**Patient and carer spokespeople**

**Media case studies**

Overview:

We are looking for case studies for our press and public affairs work.

The Strategic Communications team works to get news outlets and the government talking about the Royal College of Psychiatrists and the important work we do. If you see us on the telly or in the paper, it was probably arranged by us. When the College is mentioned in Parliament, it’s because we’re out meeting MPs and Peers to raise awareness of psychiatry and mental health in general.

The best way to explain mental ill health is through people’s lived experience. Journalists, MPs and the public respond to real-life human experiences that make them sit up and go, “wow – I never realised it could be like that”. That personal connection is what engages people, so we need people to share their stories.

Examples of a case study:

In press, we use case studies to bring news to life. A case study could be used on TV, radio or in the newspapers – journalists are always looking for the first-person element. Ideally, you be comfortable to be named and potentially have your photo taken – but case studies can also be anonymous. We would supply a media outlet with a ready-written case study or arrange an interview for you to talk with a journalist.

In public affairs, we use written case studies for parliamentary briefings or evidence to committees to help us illustrate the current situation around mental health in England and Wales. These might be quoted in the House of Commons during a debate or published on a Government website. These can be anonymous.

What do I need to do?

If you’re interested in sharing your story in press or public affairs, please fill in the form below with as much information as possible. If there is something you’d like to tell us as background, but don’t want to share with the media, please let us know.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Name: | My experience with mental health  (please include as much info as possible): | I am happy to do…:  (please delete as applicable) | Email: | Phone: | Anonymity: |
| Click or tap here to enter text. | Eg I had to travel miles away from my home to get treatment for an eating disorder on an inpatient ward. I waited weeks for treatment and was sent to an unfamiliar environment which made my recovery much more difficult.  Eg I found it hard to talk to anyone about my eating disorder and waited a long time to seek help from a professional because of stigma.  Click or tap here to enter text. | * TV work * Radio work * Newspapers * Magazines * Interviews over the phone (radio/newspapers   /magazines)   * Interviews face-to-face (TV) | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap here to enter text. | We appreciate this depends on the circumstance, but please let us know if there is anything you’d like to keep out of the media, eg family issues/the name of a hospital you were treated.  Click or tap here to enter text. |

Please return this form to [press@rcpsych.ac.uk](mailto:press@rcpsych.ac.uk) with ‘Case study for media’ in the subject line. Before you are put forward for any media work, we will arrange an informal chat with one of our Communications team to discuss case study work and answer any questions you have.

We will then write up a short case study of your lived experience to keep on file and will contact you with any requests from media for interviews.

Please note: Unfortunately media requests often come in at short notice. This is sadly beyond our control, but we will always aim to give you as much time as possible.

FAQs

Q. What will I be asked about?

A. Your experiences. We always try to find out from a journalist what they want to get from an interview so we can let you know what you’ll be asked. As a case study, what people want to know is your story – nobody knows ‘what happened’ better than you, so you’re always in control.

If there is an aspect of your medical history that you’d like to keep private, tell us and we can let the journalist know what they cannot ask.

Q. How will I know what being a case study involves?

A. There are lots of types of media – and lots of types of case study. The responsibilities and commitments of being a case study will vary depending on the type of media. For example, if the BBC wants to do an interview on the breakfast news, you might have to travel to Manchester and be ready to film at 7am. If the Telegraph wants to do an interview for an article in print, speaking to someone on the phone for 10 minutes would be enough.

To help you understand the requirements and make your decision, we will provide an individualised briefing for each opportunity so you’re aware of timings and any travel implications.

Q. Do I have to be on TV?

A. No. When you sign up to be a case study, you can let us know what type of media you are comfortable dealing with. We would never put you forward for a TV/radio interview without asking you first.

Q. Can I be anonymous?

A. It depends. We are ideally looking for someone who is comfortable being interviewed, named and photographed.

However, we appreciate that you might be more comfortable being named in some situations than others, so we will always explain what the piece will be about, where it will go and who will see it/hear it to help you make a decision about anonymity.

We understand that not everyone is able to be identified, but there are lots of opportunities to use anonymised case studies. For example, we could use anonymous written experiences for public affairs work or in a news article that doesn’t need to speak to someone directly.

Q. Can I change my mind?

A. We understand press work can be a bit daunting, so we will support you as much as possible. We will always try wherever possible to ensure a trained communications professional from our team accompanies you to interviews.

If you’re open with us, we can make sure we never put you in a situation that makes you feel uncomfortable. But nobody can know how they’ll feel until the day comes – and if we suggest something to you (eg. a TV interview), you’re always within your rights to turn it down.

I agree for my details to be passed on to third parties for the purposes of College media work.

I have read, understood and agree to abide by the [College’s code of conduct](https://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/pdf/Code%20of%20Conduct%20Final_Council12Jan2018.pdf).

Click or tap here to enter text.

Print name

Date: / /