



I. 2.8.4 Public and Media Relations

Chapter 2 - General	Original Effective Date: April 2000
Section: 2.4 Administrative and Support Departments	Date Last Reviewed: November 2022
Responsible Entity: Vice President/Chief Marketing and Communications Officer	Date Last Revised: November 2022

II. Purpose

To establish requirements for interacting with public and/or news media representatives and requests for interviews in order to provide timely and accurate information regarding UT Health San Antonio's programs and activities.

III. Scope

This policy applies to all interactions with public and news media outlets.

IV. Policy

The public and media relations staff is designated to act as the bridge between the members of the news media and members of the UT Health San Antonio community, including by not limited to administration, faculty, staff, students, residents and trainees.

Public and media relations staff consult on various aspects of UT Health San Antonio's public relations. The public and media relations staff members produce news releases, media advisories, public service announcements and faculty/subject matter expert appearances for local, regional, national and international media, as well as assist the news media with their stories by connecting them to UT Health San Antonio spokespeople.

A. Requirements

1. Individuals who are administration, faculty, staff, students, residents or trainees are to contact the [public and media relations staff](#) prior to contacting a member of the news media regarding any UT Health San Antonio matter. If a member of the news media directly contacts an individual of these groups, they are to coordinate with the public and media relations staff prior to responding to the member of the news media.
2. In response to a request by a member of the news media for an interview to take place in a UT Health San Antonio clinical or clinical research area, a public and media relations staff member must notify appropriate clinical leadership.

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B. News media access to clinical or clinical research areas

1. The public and media relations staff member is to accompany the news media at all times for the duration of a visit. If at any time the practice manager determines that patient privacy or clinical operation policies are not being followed, the news media will be requested to leave the area immediately.
2. In the event that news media is requested to leave an area, by clinician/clinical personnel, practice manager or other designated school official, it is the responsibility of the public and media relations staff member to ensure the news media leave the premises, with assistance from UT Police, if needed.
3. In the event that news media arrive without pre-arrangement, they are not permitted to conduct interviews or to film.
4. When news media request the use of patient digital images/scans as part of an interview or story, the public and media relations staff member must contact the health care provider for approval and the appropriate manager to arrange for access to an area in which to film the images/scans. If the health care provider agrees to a request to make images/scans available, the health care provider or practice manager will be responsible to ensure that all images/scans have been de-identified.

C. Required Consent

1. For Patients

- a. All employees have an obligation to prevent unauthorized access to, or use of, patient and personal data and to assure that "de-identified" data cannot be linked back to the user or patient. The use of any medium of film, videotape or otherwise to record patient interactions with health care providers requires the utmost respect for the privacy and confidentiality of the patient. To ensure the rights of patients are protected the following requirements are to be met and consents obtained in advance of filming.
 - i. The patient must first be contacted by the faculty member, practice manager or the patient's health care provider in order to secure the patient's consent prior to the individual being contacted by the public and media relations staff member.
 - ii. Filming of patients requires explicit patient consent and only patients who are able to consent can be filmed. A *Patient Authorization Release Form* must be completed, with the patient's consent, prior to any contact with the patient for filming purposes. Consent is to be obtained by the assigned staff member of the public and media relations team. Consent may never be obtained by a member of the film crew or production team.
 - iii. In all cases in which a patient is a minor (17 years old or younger), or has a legal guardian, the consent of the parent or legal guardian must be obtained by the public and media relations staff member involved in the patient's contact with the media and maintained on file by the practice manager for inclusion within the patient's record.

2. Patient Rights

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- a. Patients have the right to have filming stopped upon request at any time. Clinical personnel involved in the direct medical care of a patient who believe that filming may jeopardize patient care have an obligation to request that filming stop.
- b. The *Patient Authorization Release Form* states that the patient may withdraw or revoke authorization at any time and such revocation must be given to UT Health San Antonio in writing. A withdrawal authorization will have no effect on the patient's treatment. However, the patient should acknowledge the possibility that any disclosure or publication made prior to their revocation may remain in the public domain.
- c. For Non-Patients

In circumstances that do not involve patients (or the patient's sharing of personal/private information), it is the *Model Authorization Release* that should be signed in order to secure acknowledgement of/agreement to the public dissemination of the photo, audio and/or video recording of the individual.

V. Definitions

There are no defined terms used in this Policy.

VI. Related References

For questions regarding this policy contact a member of the public and media relations staff listed on the [Communications Team site](#).

Patient Authorization Release Forms

[English Release Form](#)

[Spanish Release Form](#)

Model Authorization Release Forms

[English Release Form](#)

[Spanish Release Form](#)

VII. Review and Approval History

The approving authority of this policy is the University Executive Committee.

Effective Date	Action Taken	Approved By	Approved Date
04/2000	Policy Origination		
07/2015	Policy Revision		
11/2022	Policy Revision	Executive Committee	11/10/2022