Saving Life 2019: Media Guide

Not for circulation beyond staff, campaign leaders, CAN members, and MPLs

INTRODUCTION

Securing media coverage is an essential component of the Saving Life 2019 campaign. Media helps ensure that the general public understands—and has the opportunity to support—our campaign. It also keeps our issues on the agenda of MPs and candidates who we know keenly observe the media to understand which issues are resonating in their local electorates. This guide is designed to enable you to effectively use the media to share Saving Life 2019 messages in local communities across NSW.

CAMPAIGN OVERVIEW

Saving Life 2019 is the Cancer Council NSW pre-election advocacy campaign that will call on the next NSW government to protect the community from tobacco, tackle childhood obesity, and support people with lymphoedema.

Through Saving Life, Cancer Council and the CanAct community will use the pre-election period to:

- collect evidence and build and demonstrate community support for our issues and policy solutions;
- present these in engaging ways to the media, the community and candidates; and
- secure firm commitments from candidates and major parties to implement our policy asks if elected to govern NSW.

Saving Life will be launched on 27 July 2018 and will run in communities across NSW until the NSW election on 23 March 2019.

TOP TIPS

- Make sure you know your key messages inside out
- Always work with your Community Programs Coordinator when seeking media coverage
- We will provide you with media release templates to use throughout the campaign
- Cancer Council may have local case studies to support your media. Again, check in with your Community Programs Coordinator.
- If you have an idea for a media release that we haven’t covered contact your Community Programs Coordinator

KEY MESSAGES

The messages below should be used to inform media interviews, meetings with MPs, candidate forums, and other engagement with the community related to our Saving Life 2019 campaign.

Campaign

- Every day in NSW, more than 120 people hear the words ‘you’ve got cancer’ and too many families lose someone they love.
- The next NSW Government has the power to reduce the number of people who will get cancer and ensure that people who experience cancer get the support they need.
- Saving Life 2019: Election Priorities will support the next NSW Government to take action to further reduce the impact of cancer on our community.
• Key policy proposals:
  1. Strengthen the Smoke-free Environment Act 2000 to ensure that people working or socialising in bars and clubs in NSW are protected from second-hand smoke.
  2. Amend the Public Health (Tobacco) Act 2008 to ban tobacco vending machines and introduce an annual licence fee to encourage retailers to stop selling. These measures will reduce the risk of young people developing this fatal habit and support smokers to quit.
  3. Remove junk food advertising from state owned property to reduce children’s exposure; and support national regulations on food marketing to children.
  4. Provide funding for public lymphoedema services across NSW to ensure that people with lymphoedema have timely access to evidence-based care, regardless of where they live.

Supporter-focused
• Through our previous campaigns, we have created smoke-free outdoor areas, removed tobacco displays from shops, and banned commercial solariums. We’ve increased funding for state-wide palliative care services, bowel screening and those travelling to treatment.
• We’ve achieved so much together in the CanAct community, but there’s much more we need to do. Help us create a cancer free future by [insert action].
• Your local action ensures we’ll have state-wide impact.

Tobacco – general
• Cigarettes are lethal – smoking causes 5,500 deaths and 47,000 hospitalisations every year in NSW.
• New data shows that NSW smoking rates have flatlined since 2013. Achieving a smoke-free NSW is only possible if the government takes action now.
• Smoking still places a huge burden on the community and on people’s lives, so the government must act now.

Tobacco – smoke free
• When smoking is allowed indoors it harms everyone’s health.
• Workers and patrons of bars and clubs in NSW are still being exposed to second-hand smoke because the existing laws don’t adequately protect them.
• People should not have their health put at risk simply for doing their job or socialising.
• The government should fix our laws so that people working or socialising in a bar or club are protected from harmful second-hand smoke.

Tobacco – retail
• The widespread availability of cigarettes increases the risk of young people starting to smoke and makes it harder for people to quit.
• The government should help protect the health of young people by encouraging retailers to stop selling cigarettes. Banning vending machines and introducing a licence fee would be effective ways of doing this.
• For low volume retailers, and those that don’t consider cigarette sales to be important for their business, introducing a licence fee will encourage them to stop selling.

Childhood obesity
• Junk food advertising undermines parents’ efforts to teach their children healthy eating habits.
• The government needs to support parents to encourage healthy eating by removing junk food advertising from government owned property and supporting national regulations on food marketing that targets children.
• Helping kids to eat well today reduces their risk of cancer, diabetes, and heart disease in later in life.
• It is estimated that obesity already costs the community $9 billion each year. The government must take action now to reduce the burden in the future.
Lymphoedema
- Lymphoedema is incurable swelling that affects approximately 22,000 people in NSW.
- There is a shortage of public lymphoedema services across NSW. Timely access to lymphoedema services remains a problem in both rural and metropolitan regions.
- Left untreated, lymphoedema can cause severe physical discomfort and emotional distress to those affected.
- Government funding is urgently required to increase the number of public services for people with lymphoedema so they can access the treatment they need.
- Increased government funding will reduce the financial burden on people affected and result in long-term cost savings for the health system.

KEY ACTIONS
- Sign the Saving Life 2019 campaign petition at www.canact.com.au
- Attend your local Saving Life Forum at [insert relevant venue].
- Email five of your friends or family members and ask them to sign the petition at www.canact.com.au
- Post a message (optional extension: video) to Facebook letting your friends know that you support the Cancer Council Saving Life 2019 campaign, asking the next NSW government to take action to reduce the number of people who will get cancer and ensure that people who experience cancer get the support they need.

MEDIA RELEASES

We will upload media release templates to the campaign resources webpage www.canact.com.au/savinglife2019_resources for use during the campaign. If you have an idea for a media release that we haven’t covered, please contact your Community Programs Coordinator to discuss.

CASE STUDIES

Cancer Council staff have collected some case studies about the Saving Life 2019 issues from different regions of NSW. Speak with your Community Programs Coordinator to identify whether there is someone from your local community who is willing to share their story or experience with the media.

PLANNING MEDIA COVERAGE

Simple steps when planning for media coverage:

1. Each group of Saving Life leaders or Cancer Advocacy Network should, if possible, appoint a leader as the Media Liaison for the campaign. The Media Liaison will be responsible for pitching stories to local media outlets and organising interviews and photo shoots with spokespeople. Where there is no leader available to take on this role it will be undertaken by the local Community Programs Coordinator.

2. The Media Liaison should always work closely with the local Community Programs Coordinator who can provide support, including reviewing media releases and identifying campaign spokespeople and case studies.

3. Select a spokesperson for media interviews and familiarise them with the key messages included in this pack. This should be someone who has some experience or training in speaking with the media. It could be the facilitator of your local Cancer Advocacy Network or your Community Programs Coordinator, for example.

4. Where you have also identified a case study who can talk about their own experience with one of the Saving Life issues, spend some time preparing them to share their experience and ensure they are on-message.
5. Update the appropriate media release template with relevant dates, spokespeople, and case study stories where necessary. See red text in template media releases.

Paint a local picture using the local situation and stories where possible. Remember to bring your ask back to a state level action e.g. remember to include the state call to action in a local media release.

6. Share your draft media release with your Community Programs Coordinator to review.

7. Community Programs Coordinators can liaise with Ali Boydell, Regional Communications Specialist, who can review ideas and content and add value to the process, as needed.

8. Media Liaison to send the media release in the body of the email to local journalist contacts. Aim to send this in the morning for the best chance of coverage. Include a short and snappy pitch with the key message or statistics or event that you want to feature, together with the details of your available spokespeople and case studies.

9. Follow up journalists by phone to encourage them to cover the story.

10. Arrange interviews where relevant and have your key messages on hand for all interviews.

MEDIA INTERVIEWS

Print, radio and television each view news differently when it comes to packaging it for their audiences. Below are some tips for each media type:

Print
- Where possible provide a good photo opportunity, a first-hand story or case study
- Print stories are often more in-depth and require more input from your media release, spokespeople and case studies (where relevant)

Radio – news
- In most cases requires a spokesperson or interviewee. Often this will just be to record small grabs/sound bites to give context to the story. If asked to record grabs, remember to keep it simple and focus on just communicating your key messages as the editor will edit the content to suit their needs and not all of your interview will necessarily make the cut

Radio – talkback
- Talkback radio like issues that are contentious and will spark debate and issues that touch people’s lives directly (e.g. smoking laws; cancer service issues). Be clear, concise and engaging, know your key messages and stress the importance of the policy ask. Try to avoid long pauses and formal language/jargon. Try to avoid arguing with the host or presenter.

Television
- Where possible consider the visual element of TV when pitching to TV journalists. Do you have an interesting filming location, someone comfortable with speaking on camera, a case study who is happy to share their story? Think about how the story will look on TV and pick a relevant location for any filming requests, familiarise yourself or spokesperson on key messages and remember you’re probably speaking faster than you think!

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

A letter to the editor is a useful way to share your knowledge, opinions and ideas with the local community and policy makers. They are a great way of reaching a wider audience, and a simple and effective way of getting coverage from local newspapers for those occasions that your media release is not picked up.
We will provide you with some template letters to use. You can also seek support from your Community Programs Coordinator when preparing letters to the editor.

Some simple tips for writing your own letter to editor.

- Keep your letter to around 200 words
- Begin with a simple salutation
- Give your opinion
- Explain why the issue is important (include evidence or statistics where possible)
- End with a call to action (e.g. “We hope that the local community will join us in calling on the Government to…”)

ISSUES MANAGEMENT

On some occasions, issues will arise that need escalating to a Cancer Council NSW representative:

- If you identify an issue e.g. something concerning happens at an event in your community, or you observe something that could risk or harm Cancer Council’s reputation on social media, contact your Community Programs Coordinator immediately and share as much detail about the issue as you can. Where possible, provide examples of the social media posts, people involved, or pieces of news.
- If your community Programs Coordinator is not available, contact Ali Boydell, Regional Communications Specialist (see contact details over page).
- If you get a call from a journalist alerting you to a problem, the following process will help you escalate the issue appropriately and effectively:
  1. Advise the journalist or community member that you’re not the best person to speak to about the topic but you can get someone to call them back shortly on the issue e.g. “I’ll need to get some more information to answer that question so if I can just take your name, number and where you are calling from…”
  2. Find out as much as you can about the issue e.g. “So can I just confirm that you’re looking to find out more about…” and “Are there any other questions you’re looking to ask?”
  3. Where possible find out their deadline for a response.
  4. Share this information with your Community Programs Coordinator.

CONTACT

If you have any media-related questions or concerns or need a Cancer Council NSW spokesperson please contact your local Community Programs Coordinator in the first instance. If your CPC is not available, please contact Ali Boydell, Regional Communications Specialist, on 9308 0267 or ali.boydell@nswcc.org.au.