

## SALISBURY NHS FOUNDATION TRUST

### Media Handling Policy and Procedure

#### 1. Quick Reference Guide

- This policy sets out the Trust’s processes for handling requests from media
- This policy applies to all staff employed by the Trust
- Outlines the Procedure for Media Requests for Information about Patients
- Outlines the Procedure for Media Requests for Information about Services

#### 2. Introduction and Purpose

- The Trust has a duty to respond appropriately to media enquiries, providing accurate information in a timely manner.
- We have a duty to protect the interests of patients and staff as well as adhering to legal obligations regarding data protection and patient confidentiality.
- This policy will help to ensure that effective and appropriate processes are in place for staff dealing with media enquiries.

Version No.	Updated by	Updated on	Description of changes
1.1	Patrick Butler	08/01/2007	
1.2	Patrick Butler	02/10/2008	Revision date extended. No change to content
2.0	Public Relations Manager	12/09/2012	Complete review
3.0	Communications Manager	08/10/2013	Update to Communications Manager title and substitution of reference to PCT with CCG
3.1	Head of Communications	22/09/2015	Review date extended
4.0	Head of Communications	29/09/2016	Addition of guidance on supervising media and recording visits
5.0	Justine McGuinness	17/06/2019	Review to ensure alignment with Communications Strategy agreed By Board May 2019.  ‘Satisfactory’ changed to ‘Stable’
6.0	Head of Communications	October 2022	OD&P Policy and Procedure review in new Template including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Removal of Table outlining the procedures for Media Requests for Information about Patients as all Media enquiries are directed to the Communications Team</li> </ul>

#### 3 Staff Groups Affected

This policy applies to all employees engaged on a contract of employment including fixed Term contracts. It also includes all other staffing groups including; bank, agency, contractor and volunteer colleagues.

#### **4 Scope**

This policy sets out the Trust's procedures for handling media enquiries and provides guidance for staff who may come into contact with the media.

In event of a major incident, please refer to the Major Incident Plan for guidance on media handling during an incident.

#### **5. Media Requests for Information about Patients, Policy or operational activities**

You may receive requests from the media for information about patients, policy or operational activities.

All media requests relating to patients, policies or operational activities of the Trust, the hospital, its staff and volunteers should be referred to the communications team at [sft.comms@nhs.net](mailto:sft.comms@nhs.net).

No member of staff or volunteer should make any comment to the media without being asked to by the communications team.

If out of hours requests are made the journalist should be asked to contact the communications team. In an emergency the Duty Manager or Duty Executive will contact the Head of Communications or their Deputy.

#### **6. Staff with external positions or those involved in research**

It is recognised that some staff will have external positions or be involved in research. At times this may require that staff member to make comment to the media in that capacity. Where this relates to your employment or the Trust you should share the communication with the communications team at [sft.comms@nhs.net](mailto:sft.comms@nhs.net) before the communication is published. In these communications you **must** make it clear that you are not speaking on behalf of Salisbury Foundation Trust.

Examples include posts with Royal Colleges, Trade Unions and other professional bodies, positions within charities or lobby groups, a personal reputation as a subject expert. As part of a team engaged in collaborative research.

#### **7. Monitoring Compliance and the effectiveness of this policy**

This will be monitored by Head of Communications. Our People managers and all employees and workers are responsible for the implementation of this policy and procedure.

#### **8. Equality Impact Assessment**

An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed and was presented to the ratifying committee at the time of approval.

<b>Post Holder /Author Responsible for Policy:</b>	Head of Communications
<b>Date Written:</b>	October 2022
<b>Approved By:</b>	JCC October 2022
<b>Ratified by:</b>	OMB October 2022
<b>Next Due for Review:</b>	October 2025
<b>Date Policy effective from:</b>	01 July 2023