staff member at our hospitals, we can obtain photo consent on your behalf in advance. This will avoid delays. In group situations, Communications will be on hand to let you know which patients you can photograph.
- In consideration of the rights to confidentiality of our patients, their families and our staff, Communications will confirm all recording and interviews on hospital property.
- Patient or parental permission alone is insufficient.
- Communications staff can also advise on staff commitments, treatment schedules and requirements for infection control and arrange a mutually convenient time and location for your interview.

In the event of a trauma or an internal emergency, the media plays a vital role by providing the community with the latest news and public service announcements. Our disaster response plan includes operation of an on-site media centre to make sure your needs are met.

Specific Filming/Interviewing/ Observation Conditions

- The rights to privacy, confidentiality and safety of the patient, his/her family and staff, are paramount at all times.
- The premises must be left in the same condition as they are found.
- Film crew must observe the hospital's health and safety procedures e.g. obeying fire alarms.
- Any deviations from the plan or timetable to be discussed with the clinical consultant and the communications advisor.
- NO close ups of patients or families unless permission is granted by the patient and/or families at the consultant initiation.
- NO staff to be interviewed.
- Staff must give their consent to be in any background shots.
- If staff ask the crew to stop shooting at any time, they must stop immediately.
- If staff ask the crew to leave NMDHB facilities at any time, they must leave immediately.

Filming will not hinder delivery access and bus access to the centre or hospital.