**Publicity**

Letting your community-at-large know about your plans for National Nursing Home Week (NNHW) can bring many benefits. This is especially important if you are planning activities that involve families or members of the public. It is always a good idea to use events like NNHW to generate positive PR for your facility and to get your residents and staff in the spotlight.

**Five Steps to Positive PR**

1. **Know Your Contacts—**A first step to making your event public is to develop a list of local media outlets and contacts. For events like NNHW, focus on weekly suburban and shopper-type newspapers as well as special senior publications or newsletters. All these outlets rely on neighborhood news—and photographs. The “Style,” “Lifestyle” or county sections of larger daily newspapers may also cover your event. Send publicity to local radio stations too.
2. **Make It Personal** — Give your list of reporters a call or send them an e-mail several weeks in advance to introduce yourself and give them a “heads up” about the activities you have planned for NNHW. Most reporters will appreciate your news and it will make your second contact with them much smoother. Follow-up any phone calls you make with an e-mail detailing the events in writing.
3. **All Hands on Deck** — Make sure all facility leaders and staff are aware that local members of the media have been invited to attend your event. If a media contact is coming, especially if it includes a camera crew, make sure that facility leaders are prepared and able to carry out the plans you have in place. Be on site to help direct your media contact around the facility and answer any questions.
4. **One Reminder is not Enough** — Be sure to remind your invited media contacts about your events. Follow-up should take place in both phone calls and e-mail. Once is not enough—unless you receive a confirmation. In this case, refer to #3 and prepare to continue the great relationship you have started with your media contact!
5. **The Power of Follow-up —** Be sure to follow-up immediately with your contact to fulfill any promises you have made and make sure they have all they need. A handwritten thank-you note that includes your business card is always a great way to show that you appreciate their time and participation. With an effective follow-up effort, your media contact is more likely to keep your name on file as a reliable source in the nursing home community.

Once you have successfully completed these steps, give yourself a pat on the back! Media relations and positive PR takes time, dedication, and perseverance.

***For more information on*** *NNHW 2014, visit* [***www.nnhw.org***](file:///\\NT05-2000\SHARED\IAC\Shared\2009%20Files\NNHW\2010\Planning%20Guide\www.nnhw.org)*!*