

MEDIA CODE OF COOPERATION

The Integrated Health and Social Services University Network for West-Central Montreal (CIUSSS West-Central Montreal) consists of the Jewish General Hospital, Donald Berman Maimonides Geriatric Centre, Catherine Booth Hospital, CLSC Benny Farm, CLSC Côte-des-Neiges, CLSC Métro, CLSC Parc-Extension, CLSC René-Cassin, Constance-Lethbridge Rehabilitation Centre, Father-Dowd Residential Centre, Henri-Bradet Residential Centre, Info-Santé Montréal Regional Service, Jewish Eldercare Centre, MAB-Mackay Rehabilitation Centre, Miriam Home and Services, Mount Sinai Hospital Centre, Richardson Hospital, St-Andrew Residential Centre and St-Margaret Residential Centre. Nearly 345,000 people live in the area covered by West-Central Montreal Health, which has a staff of more than 9,000, including 600 doctors.

Department of Communications and Media Relations
Integrated Health and Social Services University Network for
West-Central Montreal
3755 Côte Ste-Catherine Road
Montreal, Québec H3T 1E2
(514) 340-8222, ext. 5818
communications@jgh.mcgill.ca
www.jgh.ca

▪ INTRODUCTION

The CIUSSS West-Central Montreal is ready to co-operate with the news media to provide information of public interest. However, we must balance the media's interest with the network and its staff's obligation to protect patients' rights to privacy and confidentiality, including the right not to be interviewed or photographed without their consent.

All news media inquiries and calls for expert opinions should be directed to the Department of Communications and Media Relations at (514) 340-8222, extension 24120.

The office is open from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday to Friday, except for statutory holidays. In the case of an emergency after normal business hours, the operator can put you in touch with the Communications and Media Relations staff member on call. Otherwise, if you are calling after hours regarding a matter that is not urgent, your call will be returned on the next business day.

All news media representatives (whether on the telephone or in person) must identify themselves and the organization which they represent.

News media representatives working under specific deadlines should advise Communications and Media Relations so that every possible effort can be made to provide the requested information prior to deadline.

When interviews and photography are requested by media representatives, the Communications and Media Relations staff is responsible for authorizing and coordinating the request.

When on site, all members of the media are asked to wear their identification credentials. In the case where they do not have any form of identification, they will be provided with a media badge from the Security Department.

Members of the media shall be escorted by Communications and Media Relations staff or their delegate at all times. This policy is in effect regardless of whether this request for an interview or photograph was initiated by a patient, relative, physician, volunteer, staff member or by the media organization itself.

Any member of a media organization carrying a camera (photo or video) on site without clearance from Communications and Media Relations shall be referred immediately to the Security Department.

▪ PATIENT CONFIDENTIALITY LAWS

Article 19 of the Quebec Act Respecting Health and Social Services states the following: "The record of a user is confidential and no person may have access to it except with the authorization of the user or the person designated to give authorization on his behalf, or on the order of a court."

▪ INFORMED USER CONSENT

Information about a patient may only be released with the written consent of the patient or, if he/she is incapacitated, their next-of-kin.

Consent is obtained by explaining to the user, and/or the patient's next-of-kin, who wants the information and how it will be used. The person giving consent must be informed of his/her right to refuse such consent. The CIUSSS West-Central Montreal official consent form must be completed prior to the release of medical information or an interview and/or photo session. The signed form is kept on file in the Department of Communications and Media Relations. Provided the user (or if they are incapacitated, their next-of-kin) has consented, limited information is available to the media. The CIUSSS West-Central Montreal will only confirm an individual's name if the user has consented, or if the police have previously released the user's full name and have announced that the person is a user in an CIUSSS West-Central Montreal establishment. The same policy applies when the media inquire about a Jewish General Hospital patient by name, the CIUSSS West-Central Montreal will only provide confirmation (with the patient's consent, or that of their next-of-kin) that the patient has been admitted or treated and discharged; and/or the current condition of the patient. The terms outlined below will be used to describe their condition.

- Good – Vital signs are stable* and within normal limits. Patient is conscious and comfortable. Making favorable progress.

- Fair – Vital signs are stable* and within or close to normal limits. Patient is conscious. Patient may have minor complications.

- Serious – Acutely ill. Vital signs may be unstable and not within normal limits. Patient may be unconscious. There are major complications.

- Critical – Vital signs are unstable and not within normal limits. There are major complications and indications are unfavorable.

* Stable – the term stable is only a description of a patient's vital signs which include temperature, pulse, respiration, and blood pressure. Without the written, informed consent of the patient and/or family, the hospital will NOT provide information about:

- Nature of illness or injury
- Specific severity of the injuries or prognosis.
- Possible cause of injury or the environment in which the accident occurred.
- Patient's release date.

Name(s) of attending physician(s), without consent of physician(s) and that of the patient (or if the patient is incapacitated, their next-of-kin).

▪ PROMINENT PERSONS

When a person in the public eye (politician, sports, entertainment, business, etc...) is admitted to the hospital, information about the person's condition may be released by Department of Communications and Media Relations, only with the permission of the patient (or if the patient is incapacitated, their next-of-kin) and his/her physician.