

Professionalism in Relationships with Media

Code of Medical Ethics Opinion 3.1.5

Ensuring that the public is informed promptly and accurately about medical issues is a valuable objective. However, media requests for information about patients can pose concerns about patient privacy and confidentiality, among other issues.

Physicians who speak on health-related matters on behalf of organizations should be aware of institutional guidelines for communicating with media, where they exist. To safeguard patient interests when working with representative of the media, all physicians should:

1. () Obtain consent from the patient or the patient's authorized representative before releasing information.
2. () Release only information specifically authorized by the patient or patient's representative or that is part of the public record.
3. () Ensure that no statement regarding diagnosis or prognosis is made except by or on behalf of the attending physician.
4. () Refer any questions regarding criminal activities or other police matters to the proper authorities.

AMA Principles of Medical Ethics: IV

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