COMMUNICATIONS

Media/News

The Office of Communications is designated as the clearinghouse for Health Science Center (HSC) news and information. The office produces news releases and media advisories for local, regional national and international media, and assists the news media with their stories by bridging them to Health Science Center faculty and spokespeople. Also, the Communications Office publishes e-newsletters, web pages/sites, the flagship institutional Health Science Center magazine *Mission*, and a variety of other publications, all for both internal and external audiences and available in print and online.

Faculty and staff are asked to contact the Office of Communications prior to contacting any member of the news media regarding any Health Science Center matter. If a member of the media contacts a member of the Health Science Center faculty or staff, such faculty and staff are asked to inform the Office of Communications of this activity without delay.

Office of Communications staff may consult on various public relations aspects of the Health Science Center and departmental projects.

Procedure For Media/News Access to Clinical or Clinical Research Areas

All HSC employees and faculty members have an obligation to prevent unauthorized access to, or use of, patient and personal data and to assure that “de-identified” data cannot be linked back to the user or patient. The use of any medium to film, videotape or otherwise record patient interactions with health care providers requires the utmost respect for the privacy and confidentiality of the patient.

The following procedures are to be followed to help ensure that the rights of patients are protected whenever filming, videotaping or otherwise recording of patients occurs.

1. Filming of patients requires explicit patient consent and only patients who are able to consent can be filmed. The HSC “Patient Authorization Release Form” *(English) (Spanish)* must be completed, with the patient’s consent, prior to any contact with the patient for filming purposes. Consent will be obtained by the
assigned media officer from the Office of Communications.

Consent may never be obtained by a member of the film crew or production team. In all cases in which a patient is a minor (17 years old or younger), or has a legal guardian, the consent of the parent or legal guardian must be approved by the Dean of the respective school, or his/her designee. A copy of the consent form will be given to the practice manager for inclusion within the patient’s medical record, and the original consent will be provided to the Office of Communications to maintain on file.

2. Patients have the right to have filming stopped upon request at any time and to request that the film crew be removed from the area. Clinical personnel involved in the direct medical care of the patient who believe that filming may jeopardize patient care have an obligation to request that the film crew be removed from the patient area.

3. The HSC “Patient Authorization Release Form” (English) (Spanish) states that the patient may withdraw or revoke authorization at any time and such revocation must be given to the HSC in writing. A withdrawal authorization will have no affect on the patient’s treatment. However, the patient should acknowledge the possibility that any disclosure or publication made prior to his/her revocation may remain in the public domain.

4. In response to a request by a member of the news media for an interview to take place in a Health Science Center clinical or clinical research area, a media officer from the Office of Communications must notify:

   - the department chair or division chief from which the interview is being sought;
   - the faculty member to be interviewed;
   - the chief executive officer of the relevant clinical practice, or the equivalent;
• the chief administrative officer of the relevant clinical practice, or the equivalent; and

• the appropriate manager who will arrange for access to an appropriate area in which to conduct the interview.

If a patient is to be involved in filming, he/she must first be contacted by the faculty member, practice manager or the patient’s health care provider in order to secure the patient’s consent prior to his/her being contacted by the media officer from the Office of Communications. Consents must be obtained in advance of the filming. In the event that news media arrive without pre-arrangement, they will not be permitted to conduct interviews or film. The practice manager will be available throughout the media interview and the media officer from the Office of Communications will accompany the news media at all times for the duration of the visit to clinical and clinical research areas. If at any time the practice manager determines that patient privacy or clinical operation policies are not being followed, the news media will be requested to leave the area immediately.

5. When the news media request the use of patient digital images/scans as part of an interview or story, the media officer from the Office of Communications must contact the health care provider for approval and the appropriate manager to arrange for access to an area in which to film the images/scans. If the health care provider agrees to a request to make images/scans available, the health care provider or the practice manager will be responsible to ensure that all the images/scans have been de-identified.

6. In any event that the news media is requested to leave an area, by a clinician/clinical personnel, practice manager or other designated school official, it is the responsibility of the media officer from the Office of Communications to ensure that the news media leave the premises, with assistance from UT Police, if needed.