

Engaging **WITH THE MEDIA**

Society for Endocrinology members are experts in hormone science and health. Members who act as Media Ambassadors work alongside the Society press office to provide accurate and responsible media reporting of endocrinology-related topics.

Find out how the media works and how the Society can support you to effectively engage with journalists as a Media Ambassador. You will improve your communication skills, get new perspectives on your work, and raise the profile of your research/practice and institution.

Importantly, by engaging with the media you will improve the quality of science and health reporting, enabling people to make better informed decisions about their health.

www.endocrinology.org

[@Soc_Endo](https://twitter.com/Soc_Endo)



HOW DO STORIES APPEAR IN THE MEDIA?

The majority of news stories come from publishers, institutions or learned societies who send press releases often highlighting newsworthy research or practice published in journals, or presented at events. Some examples of what journalists find newsworthy are:

- new research about common medical conditions that could eventually lead to better diagnosis or treatments
- research into health implications of everyday foods/products or lifestyle choices
- findings that challenge the status quo, that may be controversial
- research with an economic or political relevance to society

WHAT ARE JOURNALISTS LOOKING FOR?

Once journalists have chosen their story to cover, they generally try to engage with experts in order to inform their coverage of an endocrinology-related topic.

Expert input is crucial in media reporting – it helps journalists and writers shape stories, get the facts right and sometimes even assess whether stories are worth pursuing at all.

Journalists will get in touch with press offices at organisations such as at the Society for Endocrinology to discuss their story and be put in touch with a relevant scientist, clinician or nurse.

REMEMBER:

Journalists often have very short deadlines – even more so with online journalism. They need really quick responses from experts to be able to write their stories – often within a few hours – before they're published.

WHY SHOULD SCIENTISTS, CLINICIANS AND NURSES ENGAGE WITH JOURNALISTS?

By engaging with the media, our Media Ambassadors help the public make informed decisions. This engagement also helps scientists, clinicians and nurses keep perspective of the significance and relevance of their work to society, and it can be an opportunity to raise the profile of their work and institution.

Importantly, expert input helps improve the quality of science and health reporting. Insights from Media Ambassadors are invaluable to:

- provide context and background
- highlight limitations or inconsistencies
- explain real world implications

When media enquiries are **not** addressed by those who have the relevant expertise, there is a risk that the message will be misconstrued, becoming detrimental to public health and to society. This can trigger mistrust towards science and medicine.

REMEMBER:

There are plenty of people far less qualified than you who will be willing to speak to the media if you choose not to!



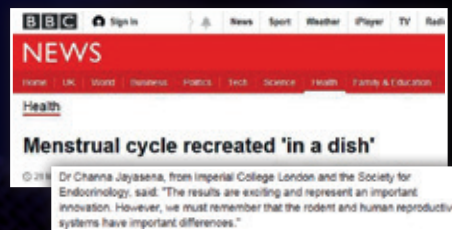
WHAT IS ACTUALLY INVOLVED IN BEING A MEDIA AMBASSADOR?

1. Responding to breaking news

The Society's press office is regularly asked for experts to provide written comments on specific endocrinology-related research papers that have been highlighted to the press via research institutions or publishers. Sometimes journalists will ask to have a short phone conversation if they have specific questions. These enquiries come from the Science Media Centre (SMC), news outlets or publications, freelance journalists or writers.

For example...

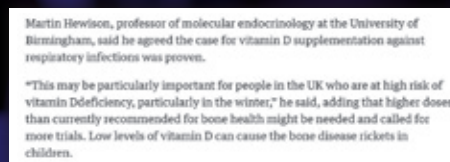
- **Channa Jayasena** and the Society were mentioned in the BBC, after talking to a journalist about a story on mimicking the menstrual cycle in a dish



- **Ashley Grossman** provided a comment about global warming and the rise in diabetes cases, which was reported in the *Telegraph*



- **Martin Hewison** submitted quotes on a study about vitamin D supplements and respiratory infections, which was covered by the BBC and *The Guardian*



- A story about parabens and obesity was dropped by the *Telegraph*, thanks to comments and contributions by **Saffron Whitehead** and **Giles Yeo**



2. Research for feature articles in print, TV or radio

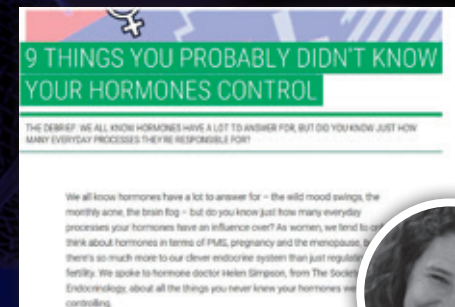
The Society's press office sometimes receives requests for advice or participation from TV shows, radio shows, freelance journalists, writers or filmmakers for a live or pre-recorded interview regarding a particular study or topic. Sometimes, these media outlets are simply seeking a preliminary, informative chat to gather background information about a topic that the source is covering.

For example...



- **Richard Quinton** appeared on a BBC Radio 4 show, talking about testosterone prescriptions.

- **Helen Simpson** contributed to an article on how hormones affect our day-to-day life, for *The Debrief*



- **Maralyn Druce** participated in a BBC Business Daily radio show about oxytocin



REMEMBER:

Even if your written quote or interview has been edited, and you feel like important bits have been left out, you most probably will still have got your main message across.

The benefits of working with the media can include sparking collaborations, attracting staff/students, gaining recognition for your area of work and helping obtain funding.

Helen Simpson

HOW DO I GET INVOLVED AS A MEDIA AMBASSADOR?

You can find out more about becoming a Media Ambassador by contacting the Society's press office at media@endocrinology.org. When you become a Media Ambassador, we will add your name to our database, against a list of topics related to your expertise and that you agree to comment on. We will then contact you with any relevant enquiries, support you as necessary and keep you updated with any coverage.

HOW WILL THE SOCIETY PRESS OFFICE SUPPORT ME?

We offer our support at every step of the way – if you are unsure about how to engage with journalists we are always available to help you in different ways.

We will:

- help you refine your key messages
- conduct mock-interviews
- advise on what kind of language to use when providing written comments

We aim to contact our Ambassadors only with those enquiries that fall into their field of expertise.

We will not:

- share any contact details with journalists unless you specifically agree that you are able to comment
- send more than one email with the same enquiry – if you don't get back to us before the specified deadline, we will assume you are unavailable

REMEMBER:

The Society has a series of how-to guides on how to interact with the media, and offers training opportunities to help you gain confidence when communicating with journalists.

Find out more about Society resources and training www.endocrinology.org/outreach/public-engagement





Share your expertise and help
improve science and health
reporting – become a Society Media
Ambassador by contacting us at
media@endocrinology.org