

**BOARD POLICY**

Subject: Media Contact	Date Approved: April 15, 2009
Approved by: Board of Directors	Date Revised:
Specific to: All Staff, Board of Directors and Volunteers	Next Review Date: September 2017

**PRINCIPLE:**

The North Huron Family Health Team (NHFHT) is committed to the reasonable disclosure of information to the media within the guidelines of related policies such as the Privacy Policy.

**POLICY:**

All inquiries from the media, e.g. newspapers, newsletters, radio, television, internet, etc. shall be directed to and handled and/or coordinated by the Executive Director or Board Chair

Staff shall not disclose information to the media with respect to the corporation, its operation and services without prior approval by the Executive Director, who will be immediately advised of any requests of this nature. The Executive Director shall also be alerted if it is anticipated that a program or service may attract media attention.

Client information is confidential and shall not be released to the media under any circumstances without prior, written, informed consent of the client (e.g. local newspaper wishing to feature services through a family pictorial or story).

It is important that any media communication is presented in a clear, consistent, professional image of the NHFHT and that the corporation does not take, or is seen to be taking, a partisan position on issues of public policy. As a result, the following principles shall be embraced and guidelines followed in relations with the media:

**Media Contact Principles:**

- All contact coordinated by and through the office of the Executive Director,
- Information given to the media should be based on the knowledge we have through our work,
- Appreciation is given to the fact that multiple stakeholders may have interests in conflict,
- Public statements should be non-partisan,
- The NHFHT actively encourages individuals and groups to represent their own interests.

**PROCEDURES:**

**Media Contact Guidelines:**

When representing NHFHT and its services:

- Any contact with the media shall be reported to the Executive Director, and in his/her absence a designate, as soon as the contact is known.

- Any media contact that is potentially contentious shall be reported to the Executive Director immediately.
- The Executive Director will endeavor to keep the Board aware of all contact.

When representing issues:

- Staff will support clients and community members who choose to speak with the media.
- When different stakeholders are in conflict or hold different views on any given issue, efforts will be made to represent the issues in a balanced way and to acknowledge the divergent views of stakeholders.

When using the media to promote NHFHT and or its concerns:

- Requests from the media for Board members to speak on behalf of the organization must be made through the Executive Director.
- Contacts with the media to promote a position taken by the NHFHT should be coordinated by the Executive Director and overseen by the Board of Directors and be consistent with the approved communication and strategic plan.

Maintaining client confidentiality:

- If the media is to be on site, a plan of action shall be developed and discussed so that all staff on the site are aware of their role.
- When media is on site precautions shall be taken to both minimally disrupt the activities of the NHFHT facilities and protect patient confidentiality and rights.
- Patients shall not be filmed, photographed or interviewed without their informed and signed consent.