

Working with the media

Message and Reputation

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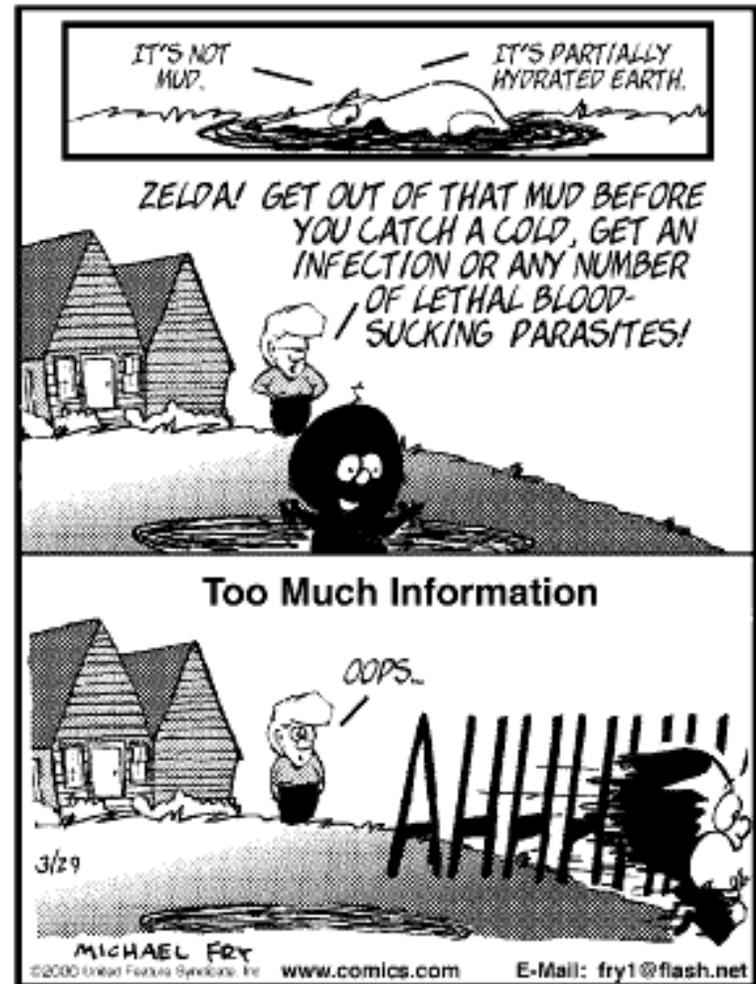


Agenda

- Media today
- The interview process:
 - What to do when a reporter calls
 - Working with media relations
 - Preparing for the interview
 - Tips for the interview
 - Reporter tricks and how to handle them
 - Answering tough questions
- HIPAA and the media
- After the Interview

The media today

- 24 hour news cycle
- Newspaper death spiral
- Online reporting, links, social media integration
- “Edutainment”
- A word about paid media



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The cheat sheet

Five C's:

- Clear
- Concise
- Conversational
- Catchy
- Colorful (but not TOO colorful)

Three V's:

- Verbal (what you say)
- Vocal (how you sound)
- Visual (how you look)

What do I do when a reporter calls me?

- Call your communications officer
- (Possibly) return their call (if they leave a message).
 - *What publication or broadcast station does the reporter work for?*
 - *What is the reporter's deadline?*
 - *What is the topic of the interview?*
 - *What kinds of questions do they have (in general)?*
 - *Who else is being interviewed?*

If you want to be a media-friendly expert:

- Be responsive, speed is important
- Build relationships with the media
- If you aren't the best source, help them find another
- Don't bury the bottom line
- A relaxed, friendly tone goes a long way

Preparing for the Interview

- What is your key message?
- State your conclusion first, then back it up with facts.
- Do your homework: learn everything you can about the issue involved.
- Have facts and figures at hand.
- If for television or a portrait – what visuals are available?

Appearance and Background

- Posture
- Attire
 - In general, avoid stripes, checks, busy patterns
 - Colors are better than white
- Where you sit
- Are you a fidgeter?
- What's in the background?

The Interview

- Yes, you can tape the interview!
- Don't relax too much
- Eliminate distractions
- Repeat your main point
- Answer questions clearly and forcefully
- Be concise
- Don't be defensive



If you can remember this...

- Repeat the last part of the reporter's question in the first part of your answer.
- Work the name of your organization(s) into your comments.
- Pause in between thoughts



A word about jargon

- We are too close to our professions!
- Avoid jargon, use lay language:
 - Resection = Surgery to remove a tumor
 - Etiology = cause
 - Metastasis = spread
 - *What's your favorite example?*
- Statistics – how to put risk in context.
 - If you're interested in risk communication...we can talk later!



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Reporter tricks and how to handle them

- Asking a narrow or leading question
- Putting words in your mouth
- Trying to get you to speak disparagingly of someone else (or assign blame)
- Pushing until you say no comment
- Asking you to speculate on something you know little about
- Asking you to talk “off the record”
- Asking a hypothetical question
- The waiting tactic
- Chatting after the interview is over

Answering tough questions

- What do you think about health insurance/health care reform?
- Do you think there are too many surgeries for prostate cancer?
- So you are saying that hospitals shouldn't invest in new technologies?
- Solutions: bridging and “touch and go”

Common bridging statements

- “And what’s most important to know is...”
- “However, what is more important to look at is...”
- “However, the real issue here is...”
- “And what this all means is...”
- “And what’s most important to remember is...”
- “With this in mind, if we look at the bigger picture...”
- “With this in mind, if we take a look back...”
- “If we take a broader perspective, . . .”
- “If we look at the big picture...”
- “Let me put all this in perspective by saying...”
- “What all this information tells me is...”
- “Before we continue, let me emphasize that...”
- “This is an important point because...”
- “What this all boils down to is...”
- “While this is important, it is also important to remember...”
- “It’s true that...but it is also true that...”

Common bridging statements

- “The heart of the matter is...”
- “What matters most in this situation is...”
- “And as I said before,...”
- “And if we take a closer look, we will see...”
- “Let me just at to this point, that...”
- “I think it would be more correct to say...”
- “Let me point out again that...”
- “Let me emphasize again...”
- “In this context, it is essential that I note...”
- “Another thing to remember is...”
- “Before we leave the subject, let me add that...”
- “And that reminds me...”
- “And the one thing that is important to remember is...”
- “What I’ve said comes down to this...”
- “Here’s the real issue...”
- “What is key here is...”

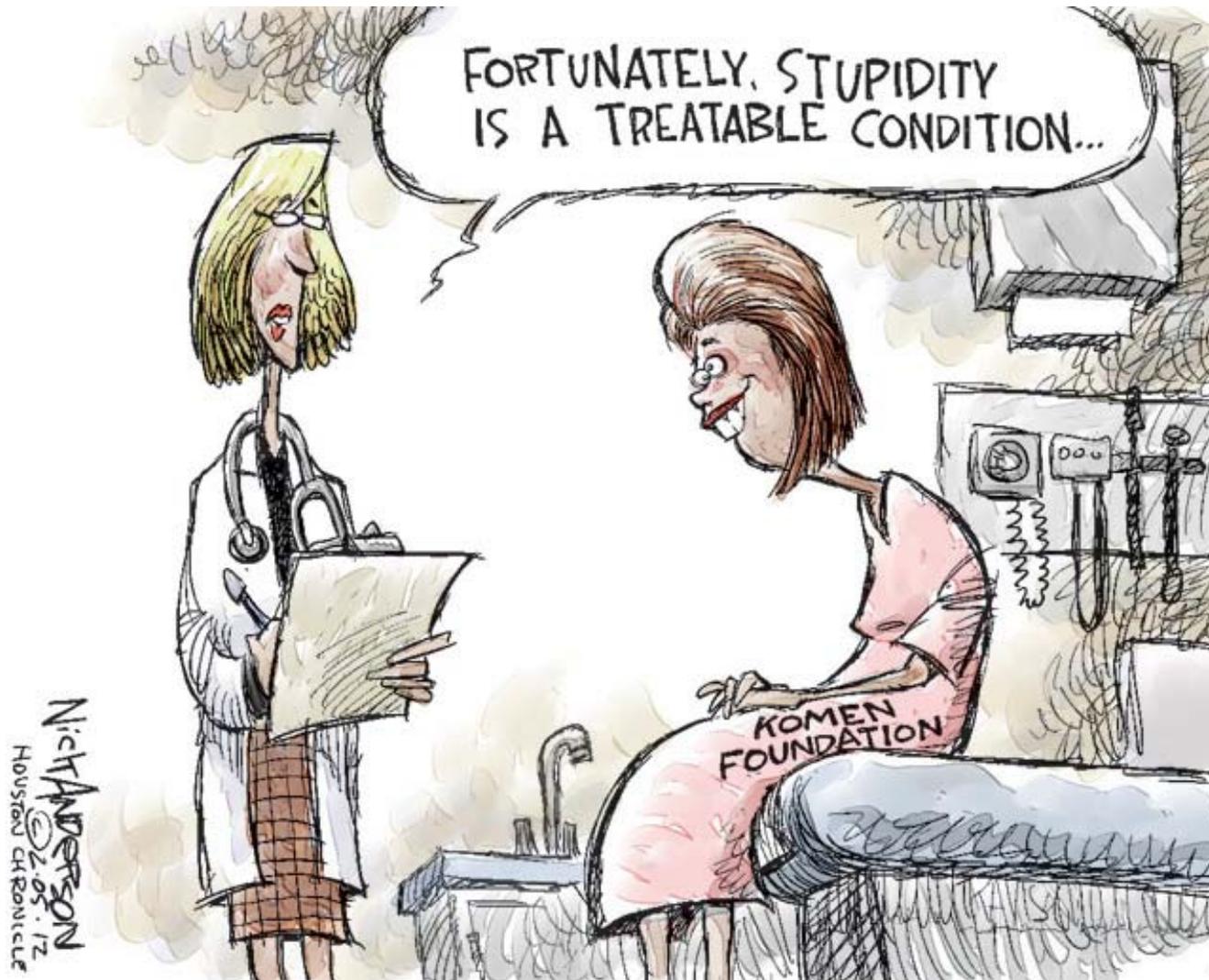
HIPAA and the Media

- Many reporters do not understand HIPAA: “This is a federal law. I can not violate it.”
- Patient privacy trumps media exposure. Period.
- Obtain a signed HIPAA release every time, ahead of time. (Verbal consent is NOT sufficient).
- If a participating patient agrees to work with you on communications or marketing outreach, ensure that they understand:
 - Their diagnosis and name will be disclosed
 - They can control the level of detail they disclose
 - What you are asking them to say (it goes without saying that this is the truth)

After the interview

- SOMETIMES the reporter will offer to let you see the article
- But you shouldn't ask.
- Tactfully offer to be available to confirm facts and figures at the reporter's convenience.

We'll keep you on the right side of this conversation!



Questions?

My door is open

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