

Dartmouth-Hitchcock Health Media Relations Policy

Policy Purpose

Dartmouth-Hitchcock's leadership position in the health care field encourages news media outlets to use Dartmouth-Hitchcock (D-H) as a resource for news statements, expertise, and background material on current health issues. It is important to coordinate all D-H responses to media in order to present a consistent, accurate, and understandable response; to ensure the confidentiality of Protected Health Information (PHI); and to protect the image of the organization.

Scope

For the purposes of this policy, "Dartmouth-Hitchcock" refers to all entities including Dartmouth-Hitchcock Clinic (DHC), Mary Hitchcock Memorial Hospital (MHMH) and Community Group Practices in Concord, Manchester, Nashua, and Keene, NH, and Bennington, VT, as well as other Dartmouth-Hitchcock facilities in community hospitals with which Dartmouth-Hitchcock has an affiliation.

Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, "media" includes, but is not limited to external print, broadcast, and internet-based organizations engaged in news gathering or educational activities.

"Authorized representatives" of Dartmouth-Hitchcock includes staff photographers, videographers, and writers) communications channels such as D-H Weekly, CHaD Matters Dartmouth-Hitchcock Health & Wellness, D-HH System Connections, Dartmouth-Hitchcock's internet site www.dartmouth-hitchcock.org.

Policy Statement

In order to communicate with a single, coordinated voice, members of the Dartmouth-Hitchcock Communications & Marketing Media Relations staff serve as the official spokespersons for Dartmouth-Hitchcock, and Dartmouth-Hitchcock Health system. In this capacity, Media Relations staff provide an identifiable and consistent contact for news media. It is the responsibility of Media Relations staff to work with all news media representatives to facilitate the release of information regarding patients, programs, services, and personnel.

Media Relations staff is available at any time to assist with news media requests. All requests from news media representatives or private media companies will be referred to Communications & Marketing at 603-653-1910 during business hours (8 am-5 pm Monday-Friday). After business hours, news media representatives should call the main switchboard at 603-650-5000 and ask for the Media Relations representative on-call on pager 6115. Routine news media calls regarding patient conditions will continue to be referred to the House Supervisor on nights, weekends and holidays.

Additionally, following patient privacy law under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA), any media representatives on-site, whether from the news media or from a private company such as a medical vendor, must be accompanied by a member of Communications & Marketing staff while they are on the premises.

No filming, photography, or interviews will take place on the property of Dartmouth-Hitchcock without approval of, and supervision by, Communications & Marketing.

Dartmouth-Hitchcock providers and staff must coordinate any interaction with news media, through the Communications & Marketing Media Relations staff. Media Relations staff will attend all interviews and will be available for follow up with journalists following the interview.

Dartmouth-Hitchcock employees may be photographed or filmed in the course of their work as a part of a news story, but any employee may decline to be interviewed or photographed. While Media Relations makes every effort to communicate when news media are on the premises, they are not always able to inform all personnel in the area of a media crew's presence, and will not obtain a signed release from D-H, or D-HH employees who may be included in a media piece.

(updated 08-01-19)