Research Team Memorandum of Understanding

Communication

Version date: Dec 9 2019
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These Memorandum of Understanding documents are intended to guide the work of the Trans PULSE Canada Study. While each team member agrees in principle with the Memorandum of Understanding, it is considered a set of 'living documents', which may be revisited and revised throughout the life of our project.
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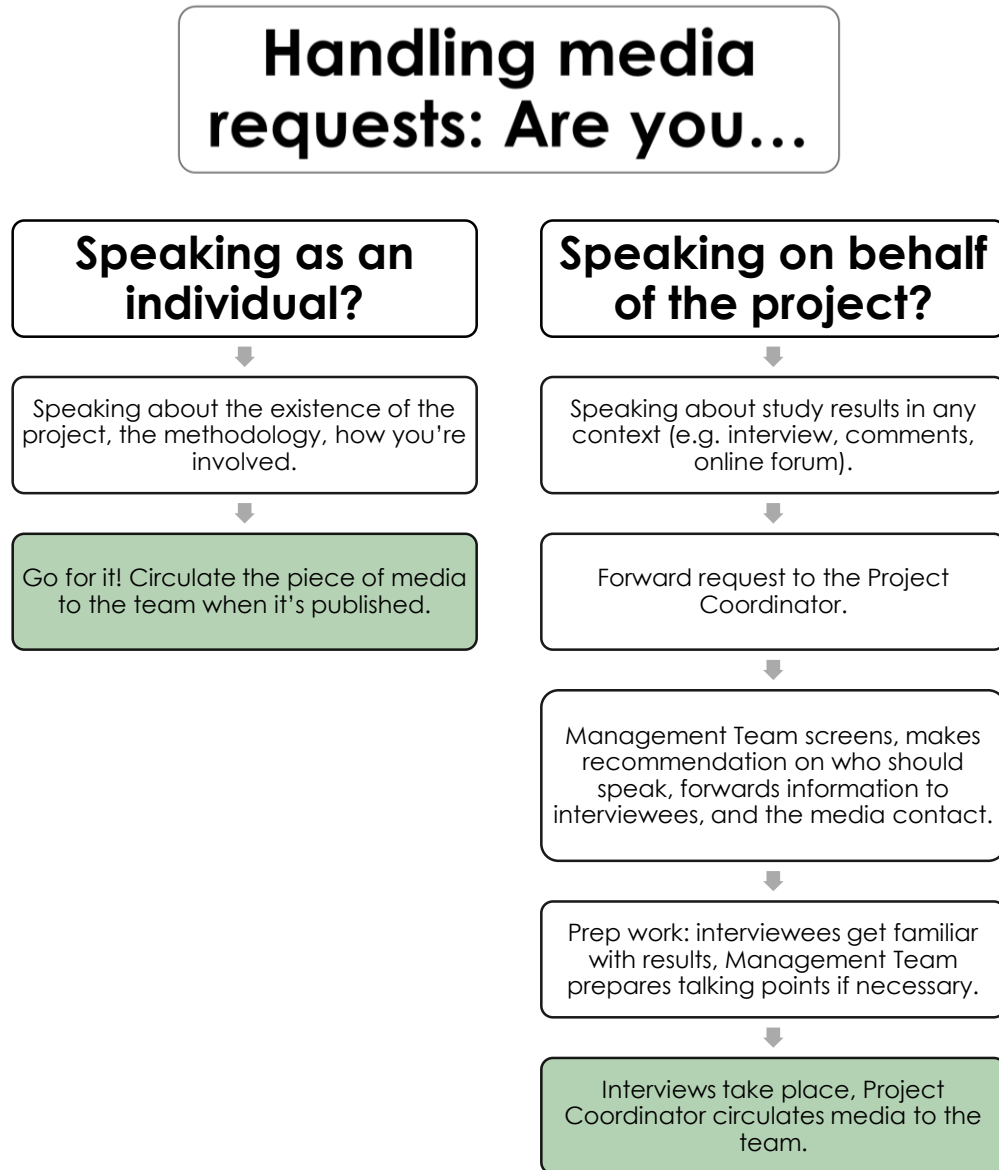## External Communication

Who can speak to media?

Team members who speak to the media about the project in any capacity are committed to providing information that is true, to the best of their knowledge. If anyone has doubts about whether a given media request falls under "speaking as an individual" vs. "speaking on behalf of the project", they should consult the Project Coordinator for guidance.

Speaking as an individual – All team members can speak for themselves as a professional or community member, including talking about the existence of the project, its aims, its methodology, and their involvement (without sharing study findings).

Speaking on behalf of the project - Media discussions regarding the project should not be made without consent or direction from the Management Team. This may include interviews, speaking to media, or engaging in public forums online. Particular caution should be exercised around communication of findings to ensure accuracy and contextualization of results. Strong consideration should also be given to how one's public communications could impact the stigmatization of trans communities and other marginalized groups.

In general, media requests related to the project should be forwarded to the Project Coordinator, who will screen the request along with the PIs. Media will then be advised to speak to one PI, and a team member in their local area who has agreed to speak with media. If a request pertains to a specific publication, media will be advised to speak to at least one PI, and the publication's lead author. If the publication focuses on a population that neither the lead author nor the PI is a part of, media will additionally be advised to speak to a member of the manuscript preparation team or the broader research team who is a member of said population.

Before speaking to media, team members are expected to familiarize themselves with the relevant research results. If desired, the management team can prepare talking points for any member of the team who will be speaking to media

Handling media requests: Are you…

Speaking as an individual?

Speaking about the existence of the project, the methodology, how you're involved.

Go for it! Circulate the piece of media to the team when it's published.

Speaking on behalf of the project?

Speaking about study results in any context (e.g. interview, comments, online forum).

Forward request to the Project Coordinator.

Management Team screens, makes recommendation on who should speak, forwards information to interviewees, and the media contact.

Prep work: interviewees get familiar with results, Management Team prepares talking points if necessary.

Interviews take place, Project Coordinator circulates media to the team.

Media requests for unpublished results

In order to uphold community accountability, all results will be published first by the Trans PULSE Canada team before being released to media.

Media requests for unpublished study materials

Unpublished study materials refer to any internal documents or information that have not been posted to our website or social media, for example: draft publications that do not yet include results, the study protocol, safety protocol, data analysis working group membership, etc. The

management team will judge whether decisions on unpublished study materials should go to the steering committee. In the interest of transparency, requests that are feasible, and pose no known risk to the team or broader community will generally be obliged. However, any request for potentially sensitive information (e.g. names of team members) will be brought to the steering committee, or be denied on this basis by the management team.

Internal Communication

Due to the national scale of this project, all regular communication will happen online. Communications which may need to include individuals external to the project (e.g. administrators) will occur over email, while the majority of internal communications will occur via Basecamp. When necessary, groups will meet via online video or voice call. Upon request, the Project Coordinator will schedule these meetings using Zoom.

Basecamp

Basecamp is an online co-working platform. For instructions on how to navigate Basecamp, see [Basecamp's own how-to guides](#), and the guidelines below. Basecamp is split into several areas: Headquarters, Teams, and Projects. Choose where to communicate based on your intended audience. While everyone has access to Basecamp Headquarters, Teams and Projects are restricted to their relevant audiences.

Headquarters: A space for everyone who is on the Trans PULSE Canada Basecamp to make team-wide announcements, FYIs, calls for feedback, etc.

> Current Headquarters: Our headquarters is called "Trans PULSE Canada" and can be found to the right of the logo on the Basecamp home page.

Teams: Teams are working spaces for people with similar roles. Think of them as departments, or working groups. Most teams will be active to some degree throughout the course of the project.

> Current Teams: Indigenous Leadership Group, Data Analysis Working Group, Management Team, Memorandum of Understanding Working Group, Survey Design Working Group, Steering Committee.

Projects: Projects are groups convened to accomplish specific goals within a limited period of time. Once that specific component of the study is complete, a project group may become inactive.

> Current Projects: All 9 PPCTs, 2018 November In-Person Meeting, KTE for Sharing, Team Photos for Internal Use.

Basecamp provides several ways to communicate. Choose a method based on your intended audience, and privacy level.

Communicating outside of Headquarters/Teams/Projects:

Pings: To be used for private messaging between two or more individuals.

Communicating within a Headquarters/Team/Project:

Campfire: Like a ping, but can be read by everyone within that HQ/Team/Project. Use the Campfire to chat casually with a specific group of people. The Campfire should not be used to discuss confidential or sensitive information.

Message Board: A forum for making more formal announcements/FYIs/calls for feedback to everyone within a HQ/Team/Project. Users can attach files, and people can respond with comments, including other files. When someone posts on the Message Board, others are encouraged to respond with feedback. The Message Board should not be used to discuss confidential or sensitive information.

Comments: Virtually all areas of Basecamp allow users to comment. Comments should only be used to discuss the item at hand (e.g. a specific document, message, or to-do). Avoid using comments to introduce a new topic. If your comment is more broad than the item you're commenting on, use the Message Board. Comments should not be used to discuss confidential or sensitive information.

Notifications

While everyone is responsible for remaining up-to-date with activity on Basecamp, it is up to each individual to decide how they intend to do this. By default, Basecamp sends email notifications. For instructions on using alternative notification schemes (e.g. in-app or in-browser notifications, daily activity emails, restricted time periods for notifications), see the Basecamp how-to page.