



Quick Tips:

# Getting Local Media Coverage on Malnutrition Awareness Week

#ASPENMAW23

Partnering with the local media to promote Malnutrition Awareness Week™ is a great way to educate our communities about the importance of advocating for our own nutrition and well-being. Here are some tips on working with local newspapers and television and radio stations. *Please share what your local media prints and/or broadcasts with ASPEN! Email [stephanie@nutritioncare.org](mailto:stephanie@nutritioncare.org).*

Before you reach out to the media, it is important to:

1. Obtain permission from your supervisor, administrator, and/or leaders.
2. Meet with the staff responsible for your institution's public relations, community relations, or marketing to discuss promoting Malnutrition Awareness Week. Get clear direction on what part they will play in the campaign and what you and your team will do.
3. Ask them to review a list of malnutrition-related issues in your community that you would like to share with the local media. Use their approved examples in interviews and press releases.

## Local Newspapers

1. Contact the local reporter who writes about health, nutrition, the elderly, or community events. Talk to them about Malnutrition Awareness Week, the impact of malnutrition on your community, and its relevance to their readers.

*2 months before Malnutrition Awareness Week:*

- Briefly outline why their readers need to learn about malnutrition and how that knowledge will benefit them. Note that malnutrition impacts many different people of all ages. Use statistics from the [ASPEN Value Project](#) on the cost of malnutrition in both financial and human terms.
- Discuss your planned events for Malnutrition Awareness Week.
- Share the names of experts they can interview.
- Detail any upcoming photo opportunities.
- Provide images and graphics they can use. (See [nutritioncare.org/SpreadTheWord](https://nutritioncare.org/SpreadTheWord) and [nutritioncare.org/Malnutrition](https://nutritioncare.org/Malnutrition)).
- Share your contact information and the best times to reach you.

*1 month before Malnutrition Awareness Week:*

- Send out press releases about Malnutrition Awareness Week. (See the [MAW Press Release Template](#).)
- Share dates and times of photo opportunities.

2. Write and submit a letter to the editor or opinion essay (op-ed).

- Research your local newspaper's editorial submission policies and timelines.
- Be mindful of publication guidelines (word count, fact-checking, deadlines, etc.).

3. Add Malnutrition Awareness Week to the newspaper's calendar of events.

- Review the paper's guidelines for event submissions.
- Find out if the newspaper accepts photos or images on their web-based calendars. ASPEN has suitable graphics that you can use.

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[nutritioncare.org/MAW](https://nutritioncare.org/MAW)

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### Local TV/Radio Interview and/or News Story

Contact the producer of local news or public affairs programs and suggest doing a segment on the issue of malnutrition and its impact on your community.

*2 months before Malnutrition Awareness Week:*

- Send the dates of Malnutrition Awareness Week to TV and radio stations noting why MAW is important to their audience. Provide a contact person and any available details.

*1 month before Malnutrition Awareness Week:*

- Present three key points on why it is necessary for their audience to learn about malnutrition and to be able to recognize it in themselves and others. Point out that malnutrition affects many different people. Share ASPEN statistics on the cost of malnutrition in financial and human terms.
- Offer to be interviewed about your Malnutrition Awareness Week events and/or provide details they can share with their audience. Stress why and how these events are relevant to your community.
- Ask the media to incorporate the issue of malnutrition awareness into news stories on other health issues or in tandem with national days/months of observance relevant to health (e.g., Cancer Awareness Month).

*2 weeks before Malnutrition Awareness Week*

- Send out a press release on the upcoming event and your activities for the week.

*First day of Malnutrition Awareness Week*

Reach out to the stations reminding them that it is Malnutrition Awareness Week, an event that's important to their community and their audience.

### Local TV and Radio Public Service Announcement (PSA)

*3 months before Malnutrition Awareness Week*

- Contact your local public affairs/community relations managers and/or public services directors. Ask for information on running PSAs and who the point person is.

- Explain how the community would benefit from learning about malnutrition and how to identify it. Ask what information you can provide.
- Provide TV and radio stations with text for PSAs. (See [ASPEN MAW PSAs.](#))

### When You Speak with the Media

#### Respect deadlines.

- Keep in mind that the media works under tight deadlines that are often inflexible.
- Return their calls as soon as possible.
- Publication deadlines are not negotiable. Aim to be a day early with submissions for print or scheduled airtime.

#### Watch what you say.

- Everything you openly share with the media can be used by them.
- If you misspeak, stop, take a breath, and immediately clarify or correct any error.
- If you are asked a question that you don't understand, ask for clarification.
- Don't be afraid to let them know if you need more time to provide an answer.

#### Prepare and practice.

- Write down three or four key talking points that include facts and figures.
- Practice talking about them in simple, understandable terms that you can present in just a few sentences. ASPEN infographics are an excellent resource for this.
- Speak from your head and your heart. Express your care and concern about your patients and the community.
- Use examples that others can relate to. If you need some ideas, check out the ASPEN patient stories.

#### Relax.

- Educating others is a part of your job, and you have a lot of experience to call upon.
- Enjoy the opportunity to share your knowledge with a broader audience and make a difference in your community.