

EMDR ALL-IRELAND ASSOCIATION

COMPANY NUMBER: 616730

MEDIA RELATIONS POLICY

1. Background

In order to ensure a professional relationship with the media, due diligence must be taken to ensure that information originating from EMDR All-Ireland Association is accurate, complete, reflects the official position of the organisation and is released to the media and target audience in a timely and professional manner.

EMDR All-Ireland Association aims to create a climate of openness and dialogue with all stakeholders. This policy supports a culture of openness and dialogue in the organisation, but also ensures that the reputation of EMDR All-Ireland Association is protected, and if possible enhanced, and that the chances of misrepresentation by the media are reduced.

In order that our communications with the media are successful it is vital that our communications are concise, clear and unambiguous. To this end all trustees, employees, and volunteers are required to comply with this policy at all times.

2. Media

Media means reporters, journalists, researchers, editors and others working for the press in all forms: newspaper, magazine and other publications, radio, television and internet sites.

3. Why might we be contacted by the media?

There are various reasons why the media may try to contact EMDR All-Ireland Association. There may be positive or negative circumstances surrounding their need for comment, it is therefore important that all comments are fully considered and come through the correct channels to ensure that they have the required impact. Reasons why the organisation may be contacted include:

- For a comment on a local, regional or national issue related to disability, equality or mental health.
- For a response to an individual's or corporate comment about one of our projects or the organisation as a whole. These comments could be positive or negative.
- For more information relating to a press release or information that has been disseminated by our organisation.
- For a response to a statement about the behaviour of a trustees, member, committee, member of staff, volunteer or user connected to the organisation. This statement could be positive or negative.

4. Confidentiality

We have a responsibility to our members, partners, employees, trustees and volunteers to ensure that certain information remains confidential. Unless information is already known to be in the public domain

or we have the express permission of the person involved, no personal information or information that may cause an individual to be identified should be released.

5. Who is responsible for media relations?

The President of EMDR All-Ireland Association should always be the first and primary contact with the media. In the President's absence the past President or President Elect can delegate for the President. (which may include designating a particular individual to participate in an interview with a media outlet).

The President is the primary spokesperson for the EMDR All-Ireland Association. Other members may also be designated responsibility for speaking to the media.

If anyone other than the President receives an enquiry from the media, the recipient of the enquiry should forward details to the President. All press releases from the organisation should be authorised by the board of trustees.

Nobody else should make comment on behalf of the organisation without the permission of the President (or in the President's absence, the Past President or president elect) .

The board of directors is responsible for monitoring press coverage.

Those with responsibility for media relations may be trained to an appropriate level including media interview techniques and drafting press releases.

6. Initial dealings with the media

If the media contacts you, it is very important that you do not make a comment. Instead take the journalist's contact details and forward them the President, as above.

It is important that you treat reporters, editors, and program directors courteously. Their impression of each individual in the organisation affects their impression of the entire organisation, and this may influence how and what they report about us.

7. Responding to the media

Upon receipt of a request for information from the media, the request should always be directed to the President, the Past President or president elect or a named designated spokesperson for EMDR All-Ireland Association.

If none of the above are available, then the person receiving the request should say that they are unable to comment and that they will need to pass the request to the appropriate person. Take full contact details from the person making the request (Name, Company, Telephone number, email address, topic for comment). Ask the person making the request for their deadline. The person receiving the request should inform the caller that they will get the appropriate person to contact them and that reasonable efforts will be made to do this within the deadline.

All contact with the media should be recorded, noting what comment was made, which method was used (i.e. written response, telephone interview etc) and any potential impact from the comment.

8. Press releases

As well as responding effectively and punctually to requests for information from the media, it is important to be proactive in seeking out opportunities to promote the activities and reputation of EMDR All-Ireland Association

Maximising the opportunities for press coverage requires every employee, board member and volunteer to be alert to possible stories and subjects for articles and to let the President know about them as soon as

possible. Press releases should be considered in the following situations:

- To communicate key achievements of the organisation.
- To communicate key findings of the organisation.
- To promote the involvement of the local communities in the projects of the organisation.
- To promote attendance at special events and functions. Any employee, board member or volunteer may draft a press release, however they must all be authorised by the President before being distributed in order to ensure that there is consistency and that factual content is accurate and that the use of the release can be monitored.

All press releases must be authorised by the President.

Approved copy describing EMDR and the EMDR All-Ireland Association can be supplied to any board member on request, along with standard information on how to write a press release.

9. Crisis management

It is necessary to be aware of the need to manage any publicity – negative or otherwise – that may result from a ‘crisis’ situation which EMDR All-Ireland Association has been viewed to cause or been involved in.

Such a strategy will ensure any damage inflicted on the organisation – its reputation, services and projects – by negative publicity is limited. It will also assist in enabling the organisation to disassociate itself from the crisis situation should this be appropriate course of action.

A media spokesperson – which will be the President where possible – must be nominated when a crisis has arisen. This role must be agreed by the board of directors.

The media spokesperson will be the only person authorised to speak with the media for the duration of the crisis to ensure the media does not receive any inaccurate or mixed information.

If possible, seek to circulate a press statement as soon as possible, before media outlets have begun to contact the organisation. This will assist in taking the ‘sting’ out of a crisis and allow the organisation to reflect its position on the situation at the earliest juncture.

It is important to ensure lines of communication are clearly defined by making all staff aware that media enquiries must be directed to the spokesperson. Guidelines for directing media enquiries are included earlier in this policy.

In a crisis situation, it is crucial to be as honest and open as possible, within the bounds of confidentiality considerations. Whatever the situation, damage to the organisation will increase if dishonest claims or statements are later uncovered.

10. Review

This policy will be reviewed every three years or more regularly if we identify any noncompliance or problem or in the light of emerging legislation or best practice that could impact on this policy.

A report of the findings of the review, based on the data and other information collected and evaluated, will be presented to the Board of directors and appropriate action taken.

Date: 2020/06/12