

## Journals PR selection criteria

Content is selected for press release on the basis of its **news** potential, so it either needs to be new, or a new take on an old subject.

### What gets press released:

- Original research
- Standalone commentaries and editorials
- Opinion pieces
- Letters (not responses)
- Meta-analyses

### Common criteria include:

- Topical/seasonal issue, eg swine flu, obesity; or tied to a bill going through parliament or changes in professional practice
- A new avenue of enquiry/endeavour, eg work treadmills at computer terminals (BJSM)
- Controversy – eg academic doping with performance enhancing drugs; advice given to pregnant women about alcohol
- Emotive topics involving religious convictions or cultural practice; abortion; assisted dying
- Turning received wisdom on its head: eg doubt cast over use of aspirin for secondary prevention of heart attacks (DTB)
- Quirkiness: eg editorial on lost tennis balls (BJSM); a case report on perils of skinny jeans (JNNP)
- Major public health interest item, eg MMR vaccination, binge drinking
- Findings about a commonly used drug or health condition, which will have implications for many people – eg Aspirin or antibiotics, osteoporosis or asthma
- An emerging problem/threat eg impact of climate change on health; swine flu; insufficient resources for an ageing population; hidden dangers of a drug/treatment
- Lifestyle concerns, eg exercise, diet, sex, shiftwork, sedentary behaviour
- Revelations about costs or process, eg cost of smoking or hip replacement for the NHS; evidence of discrimination/inequality; or money being spent badly...or not at all; looming workforce or funding crises
- Criticism of current government policy...or well evidenced pleas for changes in policy
- Problems about healthcare professional behaviour – practice or attitude; training; poor health; fraud and misconduct
- Simple things that can make a big difference – to improve health or prolong life; or save health services a stack of cash
- New health discoveries about prominent people in history
- Consensus statements

### Content that is difficult to press release:

- Clinical guidelines, unless these are saying something unexpected/controversial
- Essays
- Reviews summing up evidence to date
- Historical perspectives
- Niche articles applicable to a select group or narrowly defined geographical area
- Complicated science

We tend to avoid phase I trials and animal research, on the grounds that these may never progress further and we would be raising unrealistic expectations of new treatments.



