



Australasian College
for Emergency Medicine

Media Policy

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acem.org.au

Document Review

Timeframe for review:	Every two years, or earlier if required
Document authorisation:	ACEM Board
Document implementation:	Executive Director, Policy, Research and Partnerships
Document maintenance:	Manager, Media and Publications

Revision History

Version	Date	Pages revised / Brief Explanation of Revision
v1	Nov-2016	Approved by Council
...
v7	Jun-2017	Approved by Board; substantive revisions throughout
v8	Feb-2018	Minor amendments to s4.3 re endorsement of individual products and clarification of product endorsement clause, amendments to s5 spokespeople, incorporating President- Elect and Immediate Past President.
v9	Dec-2022	Contemporaneous review, including minor revisions and wording changes to all sections of the policy.
v10	Oct-2024	Contemporaneous review, including amendments to s4.3 regarding the type of media issues ACEM does and does not comment on, and approvals required prior to release of a media statement.

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1. Introduction

The Australasian College for Emergency Medicine (ACEM; the College) is the not-for-profit organisation in Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand responsible for the training of specialist emergency physicians and advancement of professional standards in emergency medicine.

As the peak professional organisation for emergency medicine, ACEM has a vital interest in ensuring the highest standards of emergency medical care are maintained for all patients across Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand. Jurisdictional Faculties throughout Australia, and in Aotearoa New Zealand, target local issues and strive to raise awareness of emergency medicine care on behalf of their communities.

ACEM receives and analyses media inquiries, produces media releases and other forms of content used in proactive media engagement and is asked to comment on a variety of issues across Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand.

ACEM acknowledges the important role that the media plays in the context of its work across education, training and policy, and advocacy. It is vital that ACEM presents information consistently, strategically and professionally to the media.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this Media Policy is to ensure that ACEM presents a unified, informed and consistent response to the wide range of issues related to emergency medicine and public health systems that ACEM is involved in across Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand.

This Media Policy covers contributions to print, radio, television, and online media such as interviews and commentary, media releases and statements, and editorials. It also addresses how ACEM responds to media enquiries and issues, the type of media issues ACEM comments on and the designated ACEM spokespeople.

3. Definitions

Media

means all mass external communications activities including, but not limited to, coverage in the press, radio and television, and on the internet.

Member

means a person admitted as a member of the College pursuant to the provisions of the ACEM Constitution and associated regulations, and, for the purposes of this policy, also includes trainees.

Trainee

means trainees enrolled in and undertaking the FACEM Training Program and, for the purposes of this policy, also includes Emergency Medicine Certificate, Emergency Medicine Diploma, Emergency Medicine Advanced Diploma, Diploma of Pre-Hospital and Retrieval Medicine (DipPHRM) trainees, Associateship (Foundational, Intermediate, Advanced, and Associateship in Pre-Hospital and Retrieval Medicine) trainees, and Specialist International Medical Graduates (SIMGs) undertaking College requirements for the purpose of attaining eligibility for election to Fellowship of the College.

Employee

means any employee or contractor engaged by the College.

4. Policy

4.1 Background and purpose of media

ACEM's Vision is:

'To be the trusted authority for ensuring clinical, professional and training standards in the provision of quality, evidence-based, patient-focused emergency care.'

ACEM's Mission is:

'Promote excellence in the delivery of quality emergency care to the community through our committed and expert members.'

As the primary authority and public face of emergency medicine in Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand, ACEM has a responsibility to ensure the public can understand its positions and that its media responses are accurate, consistent, timely, authoritative, reassuring, and interesting. This will be assisted by close engagement with the ACEM Board, including the President, and all College members and trainees, and will be guided by ACEM's Core Values of Respect, Integrity, Collaboration and Equity.

ACEM also has an important responsibility to inform the general public, via the media, on topics of emergency medicine concern or on issues where emergency medicine standards or procedures have been called into question.

Members, trainees and employees expect ACEM to positively advocate and represent the profession in the media on a wide range of issues that affect emergency physicians and their patients.

To assist with facilitating a coordinated and timely response or approach to the media, all communications should be managed and coordinated by ACEM's Policy and Public Affairs Division, specifically its General Manager, Policy and Public Affairs and/or its Manager, Media and Publications.

4.2 Benefits of coordinated media and strategic communications

One significant way the College strengthens its role and objectives, including its advocacy, awareness and member support work, is through reinforcing its position on varying issues to the general public and seeking to inform public opinion through the media.

The Media Policy forms parts of ACEM's broader strategic communications and engagement strategy, which focuses on:

- Maintaining and consolidating ACEM's brand and capacity to influence key stakeholders;
- Improving and deepening member engagement, and awareness of public advocacy efforts, across the College; and
- Providing high-quality communications services to members and the organisation.

Successful management of ACEM's media engagements ensures the public profile and reputation of ACEM, its members and trainees are positively maintained, reinforced and enhanced.

4.3 Principles

In responding to the media ACEM will adhere to the following principles.

(1) ACEM may:

- Comment on Federal and State Government health policy as it affects emergency medicine in Australia, and national health policy as it affects emergency medicine in Aotearoa New Zealand;
- Respond and react to comments made by allied health or other agencies;
- Comment on authenticated new emergency medicine research;
- Comment on emergency medicine procedures and operations;
- Comment on individual emergency medicine excellence;
- Profile and publicise ACEM research or individual emergency care research;
- Profile and publicise the work of ACEM governing bodies, committees, faculties, and other

College entities;

- Comment on matters to which it has previously gone on record to discuss, or matters in which it has a stated position that is publicly available for review/comment;
- Comment on matters that relate to the health and wellbeing of Indigenous people of Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand;
- Comment on matters which, in the opinion of the ACEM President, are of significant public interest; and,
- With approval of the ACEM President, and where required the ACEM Board, comment on international matters outside Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand specifically where ACEM currently holds formal partnerships with that country (for example, Fiji, Mongolia, Myanmar, Papua New Guinea).

(2) ACEM does not:

- Comment on personal issues that concern a member, trainee or employee's remuneration, fees for service, competency or ability;
- Rate emergency physicians;
- Rate emergency departments/hospitals;
- Comment on adverse events in the hospital setting if it is likely to have an impact on disciplinary or legal proceedings;
- Comment on individual emergency care matters or give an opinion of emergency care cases that are before a court of law;
- Endorse individual emergency care products or techniques that have not been researched by credible methodologies;
- Comment on a product or procedure that gives the product owner a commercial advantage;
- Publicly endorse political parties, in the case of state, territory or national elections;
- Provide opinion on matters of industrial relations or action; and
- Comment on international issues occurring outside Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand (aside from the instance(s) whereby ACEM currently holds formal partnerships). Where this occurs the College may with approval of the ACEM President, and where required the ACEM Board, defer to the International Federation for Emergency Medicine (IFEM).

(3) Where a media statement or a quote(s) within a media statement is directly attributed to an ACEM member, trainee, or employee, approval must be provided in writing by that person prior to release of the media statement.

5. Media spokespeople

Media engagements are responded to on a national/bi-national and jurisdictional basis. The nominated spokespeople for ACEM are:

- a. The President and/or the President-Elect/Immediate Past President for all national and bi-national issues, and jurisdictional issues as required.
- b. Faculty Chairs and Deputy Faculty Chairs for relevant jurisdictional issues in Australia, and at the national level in Aotearoa New Zealand.
- c. Specific Fellows who are subject matter experts in their chosen field, and/or specific Fellows or employees identified, approved and media-trained by ACEM, including committee chairs of various Council of Education (COE) or Council of Advocacy, Practice and Partnerships (CAPP) entities.

The President is the default primary spokesperson on all College matters. Comment provided to media on behalf of the College is at the discretion of, and subject to the approval of, the President.

College spokespeople should undertake media training as provided by College Media and Publications Unit,

prior to their first engagement with the media.

College spokespeople must understand and comply with the contents of this policy, and only represent the College under the direction of the President.

College spokespeople who also represent other organisations in the media should always clearly identify which organisation they are representing at the time. A College spokesperson representing another organisation must obtain the express permission of the President to use ACEM-owned material, information or messages. They must also publicly acknowledge ACEM ownership of this material, information or messages at the time of use.

College employees should refer all media queries and planned activity (both proactive and reactive) to the Media and Publications Unit for management and planning. The College Media and Publications Unit will work closely with members, employees and other stakeholders to achieve clear outcomes, and manage risks (under the delegation of ACEM's General Manager, Policy and Public Affairs).

ACEM understands that the quality of ACEM's media relationships are vital to supporting the public elevation, and the quality of coverage, of ACEM's priority issues. Only ACEM's General Manager, Policy and Public Affairs and/or the Manager, Media and Publications and/or a Media Advisor or Media Officer employed by ACEM can engage with the media to discuss issues, provide background, and to maintain good working relationships with journalists.

6. Associated documents

- ACEM Constitution
- ACEM Regulations
- ACEM Code of Conduct (COR305)
- ACEM Core Values
- External Communications Policy (COR607)
- Intellectual Property Policy (COR64)
- Policy on Conflict of Interest (COR139)
- Social Media Policy (COR345)
- Communications and Engagement, Communications Strategy



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