

Public Relations Tool Kit

**Table of Contents:**

**1.0 Public Relations 101**

**1.1 Press Releases**

**1.2 Media Outreach**

**1.3 Testimonials**

**1.4 Pitch and Testimonial Templates**

….

1.0 Public Relations 101

Public relations (PR) is a great way to generate “buzz” about a business in your local community. While effective, public relations relying on “earned media” comes with benefits (no advertising cost) and challenges (long lead time). Securing a media placement in print, online or via a broadcast TV / radio station takes time. Reporters and producers are flooded with news tips ranging from hard-hitting news to evergreen human interest stories on a daily basis, and because hard-hitting news will always take precedence, it can take several months of media outreach to get a local media outlet to cover a story about a medical procedure or patient story (which would fall under the “evergreen” category). However, once a story is secured, it can be a great way to organically gain visibility for a healthcare professional and his or her services. See below for some simple ways to do PR in your local market.

1.1 Public Relations: **Press Releases**

A press release is an official statement issued by an organization, with the purpose of sharing specific information on a particular matter with the media. Issuing a press release to your local media can also be a great way to expand your presence online so that when people search for you, the right information is available.

There are a few ways you can distribute a press release, depending upon the audience you want to reach:

**Newswire**: newswire distribution is the standard approach for disseminating a press release to a targeted list of media and guaranteeing pickup by online media outlets. It does come with an associated cost, but for a small cost you can reach every media outlet in your area with your news. To work with a newswire to distribute your release, follow these steps:

1. Contact [PRWeb](https://service.prweb.com/aff-10pdc/?utm_source=google&utm_medium=paidsearch&utm_campaign=prwbranded_brandonly&utm_term=prweb&gclid=CjwKCAiAxp-ABhALEiwAXm6IySNrrLnL8w3slavnZwCthQQWvRwHKqW0RCBQqM_RIfLsNwWD1vGZ1hoC0VIQAvD_BwE) (most affordable option, but other reputable options include [PRNewsire](https://www.prnewswire.com/account/online-membership-form/?&utm_source=google&utm_medium=paidsearch&utm_campaign=prncompetitive_prwire&utm_term=prnewsire&gclid=CjwKCAiAxp-ABhALEiwAXm6IyVyDPxqmlUY5vmr9oxA-JN24OcQXqx5vt87qt0uePaA4xYupSEnMBxoC0sYQAvD_BwE) and [Business Wire](https://membership.businesswire.com/account-signup?utm_campaign=fy21-evergreen-brand-us-na&utm_source=google&utm_medium=cpc&utm_term=businesswire&hsa_mt=e&hsa_net=adwords&hsa_ver=3&hsa_kw=businesswire&hsa_acc=9045957327&hsa_grp=113597914052&hsa_tgt=kwd-13227686&hsa_src=g&hsa_ad=461810204527&hsa_cam=11039670392&gclid=CjwKCAiAxp-ABhALEiwAXm6IyWT3X-aSzrBkWqIlkQNIGiXsYmkrwMZdJUSWW_6OQAtQO8KFHYPuQBoCU7UQAvD_BwE)) to set up an account and secure their guidance on which lists you should send your releases to. Lists include local distribution (state, town) and health-specific media outlets. This is how you make sure your press release is seen by the right reporters.
2. Once you have set up an account, you can upload your press release online, following the instructions provided. This is where you will also select the lists you aligned on with your newswire rep. All press releases should be scheduled for distribution between 8-9am ET on a Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday to increase the likelihood of getting noticed by media.
3. After the release crosses the wire, your organization will receive a “pickup report” that will show you where your press release appeared online and the total audience reach. It is also recommended that you link to the press release via social media and make it available on your website.

**Patch Local:** Patch.com is a great destination to share local news with members of your community. Most cities have their own dedicated Patch.com site that allows members to upload information about local businesses, events, articles, and news. Even if you do plan on putting a press release over the newswire as stated above, it’s still worth sending it to your local Patch. To share news with your local patch, follow these steps:

1. Visit [www.patch.com](http://www.patch.com) and select your city or town.
2. Set up an account to gain access to your city’s Patch.
3. Once you are on your local Patch’s page, scroll to the very bottom where you will see an envelope button. Click on the envelop button and a new window will open providing an email address of your local Patch’s editorial team.
4. Send your press release to the email address provided for consideration by the editorial team. Follow-up via the phone number provided on the website if you do not hear back within three days.
5. **Note:** Patch is crowd-sourced, so you can post your own content via a personal patch account using the “post” button. However, they have guidelines around promotion of businesses via posts so be cautious only to post if you have useful information to share like health tips, patient testimonials, etc.

**Media Outreach:** another no-cost option for press release distribution is media outreach, where you can send the release directly to reporters for consideration. See section 1.2 for guidance on pitching your local media.

1.2 Public Relations: **Media Outreach**

Media outreach – also known as “pitching” – consists of reaching out to a press contact with the intent of introducing your organization, or in the best-case scenario, generating a positive story in the news or securing an interview for a spokesperson (physician or patient, in this instance). What’s more – if you routinely pitch yourself to your local media and begin to build a relationship with editors and producers, they are more likely to tap into you as a resource for health stories at a later date.

While building relationships with local media is the end goal, you need to grab their attention first. As straightforward as this sounds, we now live in a world where the news cycle is extremely noisy and saturated, and reporters have a brief attention span. Therefore, it is crucial that your initial pitch is succinct, attention-grabbing and straight to the point. Below are seven basic steps to help you craft an effective pitch about the positive impact you are having on patient’s lives with innovative surgical procedures.

1. **Identify media:** make a list of the newspapers, online outlets, and broadcast stations in your city.
2. **Secure contact information:** Visit the websites of each media outlet and identify the reporters who cover human interest stories, local businesses and health. Visit the “contact us” page on each website to determine if email addresses / phone numbers are provided for the reporters of interest. If you cannot find their personal contact information, there should be a general “media tips” email you can send your pitch to.
3. **Know the goal:** the goal of your outreach will be to secure an interview with the physician, and possibly a patient, about the benefits and risks of the Acessa procedure.
4. **Craft the pitch:** every pitch needs an angle that defines your story’s uniqueness or relevancy and ensures your pitch doesn’t sound like an advertisement. A pitch to secure an interview with a physician about a specific procedure should lean into the human interest element of the story: how is this benefiting the community? You can find a pre-written template pitch on page 5 of this file. However, if you are interested in writing your own, some angles to explore are:
   1. Tie to an awareness month like Fibroid Awareness Month (July) or International Women’s Day (March 8th)
   2. Tie to recent legislation or coverage in the media, such as [*The Uterine Fibroid Research and Education Act of 2020*](https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/house-bill/6383/text?q=%7B%22search%22%3A%22Uterine+Fibroid+Research+and+Education+Act%22%7D&r=2&s=1)
   3. Tie to the disproportionate affect fibroids have on women of color
5. **Email reporters:** send your pitch or press release in the body of an email to each reporter on your list from step 2.
6. **Follow up:** Emails can easily get lost in someone’s inbox. You should always write or call reporters to follow up. Allow at least two to three days before contacting her/him. First, ask if she/he saw your story idea. Second, ask if she/he is interested in covering it. If not, don’t pressure her/him. If she/he is uncertain, concisely reintroduce your idea to see if you can pique interest.
7. **Say thank you:** If a reporter covers your story, send a thank you! You can do so via email or a handwritten note, depending on your preference. This will also ensure that you are building lasting relationships, increasing the likelihood of covering your stories in the future.

When it comes to media outreach, remember that it takes time. Reporters are busy and often covering breaking news or are limited on staff. The best approach is to begin building relationships with your local media so that when they do have time or interest in covering a story about fibroids that they think to give you a call for an interview.

1.3 Public Relations: **Testimonials**

Testimonials are an effective way for physicians to collect and share positive feedback from their patients about their practice and services. They are also a convenient tool to use to attract potential patients and are a great way for physicians to gain visibility among peers.

By sharing a patient story or practitioner story about a personal experience being treated by or treating a patient with the Acessa procedure, you are able to create relatable content that can be easily shared across social channels and websites. If you have a compelling testimonial that you would like to share with Hologic, please contact Brianna.nichols@hologic.com.

If you have a story as an Acessa user that you would like to share, or know of a patient who has a story to share, please provide the following:

**Physician Testimonial**

1. Physician headshot
2. Short physician bio
3. A few sentences from the physician about their experience with the Acessa procedure
4. Physician consent and release form – can be found in the folder you downloaded.

**Patient Testimonial**

1. Patient headshot
2. [Patient consent form](#Patient_Consent_Form) – can be found in the folder you downloaded.
   1. In addition, confirm which of the following is the patient comfortable with:
      1. Publishing their testimonial on Hologic’s website and/or brochures
      2. Participating in a video shoot
      3. Partaking in interviews with media
3. A few sentences from the patient about their experience with fibroids and the Acessa procedure

Please send the above information to [HologicSurgical@Hologic.com](mailto:HologicSurgical@Hologic.com) or your sales rep.

1.4 Templates

Pitch Template

Hi [INSERT NAME OF REPORTER],

Knowing that your efforts at this time may be focused on XYZ [INSERT RELAVENT CURRENT EVENT (i.e. COVID-19)], I wanted to reach out to see if you have interest in hearing about other health-related stories. (Only include as introduction if you are pitching during a busy news cycle)

Between 70-80% of women will experience uterine fibroids by the age of 50, and those with symptoms may experience heavy periods, reproductive issues, pain, urinary frequency, and anemia.[[1]](#footnote-1) Still, on average it takes 3.6 years for women to seek treatment and ~41% of women report seeing at least two healthcare providers before diagnosis.[[2]](#footnote-2) Delayed diagnosis and lack of awareness of treatment options can result in women receiving more invasive treatment than may be necessary.

If sent by office / hospital staff or media team:

A physician at [INSERT LOCATION AND HOSPITAL], specializes in the Acessa® procedure, a minimally invasive treatment alternative for women who have symptomatic fibroids and would otherwise require a myomectomy or hysterectomy.

We can put you in touch with Dr. [NAME] and his/her patient to learn more about the benefit of the Acessa procedure and the importance of providing women suffering from fibroids with more treatment options. Would this be of interest to you or your readers? If so, I would be happy to provide further information.

If sent by physician:

At [INSERT LOCATION AND HOSPITAL], we specialize in the Acessa® procedure, a new minimally invasive treatment alternative for women who have symptomatic fibroids and would otherwise require a myomectomy or hysterectomy. I’d be happy to provide you with more information about this procedure and put you in touch with one of my patients who can speak to their personal experience.

Let me know if you would be interested in sharing this information with your readers.

Best,

[INSERT NAME]

1. Erica E. Marsh, Ayman Al-Hendy, Dale Kappus, Alex Galitsky, Elizabeth A. Stewart, and Majid Kerolous. Journal of Women's Health. Nov 2018.1359-1367. <http://doi.org/10.1089/jwh.2018.7076> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Borah BJ, Nicholson WK, Bradley L, Stewart EA. The impact of uterine leiomyomas: A national survey of affected women. **Am J Obstet Gynecol** 2013;209:319.e311–e319.e320. [Crossref](https://www.liebertpub.com/servlet/linkout?suffix=B10&dbid=16&doi=10.1089%2Fjwh.2018.7076&key=10.1016%2Fj.ajog.2013.07.017), [Google Scholar](http://scholar.google.com/scholar_lookup?hl=en&volume=209&publication_year=2013&pages=319.e311-e319.e320&journal=Am+J+Obstet+Gynecol&author=BJ+Borahauthor=WK+Nicholsonauthor=L+Bradleyauthor=EA+Stewart&title=The+impact+of+uterine+leiomyomas%3A+A+national+survey+of+affected+women) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)