

Your PR Toolkit

You are amazing and we think your support is fantastic!

Every penny you raise really does make a difference to local families living with life limiting illness.

To help boost the success of your fundraising activity, why not get in touch with your local newspaper or radio station? You're doing something awesome, so why not tell everyone!

A great way to show how you are actively supporting Birmingham St Mary's Hospice is by writing a press release. This is a written statement/news story to the media giving information on a particular matter such as an event or challenge you are undertaking.

Good PR can help to boost your donations or sponsorship, bring more people to the event, and to help raise awareness of the brilliant work the Hospice does.



Spread the word and maximise the impact of your support

Top tips on how to write a press release that will 'grab those headlines'

Think about your structure. Good stories are written in an 'inverted pyramid' structure with the main points at the top and less important information further down.

What's your headline? Less is always more so keep your headline short, clear and to the point.

First impressions count. Remember the five W's- Who, Why, What, Where and When. For example, if it's an event, give details of who is organising it, why you're doing it, what the event is, where it is taking place and when it is happening,

Don't forget to write in third person. Use 'he', 'she', and 'they' rather than 'I', 'we' and 'us'.

Keep it brief. Short sentences work best and you should try to keep your release to one page.

In your own words. Adding a quote about what has inspired you to support the Hospice will really add value and give your press release a personal touch.

Why are we a worthy cause? By adding a note about the work we do at the Hospice, you'll help to raise awareness of our services so we can support more local families living with life limiting illness. A short sentence like this will be ideal - 'Birmingham St Mary's Hospice provides vital care to local families who are living with life limiting illness. Everyday they provide care to over 400 people, offering support in people's homes, in the community and at the Hospice itself.'

Your call to action is your most important part of your story. Make sure you tell people how they can get involved in your event or make a donation.

Registered Charity No. 503456



BIRMINGHAM
ST MARY'S
HOSPICE

And finally.... Always finish your press release with the word 'ends.'

Contact details. Make sure you include your telephone and/or email address clearly at the bottom so the journalist can contact you if they want to know more.

A picture is worth a thousand words. Photos are a great way of attracting attention to your fundraising efforts so if you have any make sure you include them with your press release.

Sending your press release out. The best way to do this is via email – at least two weeks before your activity. Visit the contact section of your local newspaper or radio station to find the news desk email address. When emailing your press release, insert the text in the main body of the email, with the headline as the subject line. Don't forget to also share your press release with us so we can help promote it as well.

Don't be shy about following it up. It's always worth dropping a call to the news desk or journalist you have contacted to check they received it and if they need any more information. Remember, they may decide to not run with your story – but don't be disheartened, it's always worth a shot!



Using your 'top tips' as a guide, here are a few example press releases we've created for inspiration

EXAMPLE PRESS RELEASE 1

Headline: Moseley hairdresser joins Jingle Bell Jog

Intro: A kind-hearted Moseley hairdresser will be swapping her scissors for a Santa suit to raise money for a charity close to her heart.

Paragraph 1: Joan Bloggs will be taking part in Birmingham St Mary's Hospice's annual 2km fun run at Kings Heath Park on Sunday 4th December in memory of her father in law.

The mother-of-two who works at Snipz Salon on the High Street is hoping to raise as much money as possible for the Selly Park based Hospice where her father-in-law was cared for.

Quote: Joan said: "Birmingham St Mary's Hospice did a fantastic job of caring for my father-in-law, Al, who died in the Hospice after a two year battle with cancer. Taking part in this year's Jingle Bell Jog is my way of saying thank you and I hope the money raised benefits others who need the care and support of the Hospice. I'll be doing the charity fun run with my husband and two children and we're really looking forward to it."

About the Hospice: Birmingham St Mary's Hospice provides vital care to local families who are living with life limiting illness. Everyday they provide care to over 400 people, offering support in people's homes, in the community and at the Hospice itself. It costs over £9 million per year to run the Hospice services and over half of these running costs come from voluntary income.

Call to action: You can sponsor Joan at: www.justgiving.com/fundraising/jogger-joan

Ends.

EXAMPLE PRESS RELEASE 2

Headline: Ready Steady Bake fundraiser has tasty results

Intro: High school pupils show their sweet side after raising almost £200 from a charity bake sale.

Paragraph 1: A group of Selly Oak High School students raised £196.34 from a bake sale on Friday 22nd October in aid of Birmingham St Mary's Hospice.

Generous sixth form students whipped up cakes and biscuits as part of the local hospice's 'Ready Steady Bake' fundraising campaign. Staff and students had the chance to make a donation in exchange for the sweet treats during the lunch hour.

Quote: Student Anita Patel who led the group said: "The bake sale was a huge success thanks to the support from staff and students at Selly Oak High School. Birmingham St Mary's Hospice is a great local cause and we have all enjoyed getting creative in the kitchen and baking treats to raise money for them."

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Call to action: If this has inspired you to get baking and you'd like to organise a bake sale, please visit www.birminghamhospice.org.uk to register your event and receive your free fundraising pack.

Ends.

EXAMPLE PRESS RELEASE 3

Headline: Daring Kings Heath duo to skydive for local Hospice

Intro: Two best friends from Kings Heath will be taking the plunge to support their local hospice.

Paragraph 1: John Doe and Sam Smith will be diving 15,000ft out of a plane on Thursday 28 July to raise money for Birmingham St Mary's Hospice.

Quote: John Doe said: "Doing a skydive is something me and Sam have always spoken about. We know a lot of people who have been touched by the care and support received from Birmingham St Mary's Hospice so it seemed right. We're both looking forward to it even though we're both not good with heights! However, it's for a great cause and the money we hope to raise is spurring us on."

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Call to action: You can sponsor John and Sam via their Just Giving page: www.justgiving.com/fundraising/john-and-sam

Ends.