



10 Steps to Effective Media Relations

- 1.** Cultivate your local media, including newspapers, radio, television, and cable access TV. Become an expert source on whom they can rely for information on health care issues.
- 2.** Write letters to the editor, op-ed pieces, and human interest articles for your local and community papers. Talking points can be obtained from AAHomecare's Web site.
- 3.** Issue press releases about innovative programs and unique aspects of your services. Details about trends in your area are important to local media. Put a human face on key issues by talking about services, care, and equipment your organization provides. Also, produce public service announcements about homecare, its value, and the role it plays in your community.
- 4.** Offer to be a guest on talk show programs on radio and television in your community.
- 5.** Work with AAHomecare and your state association to request and schedule a meeting with your local newspaper's editorial staff and board. Stress the importance of homecare to the local community, and back it up with information and stories. The goal is getting the newspaper to write an editorial that is favorable to your issue.
- 6.** Make a video in which your patients, their caregivers, and your staff talk about what homecare means to them. Show this video when you meet with local reporters.
- 7.** Ask your Member of Congress to accompany your staff on a visit to a patient's home. Invite the press to participate, with permission of the patient and Member of Congress.
- 8.** As you send information to Members of Congress, copy your local press. If you meet with your Members of Congress or their staff, mention the meeting and issue to the press. AAHomecare can work with you on this.
- 9.** Sponsor a meeting at your facility featuring employees, consumers, and caregivers addressing the value of homecare—that it's cost effective, clinically effective, and consumer preferred—and other current issues that will affect homecare. Invite the press as well as your Members of Congress.
- 10.** Before the next election, organize a candidates' forum or work with other groups in your community to survey candidates on their positions on key homecare and healthcare issues. Invite the press to attend the forum and publicize the results to the media.