**Good advice about contact with the press**

Whether the press story is positive or critical, it's important to be prepared.

Here is some good advice about contact with the press. Bear these things in mind and you’ll be even better prepared

to get your message across in the media.

**Checklist: When the journalist calls**

Get answers to the following questions before you speak:

* Who is the journalist and where are they calling from?
* What story is the journalist working on? (Ask until you are absolutely sure what the matter
* is about)
* Who else has the journalist spoken with?
* What is your role?
* Are you being quoted or is this for background information?
* When is the deadline for the journalist's story?
* Ask to have quotes sent to you for review, or read aloud to you

Remember that it is ok to ask for time to think. Offer to get back to them.

**Checklist during the interview:**

* You decide what and how much you want to say
* Say the most important things first. Provide short and specific answers.
* Talk to the readers or viewers, not the journalist – what does the audience want to know?
* Repeat the main messages
* Be critical of using professional terminology
* Feel free to use metaphors and experiential examples when explaining research data
* Respect the journalist's deadline
* Avoid idle chatter. Confidentiality is the journalist's problem
* Be extremely careful about going "off the record"
* Be polite and welcoming

Once you have spoken to the press, feel free to send a brief email or call the communications officer at your own department.