

Media Policy

RCOphth media relations and press office activities

Updated Sept 2016

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Royal College of Ophthalmologists (RCOphth) engages with the media on a range of issues relating to ophthalmology and the wider health agenda.
- 1.2 We respond to media enquiries and also initiate media engagement in order to raise awareness of ophthalmic issues, and promote the RCOphth's work.
- 1.3 This Policy sets out our approach to handling media requests and press releases. Further information about our press office function and processes are included later in the document.

2. Media Requests

- 2.1 We receive a range of media enquiries from public, consumer and trade press, across many media platforms, including broadcast, print, online and social media. Requests may be on an ad hoc basis or in response to headlines or current affairs.
- 2.2 We seek to provide accurate, informative content that is consistent with the tone and values of the college, as set out in our Royal Charter. We respond to requests for information, statistics and statements on a range of ophthalmic issues, for example:
 - Information about ophthalmic services.
 - Statements from members and college officers on topical issues.
 - Statistics about the ophthalmic workforce.
- 2.3 We do not provide clinical advice on individual cases.
- 2.4 We assess the urgency and relevance of media enquiries to the RCOphth's work in order to decide whether we are best placed, or able, to respond effectively. Further information about our aims can be found in our five year strategic plan 2015-2019.
- 2.5 We undertake to assess and, where appropriate, action media requests in a timely manner in order to maintain positive media relations and so that we can be proactive and responsive in our communication activities.

3. Press Releases

- 3.1 We issue press releases in order to publicise and promote the College, our activities, values, and goals, and to encourage participation with our work where appropriate.

3.2 We aim to issue timely press releases about college work and important developments that affect ophthalmology, for example:

- Publication of college research reports.
- Statement of support for external guidance documents.
- Position statement on external policy change.

3.3 Press releases are published on the public facing section of our website so that they may be accessed by the media and public.

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