

Media Invite

PURPOSE: To provide an invitation to media to attend the harm reduction training event with the goal of developing a news story and sharing your organization's community harm reduction efforts.

Inviting media to your training event is a useful way to let your local community know that you are holding a community harm reduction training event. It is also a way to notify your local community that you and your organization are a source of information on harm reduction in your area.

CONTACTING LOCAL MEDIA

Local media like to share compelling stories about the people in their community, like you. The best way to inform them about your story is by sending a pitch note.

A pitch note is where you'll be able to share your message in a way that can show the reporter how the story might unfold for their audience. This is also your opportunity to introduce yourself to the reporter, tell your story and explain why it's important that they highlight harm reduction events in their area.

To support your story, you might want to include an angle or reason as an effective tool to encourage media to engage in your story, this could be about local stats in your area or a situation that has led to the harm reduction event taking place. You can find general stats about the opioid crisis on the Canadian Government website or by visiting your province's government website.

You should contact them 1-2 weeks in advance with your pitch note to give reporters enough time to prepare to attend your event. If you don't hear back within a few days, send a follow-up email or contact them by phone to see if they are interested in covering your event. Their contact details will likely be found on the media's website. If you can't find it, call the general line and ask to speak with a producer, editor, or other newsroom contact.

PITCH TIPS:

- Don't try and include every aspect and detail of your event. The pitch note should be no longer than one page in length and should cover the main points that you would like covered.
- Reference relevant statistics where possible to show where the information comes from. Media can potentially use them as research points for any feature or more in-depth stories.
- References can provide credibility to the content of the letter; however, linking to another website may require the consent of that organization (unless they are a public health/government agency).
- An image is a great addition to your story and you should have one ready should someone ask for it. It should be in colour, be of high-resolution, with a plain background with no visible logos or brands. An image relevant to the event is best, such as yourself or the people organizing the event.
- If you include photos, ensure you ask permission from individuals in the photos, or seek permission if the photo is copyrighted. Always provide a photo credit to the photographer.

Below, please find a template pitch note. This template illustrates how you could share your story with local media via email, with the aim of inviting them to cover your event and potentially participate in the event.

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Subject Line Example: Invitation to Participate in Local Harm Reduction Training Event

Hello [INSERT NAME OF PHARMACIST OR FIRST RESPONDER],

My name is [INSERT NAME] and I am from [INSERT ORGANIZATION] and we are concerned with the rising number of opioid overdoses experienced within our community and across Canada.

With this concern in mind, we would like to organize a community harm reduction training event to help teach our attendees to identify the symptoms of an opioid overdose and to administer the antidote, naloxone, and we would like to invite you to conduct the training with our attendees. The proposed details of our event are listed below:

DATE:

TIME:

LOCATION:

What we would need of you:

- Explain how to identify an opioid overdose
- Demonstrate how to administer naloxone nasal spray
- Demonstrate how to administer injectable naloxone
- Answer questions of our attendees about the opioid crisis from the perspective of a community pharmacist (first responder).

With the number of opioid related hospitalizations in Canada increasing, (in 2018, the increase was estimated at 27% over the previous five years), I am sure you will agree that this training is vital to communities to better educate and equip ourselves on what we can do to help people we encounter that may need our assistance.

We know that the opioid crisis affects people from every walk of life and that it does not discriminate. Families across the country are dealing with the hardship of seeing a loved one suffer due to an accidental opioid overdose, which can affect anyone using opioids, and so we're seeing the effects reach every corner of society.

We hope you are able to attend and support our community harm reduction training event that will be a valuable source of information to our attendees. I will be in touch over the next week to discuss your availability and potential participation in our community harm reduction training event.

Best,

[INSERT NAME]

[INSERT TITLE AND ORGANIZATION NAME]

[INSERT PHONE NUMBER]