



Blood and Transplant

Celebrity and VIP safeguarding guidelines

Engaging celebrities, VIPs and influencers can be a fantastic way of amplifying the vital work that you do, but involving highly influential people with that work also presents a unique set of risks and challenges.

Ultimately your organisation is responsible for its safeguarding policies.

This document sets out the best practice guidelines that we expect all organisations delivering projects funded by, or being delivered in partnership with, NHS Blood and Transplant to follow when dealing with celebrities, VIPs and social media influencers.

This also includes any organisation that is using blood or organ donation graphics or NHS Blood and Transplant branding to promote any event they are running to promote organ donation.

Why are we making this advice available?

It is essential to remember that celebrity/VIP supporters are no different from the visitors, contractors, and guests that you may deal with on a day to day basis – and that their support must be treated as carefully as any other third-party involvement.

Celebrity/VIP visitors to your organisation should not be exempt from any safeguarding policies that you have in place, and it is not unreasonable to expect celebrities/VIPs to act in a professional manner during their co-operation with a project.

Your organisation must have safeguarding policies in place for staff, patients and anyone using your services before bringing celebrities/VIPs on board. The safety of patients, donors and staff must always be a priority.

This advice applies to long-term, ongoing celebrity/VIP involvement and also one-off events (like a celebrity/VIP visiting your workplace or agreeing to take part in a short film).

Best practice before approaching a celebrity/VIP:

- Research your celebrity/VIP supporter before approaching them or accepting support if they've approached you. Consider whether there is anything in the public domain about the celebrity/VIP that could affect the integrity and reputation of your organisation.
- Carefully assess any third-party celebrity/VIP recommendations in case of ulterior motives. For example: a seemingly generous offer from a local football club to supply you with one of their players might be a way of them using your good work to gain some positive PR for a drink-drive offender.
- Ensure that your celebrity or influencer genuinely supports donation if they are asked to promote it.

Best practice in advance of the celebrity/VIP involvement beginning:

- Provide a thorough brief to the celebrity/VIP setting out exactly what is expected of them during their involvement with your organisation, and don't forget to provide them with your key messages. If possible, have the celebrity/VIP (or their representation) acknowledge in writing that they have understood your brief.
- Ensure the celebrity/VIP fully understands any necessary safeguarding policies you have in place, and create a record to show how you have shared this information with them.
- Develop a process of recording: any research that you've undertaken on the celebrity/VIP; all conversations that have taken place between your organisation and the celebrity/VIP (in accordance with GDPR you could choose to store emails or make notes of relevant meetings or conversations); all instances where the celebrity/VIP (and their associates) visits/works with your organisation.

Best practice during and after celebrity/VIP involvement:

- Keep a thorough log of each celebrity/VIP's involvement, so you can refer back if needed. Keep specific notes on any celebrity/VIP conversations or visits. For example: what was discussed; how the visit went down; an overview of what the celebrity/VIP did/said; who they interacted with.
- Celebrity/VIP visitors should always be greeted appropriately by employees and treated respectfully throughout their visit. Employees should not approach the celebrity/VIP independently and should remain professional throughout the visit.
- It's recommended that if feasible there are at least two members of staff accompanying any celebrity/VIP visitor at all times, and that at least one appropriately nominated senior member of staff should remain with the celebrity visitor until they are escorted from the building.
- Celebrity/VIP visitors must not be left unaccompanied at any time.

Raising concerns about a visitor

If during a visit, meeting or project, the behaviour of a celebrity/VIP visitor (or one of their associates) gives cause for concern, then this should be raised at the time.

If the behaviour is of a highly inappropriate nature you should take the decision to bring the visit/their involvement in the project to an end. Following this it will be appropriate for a follow up investigation and any relevant action to be taken, and you must inform NHS Blood and Transplant.

Generally, this advice applies to in-person situations such as facility visits, but it can also apply to any inappropriate online behaviour involving a celebrity/VIP.

If a Celebrity/VIP supporter becomes involved in an arrest and/or serious allegations at any time during or after their involvement with your organisation, the situation needs to be escalated to senior management at NHS Blood and Transplant immediately. Further guidance in such a case varies on the situation.

Employee behaviour during celebrity/VIP involvement:

- Any employee (or donors/supporters/patients) who might be involved in a celebrity/VIP visit should be asked in advance whether they mind being approached by the visitor - particularly so if the visit includes the taking of photographs.
- Appropriate consent forms from your safeguarding and marketing policies will be required to be signed by people being photographed as normal.
- The relationship with the celebrity/VIP should be kept strictly professional at all times. Under no circumstances should a member of staff, patient, donor or anybody else, exchange personal contact details with celebrity/VIP visitors or their party. This includes (but isn't limited to) accepting or providing personal phone numbers, personal email addresses or residential addresses, or inviting celebrities to follow them on personal social media platforms such as Instagram/Twitter. Share professional contact details only.
- Management and employee representatives of your organisation are expected to behave professionally at all times. During VIP and celebrity visits, employees should continue in their roles as usual while supporting the management of the visit where appropriate.

Terms and definitions:

Celebrity/VIP – broadly speaking this refers to somebody with a public profile who is in a position of influence to your target audience. This could be anyone from a local celebrity to a Hollywood movie star.

It also includes social media influencers who aren't traditionally thought of as celebrities or VIPs but their access to thousands of followers can place them in a position of power and influence.

Project – this could refer to your project in its entirety, or just the element that the celebrity/VIP is participating in (for example: a social media campaign or a visit). Most of this advice centres around people involved with your project (plus your supporters) coming into contact with a celebrity/VIPs, but can also be applied to the online realm.

Safeguarding - the measures your organisation has in place to protect the health, well-being and human rights of individuals, which allow people - especially children, young people and vulnerable adults - to live free from abuse, harm and neglect.

Please sign, date and return this document to confirm that you have read and understood the NHS Blood and Transplant safeguarding guidelines for working with celebrities and VIPs.

Signature:

Organisation:

Date: / /

