

## Managing media during ophthalmic crisis

Dealing with mass media is crucial as it provides easy access to a large audience; the integrity of the health organization as well as their staff is at stake due to the negative publicity. Media coverage and reputation management plan is the best way to minimize the damage of an unplanned event.

Cataract surgery is the most commonly performed ophthalmic surgical procedures, reviews also conclude an improved quality of life after cataract surgery. Despite all these, globally, in most developing countries, there are issues with outcomes of cataract surgeries with poor outcomes ranging from as low as 11.4% to as high as 44%.<sup>[1]</sup>

Although poor outcomes are distressing or disappointing for the patients, this also has a serious impact on the morale of the surgical team and brings a bad name to the surgical team and the surgical facility.<sup>[2]</sup> A recent outbreak of endophthalmitis in one of the trust hospitals of Indore (MP) shook the ophthalmic fraternity across India.

But most of the times the information on cataract surgery failures is unfurled by the media for the general population. Dealing with mass media is crucial as it provides easy access to a large audience and media can work even in cases of a complete or partial breakdown of the routine services. Sometimes media hype, which is media generated news waves reinforce over and over again one specific frame while ignoring other perspectives.<sup>[3]</sup>

Therefore, the integrity of the health organization as well as its staff is at stake. The results of such miscommunication between the media, healthcare facility, and the public have disastrous outcomes for all.

Given below are few steps to handle media in crisis:

- 1: Start with the disaster plan
- 2: Designate a crisis team
- 3: Train staff on media communication
- 4: Appoint spokespersons
  - a) Media Spokesperson
  - b) Family Spokesperson
  - c) Staff Spokesperson
- 5: Be Truthful at all times.

A public relations and media management plan is the best way to minimize the damage of a crisis and to ensure prosperity in its wake.<sup>[4]</sup>

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