



## Community Media Tool Kit

### Spreading The Word: How to share your Northern Pass story with media

Local press coverage isn't just for business—you can get a story on the local news and reap the rewards that come with positive local publicity too. No matter which type of media outlet, from print media and online channels, to the local TV and radio news, if you submit a great story, you can land local press coverage that will build awareness for Northern Pass and support your own fundraising efforts as well.

Your participation in Northern Pass plays an important role in supporting breakthrough cancer research, and exceptional patient treatment and care at Princess Margaret Cancer Centre, one of the world's top five cancer research centres. If you would like to share your story with news outlets in your community, we've compiled a few tools to boost the chances of landing media coverage.

#### Key Messages

Key messages are the main points of information you want the audience to hear, understand, and remember. They are bite-sized summations that tell your story, why you participate in Northern Pass, and why it is important for others to get involved either by registering or donating. Here are the key messages for Northern Pass. Think of them as general guidelines you can adapt to your own words, voice, and tone.

##### Northern Pass Key Messages

- We all have a role to play in helping to Conquer Cancer In Our Lifetime. Northern Pass is an important way for me to do my part.
- Like many Canadians, I have been personally touched by cancer. Raising funds for cancer research and riding in honour of [my loved one, my friend, myself] gives me a sense of purpose and is a meaningful way for me to have an impact.
- The funds raised support breakthrough cancer research that improves lives of patients not only at The Princess Margaret, but around the world. This support truly makes a difference for patients and their families.

#### Sample Pitch

A media pitch puts your story in front of the journalist/editor or media outlet. Almost always, a media pitch is done by email, but it's also possible to do it via social platforms, telephone, or traditional mail.

To secure coverage, you'll need a strong media pitch with the following elements:

- **Personalized greeting:** Each pitch should be personalized for the contact, such as personalizing the message for a specific journalist who covers the subject area of your story.
- **Eye-catching subject line:** Pitches sent via email must include an intriguing subject line if you want them to get opened. It should indicate what the email is about and interest the recipient enough to open it to learn more.
- **Body copy with pertinent information:** This should be personalized to each journalist by answering the following questions: 1) Why should the recipient (and their audience) be interested? 2) What are the key points? 3) Why do they need to act fast? and 4) Where can they get more information?
- **Before sending out your email, be sure to check its grammar and spelling.**

***SUBJECT: How I'm helping raise millions of dollars for critical cancer research***

*Hi [insert media name],*



*[Personalized greeting] I hope your week is going well!*

*In [year] [I/my friend/my family member] received the news that rocked our world and changed it forever – a cancer diagnosis. Cancer has touched everyone and I'd like to tell you about my experience, and how I support cancer research at Canada's leading cancer centre.*

*[Insert paragraph about your personal story]*

*It's not easy to step forward and talk about symptoms, treatment, and outcomes, but cancer is the leading killer of Canadians, so we need to talk about it and support the ground-breaking research that's taking place right here in our own backyard in the GTA. Northern Pass is an important fundraising event for cancer research and that's why I'm sharing my experience and encouraging others to participate.*

*If conquering cancer is important to you or someone you know, and you'd like to hear more about my story, I'd be happy to join you for a quick call or even come by the studio.*

*I'll be in touch to follow-up and look forward to hearing from you soon!*

*Thanks!*

*[add your name and contact details]*

## **Visuals Help**

Sending quality images with the pitch is an easy win. Any image you send with a pitch, must tell the story clearly, without needing any words. For example, you might attach an image of yourself participating in the event, smiling, posing with friends and family, at the start line, or at the finish line. Attach no more than 1 or 2 images to avoid your email getting caught in spam filters.

## **How to Reach Out**

1. Identify which local media outlets (e.g., newspapers, TV stations, radio stations, and websites) you would like to send your story to.
  - a. The quickest way to determine the best contact is to call the general phone number for the outlet and ask.
  - b. Alternatively, a quick search on the outlet's website Contact, About Us, or Masthead pages should help you locate an email address and phone number to contact the outlet.
  - c. An ideal contact to reach out to would be the general news desk or editor, or a journalist who has covered local fundraising efforts.
2. Most journalists prefer to receive pitches via email. Then, follow up with a phone call or an additional email within 24-48 hours to secure the contact's attention.
  - a. Don't be discouraged if you do not receive a response after calling and sending a second email. Media are inundated with pitches and calls daily. Some are responsive, many are not.

## **Sample Community Media Outlets**

Below are links to the community news lists of some sample syndicated outlets that may have a presence in your hometown:

- [Snap'd](#)
- [Metroland News](#)
- [PostMedia](#)