

# LOCAL MEDIA 101

## Why Local Media?

In the wake of uncertainty brought on by the coronavirus, many are increasingly turning to both digital news sites and local news outlets to keep them and their loved ones safe. Connecting with local media is an important way to reach patients and key community members to share updates on how they may safely seek care and treatment in your practice.

Even if your local media outreach does not result in coverage immediately, building relationships with reporters and local media may ultimately result in media coverage. It's important to keep in mind that although web traffic and subscriptions to local outlets have increased in recent weeks, local outlets are also likely feeling the economic effects of the pandemic in the newsrooms.<sup>i,ii,iii</sup>

## How To Approach Media Successfully

### Develop proactive key messages

- New hours of operation
- New approach to staffing
- New safety protocols (PPE, cleaning, patient flow)
- New telemedicine/virtual care options (new approaches to pre-screenings, consultations, post-op consults)
- Share patient and employee testimonials to demonstrate authenticity
- Correct misinformation related to contact lens use or safe surgical methods

### Prepare for tough questions.

- Do you feel you're putting patients in danger by re-opening so quickly?
- Do you agree with the [insert politician/government body] advice to remain closed/re-open?
- How are you ensuring your practice is safe and infection free?
- How has this pandemic impacted your patients?

### Reach out to local media with a pitch/media alert that announces a practice milestone (e.g., re-opening date with new hours, first patient), supplemented with:

- Offer of interviews with practice leadership, clinical staff and patients with positive testimonials for a 360-degree story
- Photos, videos, fact sheets or infographics that bring to life your return to business measures



### TIPS ON ANSWERING TOUGH QUESTIONS

Remain serious but not defensive if a tough question arises, and note that you're following official guidance from government and regulatory bodies and taking all necessary precautions to keep your employees and patients safe. Finish by saying patients are your top priority, and that you're re-opening to deliver eye health and vision correction solutions to them.

## How to Correct Misinformation on Contact Lens Safety during COVID-19 Outbreak

To specifically address the safety of contact lens use during the COVID-19 situation, Johnson & Johnson Vision is supporting the Centre of Ocular Research & Education (CORE) for the development of evidence-based, independent educational resources that can provide continued **education on the safety of contact lenses** to eye care providers, contact lens wearers, media and government officials. Please refer to the accompanying resources on how these resources may be used.

## Other Helpful Resources on Local Media Outreach

Be sure to check out guidance and tools for media outreach from the [American Optometric Association](#) and the [CDC](#).

<sup>i</sup>Brookings Institution. <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/fixgov/2020/04/08/critical-in-a-public-health-crisis-covid-19-has-hit-local-newsrooms-hard/>. Accessed April 2020.

<sup>ii</sup>NBC News. <https://www.nbcnews.com/think/opinion/coronavirus-revealing-why-local-news-so-important-it-s-also-ncna1186261>. Accessed April 2020.

<sup>iii</sup>Wall Street Journal. <https://www.wsj.com/articles/news-outlets-win-audiences-yet-lose-revenue-during-coronavirus-crisis-11584708390>. Accessed April 2020.