

 <p>Winnipeg Regional Health Authority Office régional de la santé de Winnipeg Caring for Health À l'écoute de notre santé</p> <p style="text-align: center;">POLICY</p>	<p>REGIONAL</p> <p>Applicable to all WRHA governed and funded sites / facilities / hospitals / personal care homes, unless specifically excluded</p>		<p>Level:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1</p>
	<p>Policy Name:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Media Relations</p>	<p>Policy Number:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">10.30.020</p>	<p>Page</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1 of 2</p>
	<p>Approval Signature:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Original signed by A. Wilgosh</i></p>	<p>Section:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Governance & General Administration</p>	
	<p>Date:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">April 2011</p>	<p>Supersedes:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">January 2006</p>	

1.0 **PURPOSE:**

To ensure effective and efficient processes are in place to manage media relations and media access to Sites and Facilities within the Winnipeg Health Region.

2.0 **DEFINITIONS:**

2.1 Media – representatives of print, electronic and web-based news and current affairs outlets.

2.2 Sites or Facilities: all WRHA directly owned or operated sites and facilities and all WRHA funded sites and facilities that are wholly or primarily funded by the WRHA, including those with Service Purchase Agreements.

3.0 **POLICY:**

3.1 The WRHA shall:

- Be accessible and transparent to the Media, while respecting staff, volunteer, patient, resident and client confidentiality as well as the interests of the WRHA, its board, staff, Sites and Facilities.
- Ensure compliance with privacy legislation including *The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (Manitoba)* and *The Personal Health Information Act (Manitoba)* while releasing information to the media.
- Be respectful of Media deadlines, while ensuring the veracity of all statements.
- Provide consistent, accurate and appropriate information to the media.
- Treat all media fairly.
- Facilitate requests for interviews with staff and/or physicians, patients, residents and clients where appropriate, while limiting the impact on the operations of the Site or Facility.
- Accommodate Media requests for access to Sites and Facilities where appropriate and when possible (for example, only under exceptional circumstances would media be allowed in an Emergency Department or Critical Care Unit).

3.2 Only those designated/assigned by the WRHA Director of Media Relations or the Site/Facility Communications Representatives are authorized to represent the WRHA or any of its sites or facilities to the Media.

4.0 PROCEDURE:

- 4.1 Any media wanting an interview with representatives of WRHA or its Sites or Facilities shall contact or be referred to the WRHA Director of Media Relations or the Site/Facility Communications Representative.
- 4.2 Any media wanting information or facts checked shall contact or be referred to the WRHA Director of Media Relations or the Site/Facility Communications Representative.
- 4.3 Any media wanting access to a WRHA Site or Facility shall contact or be referred to the WRHA Director of Media Relations or the Site or Facility Communications Representative.
- 4.4 All Media inquiries or story ideas with a regional interest (not Site or Facility-specific) shall be forwarded to the WRHA Director of Media Relations. The Director shall work with WRHA Board and/or Senior Management representatives to determine who is the appropriate spokesperson and arrange for her/him to respond in a timely manner. No other staff person is authorized to represent the WRHA.
- 4.5 Site/Facility Communications Representatives shall discuss Site or Facility media inquiries and work collaboratively with the WRHA Director of Media Relations as appropriate. Site or Facility Communications Representatives will work with their Board/Senior Management representatives to determine who is the appropriate spokesperson and arrange for her/him to respond in a timely manner. No other staff person is authorized to represent the Sites or Facilities.
- 4.6 If patients or clients agree to a media interview or to being identified in still or moving footage, the Site Communications Designate shall ask the appropriate patient care representative or designate to make a note on the patient/client/resident chart.
- 4.7 When arrangements have been made for media to access a Site/Facility, the WRHA Director of Media Relations or the Site or Facility Communications designate shall inform security as well as the affected unit/area and make arrangements for the media to be escorted to the appropriate area.
- 4.8 In cases where an unauthorized working member of the media is discovered to be in a Site/Facility, staff shall immediately ask the media to wait in an appropriate area and then contact security and the Site or Facility Communications Representative or on evenings or weekends the Site or Facility's Hospital or Nursing Supervisor..
- 4.8 In cases where access to a site or facility cannot be accommodated the WRHA Director of Media Relations or the Site Communications Representative shall make reasonable efforts to provide stock photos or footage

5.0 REFERENCES: N/A

Policy Developer: Heidi Graham, WRHA Media Relations Director