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**Be your own publicist – press release template for a running, walking, cycling or swimming challenge**

Thank you for doing something to make a difference to the lives of people with Parkinson’s. You’re amazing!

Before you start writing your press release to help drum up some support for your challenge, don’t forget to check out our 5 steps to achieving local media coverage advice.

A press release is written information that you can email to your local media to get them interested in covering your story – our press release template below will help you get this information together.

1. Simply cut and paste the below press release template into an email - and fill in the key details where [indicated]
2. Also included at the end of this document is advice on taking a photo to illustrate your finished press release - which will drastically increase the chances of your local paper covering your story

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PRESS RELEASE

**[enter your town or city] [man / woman] set to raise [enter amount] with [running / walking / cycling / swimming] challenge for Parkinson’s UK**

[enter the date you email your release to your local media here]

[enter your first name and surname], [enter age], from [enter your town, or city plus area of city] will be [enter brief details of your challenge e.g. cycling over 50 miles from London to Brighton] on [enter date of challenge] to raise vital funds for the charity Parkinson’s UK.

[enter your first name] is hoping to raise [£enter amount] to support Parkinson’s UK’s work.

[enter any additional information about your challenge you’d like to include here – e.g. Daniel will set off from his home in Ealing and hopes to arrive in Brighton x hours later].

Parkinson's UK is the leading charity driving better care, treatments and quality of life for those with the condition. Its mission is to find a cure and improve life for everyone affected by Parkinson's through cutting edge research, information, support and campaigning.

[enter your first name] decided to undertake the challenge for the charity because [enter your reason e.g. their grandfather has Parkinson’s and has been supported by the charity / they want to help fund research that could one day find a cure for Parkinson’s].

[enter your name] has been training hard and is now appealing to the local community to sponsor their challenge and help them raise money for a cause that is close to their hearts.

**[enter your first name] said:**

*“This is a space for a quote from you where you can talk further about you challenge, why you are doing it, and what difference you hope the money will make.*

*“For example – It’s going to be tough but I’m proud to be raising money that will help support people with Parkinson’s, like my grandad, and help Parkinson’s UK researchers find a cure.*

*“Every penny makes a difference and I’m hoping to raise as much as I can.”*

Parkinson’s is a progressive neurological condition for which there is currently no cure, and it affects around 145,000 people in the UK including [121,927 in England / 12,184 in Scotland / 7,692 in Wales / 3,716 in Northern Ireland].

Parkinson’s UK estimate that there are more than 40 symptoms of the condition. As well as the most widely known symptom - tremor - these range from physical symptoms like muscle stiffness to depression, anxiety, hallucinations, memory problems and dementia, but Parkinson’s affects everyone differently.

**Katherine Bartrop, Head of Regional Fundraising at Parkinson’s UK, said:**

*“Our work supporting people with Parkinson’s, and research to find better treatments and a cure for the condition is completely dependent on donations.*

*“To put it simply, without the support of our amazing fundraisers, the work we do just wouldn’t be possible, and we’re very grateful for this support.”*

**To sponsor [enter your first name] please visit [enter the link to your online giving page]**

**To find out how to fundraise for Parkinson’s UK visit** [**www.parkinsons.org.uk/fundraising**](http://www.parkinsons.org.uk/fundraising)

**ENDS**

Media enquiries:

For more information please contact: [enter your name] on [enter your mobile number] and email [enter your email address]

**About Parkinson’s**

* Every hour, two people in the UK are told they have Parkinson's
* It affects 145,000 people in the UK – which is around one in 350 of the adult population
* Parkinson's is a degenerative neurological condition, for which there currently is no cure. The main symptoms of the condition are tremor, slowness of movement and rigidity
* Parkinson's UK is the UK's leading charity supporting those with the condition. Its mission is to find a cure and improve life for everyone affected by Parkinson's through cutting edge research, information, support and campaigning.
* For advice, information and support, visit www.parkinsons.org.uk or call its free, confidential helpline on 0808 800 0303

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PHOTOS TO ILLUSTRATE YOUR STORY

Sending your press release to your local paper alongside a good quality digital photo drastically increases your chances of them covering your story. So don’t be camera shy – say cheese and get snapping!

These days most smartphones will be capable of taking a high-resolution photo that a newspaper can print but if you don’t have one a photo taken on a digital camera is great alternative.

Our 5 top tips for taking the perfect photo:

1. We suggest that you take a photo of you wearing your Parkinson’s UK T-shirt or vest. But a picture of you in normal exercise gear would work just as well
2. Take your photo outside if possible as the light will be better
3. If you take your photo indoors, make sure that you are against a plain background and use a flash
4. If you are fundraising because a loved one has Parkinson’s you could also send the local newspaper a photo of that person too - but check with them first that this is OK!
5. When you email over your press release, attach your photo or photos to the same email and let the journalist know the full names of who is in each photo

If you’re looking for inspiration for your perfect photo here are links to some local news articles featuring photos of Parkinson’s UK fundraisers:

* Heather’s [cycling challenge](http://www.oxfordtimes.co.uk/news/14627724.Heather_prepares_for_marathon_ride_to_raise_funds_for_Parkinson__39_s_research/?ref=rl&lp=4)
* Mason’s [mini-marathon](http://www.thecomet.net/news/young-stotfold-boy-on-marathon-mission-for-parkinson-s-uk-1-5456624)