

Unrest: Best Practices for Organizing a CME Screening

This guide will provide you with details and ideas for hosting your own Continuing Medical Education screening of *Unrest* in order to help your event be well-attended, well-publicized, and garner support from important institutions and medical providers in your community for Myalgic Encephalomyelitis (ME).

Screenings of *Unrest* have taken place at medical institutions all over the globe. [#MEAction's new Continuing Medical Education \(CME\) program](#) amplifies the educational potential of *Unrest* and its ability to affect change in patients and doctors lives. Last year, *Unrest* was presented at the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) as a [CME event](#). Now, *Unrest* has launched a CE and CME program (for physicians, nurses, and social workers) in partnership with the American Medical Women's Association (AMWA) and the Indiana University School of Medicine. Anyone can host a #MEAction *Unrest* screening. This guide is designed to give you the tools you need to make it a success.

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1. THE CME COURSE BASICS:

- CME applies only to **physicians, nurses, and social workers** located in the U.S. *If you are interested in learning how you can support our efforts to accredit Unrest for continuing education in other countries, please email cme@unrest.film.*
- *The entire CME course consists of 1. Unrest 2. Dr. Kaufman's video of ME diagnosis and management (located [HERE](#)) 3. Taking a short test provided by Indiana University*
- *Each participant must register through Unrest's [website](#) to complete the course. Provide [this flyer](#) at your screening to make the process as simple and clear as possible.*
- *The course is for two hours of credit.*
- *Anyone may watch the course online or watch at a screening event. The test can only be taken online.*

Physicians, nurses, and social workers can go online, register, watch the film, and take the course. You do not need to attend a screening to take the course. However, a screening can encourage shared conversation and provide a valuable experience for health professionals.

2. A Case Study from MASSME

While all successful events can look differently, below is an example of what we consider best practices for a large-scale community event.

As an example of a highly successful *Unrest* screening, we'll look to the Boston event organized at the historic Regent Theatre on Nov. 12, 2017. The event was packed with 358 people attending. A panel discussion followed the film, moderated by a local National Public Radio (NPR) station senior correspondent and host. The organizers solicited the support of stakeholders in the community, resulting in 19 co-sponsors from government, healthcare, disability, arts, academic, religious and women's organizations. For most of these organizations, this was the first time they worked on an ME advocacy effort, and the first time they publicly declared their support for people with ME.

For this event, the Boston advocates were also able to secure a statement from the entire 11 member Massachusetts Congressional Delegation vowing support for ME patients, which was made public for the first time, and read aloud, during the *Unrest* screening event.

Watch the opening introduction and panel discussion from the Boston Regent screening of *Unrest* [here](#). See photos [here](#).

The Massachusetts ME/CFS & FM Association organized the Boston Regent *Unrest* screening, with #MEAction member and MassME organizer Rivka Solomon spearheading the effort with her co-organizer Leah Williams. (Follow Rivka on Twitter: @RivkaTweets)

Resources

- Sample pitch to ask your local cinema to host the screening [here](#). - Sample outreach email for your community screening [here](#). - Boston's email pitch inviting groups to co-sponsor the screening [here](#).

- Boston's email pitch inviting healthcare professionals to the screening [here](#).

- Boston's email pitch to media and press release [here](#). - Boston's email pitch to local community media stations [here](#). - Boston's email pitch inviting members of congress to support the screening [here](#).

3. Build your Team

Planning a well-attended event is a big endeavor and you have no obligation to do it alone! By organizing a small team in your community, you can divvy up responsibilities and share resources.

- Join with other #MEAction organizers in your area. We have a list of #MEAction local groups organized by state, [check it out](#) and get in touch!
- Enlist friends and family - help with small tasks can make a huge difference.
- Partner with local organizations - do some research on your area - chances are, there are a number of chronic illness, disability rights, and women's groups that are invested in the same issues that we are. Ask them if they would like to be involved, participate in the panel, or simply attend the screening. Read Rivka Solomon's technique for pitching and securing partnerships [here](#) (page 4).
- Ideally, one of your team members has a solid connection to the medical world. Their input is invaluable!

2. Find a Venue

Send out feelers now to all possible venues. (Find contact information on the venue's website.) Unrest has screened at a number of medical institutions, find our whole list [here](#). You may want to namedrop one or two if a venue seems skeptical. It's important to communicate that Unrest has institutional backing and that these screenings belong in medical spaces.

If the venue needs to be convinced about the significance of the film, there are countless news articles about the film that you can share. Also:

- [The New York Times](#)

- [LA Times](#)

- [Cosmopolitan](#)

- [The Guardian](#)

- [The Telegraph](#)

See "Sample Pitches" [here](#).

Because this is a unique screening event and you're hoping to draw an audience of medical professionals, some venues to consider:

- Universities and hospitals - ample space and usually a number of room options (hospitals vary), relevant to medical crowd, institutional proximity is always beneficial
- Non-traditional venues (ie. community centers, womens centers, art spaces, libraries, places of worship)
- Theaters make it "special" and offer the best user experience, but they always charge a rental fee - without a sponsor, a fee can make your screening implausible
- Make sure your venue is accessible! Ask the venue owner if the space is ADA compliant.

Your venue will likely determine *how* you will screen the film. Make sure to ask what equipment they have before you book. The easiest set up is always a projector and a laptop (with accompanying DVD or direct download).

3. Your Audience, Your Allies

Types of audiences include:

Medical provider audiences

- Medical students
- Residents
- Physicians in the community
- Hospital staff

Other audiences

- Local officials
- Community organizers (related to health, disability, women's groups, etc.)

You want your audience to consist of mostly medical providers, but inviting members outside of that community to organize with can bring vital perspectives to your event.

Inviting members of the community to a screening of *Unrest* is an ideal way to introduce ME to people in a way that is social, interactive, non-confrontational and fun. The event brings together leaders in the community for whom it is important to be seen at philanthropic or social justice functions. And the event serves as a positive and memorable association to people with ME.

Reach out to your local government, healthcare, disability, arts, academic, religious and women's organizations.

As always, it is ideal if you already have contacts to people in the community. If you don't have these connections yourself, think about friends, family members, colleagues, neighbors who might be able to make that introduction for you.

See "Sample Outreach Email for your Community Screening" [here](#). [Here](#) is a two-pager that

provides information about Unrest. [Here](#) is the email Boston used to invite groups to co-sponsor their event.

As described in our [community screening guide](#), establishing co-sponsors for your event can legitimize the event to the medical community and make the CME screening itself easier to accomplish. An organizer in Boston, Rivka Solomon, described the relationship they established with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and the Division of Women's Health at Brigham and Women's Hospital. Because of their presence in the local medical community, these co-sponsors appealed directly to Boston hospitals who might have otherwise overlooked the film.

Try to make strides with established and respected groups. They often have the ability to reach the insular groups that you can't.

4. Invite Healthcare Professionals

[Flyer to share with doctors, nurses, and other professionals](#). Save a copy and update it with information about your screening.

- 1. Make a list or spreadsheet of area hospitals, healthcare institutions, and medical schools.*
- 2. Find the most appropriate point of contact through their website - this is easily the most difficult part of outreach! Medical schools tend to be more public facing with contact information compared to hospitals. Look in specific departments pertinent to the film (Neurology, Immunology, Infectious Disease, Medical Humanities) - look for an administrative assistant if no other contact looks viable. Also look for contact information for their communications departments.*
- 3. Your initial email or call should be brief and explanatory - you don't want to bombard them with a long and dense email. You can elaborate as you go! Make sure you're talking to the right person, tell them you're organizing a free screening for a CME course and ask if they can send along our flyer*

5. Create the Program

- Find the Panelists & Moderator

For your CME screening, all you **need** to do is screen the film and 10-minute addition and then provide your audience with instructions on completing the course. Instructions [here!](#)

Consider if you want to provide additional programming. In the past, screening organizers have

put together panel discussions comprised of medical professionals, ME patients, and various public figures relevant to the film. Organizing a panel provides an additional incentive to attend, especially if you include professionals who work at the institution that's hosting you.

Build the program around your film screening to turn it into an event. For example, can you get a community leader or elected official -- someone who is an audience draw -- to introduce the film? Are you able to create a panel to foster discussion following the film?

The film is emotionally intense and full of important issues that need unpacking. Are there medical experts, researchers, advocates, patients and caregivers who can speak to the issues surrounding ME? How about the head of an ME advocacy organization in your community? Another idea is to go outside the ME community and get a non-ME person to MC the event, someone who has a good stage presence and would be an audience draw.

Be sure to leave time for a Q&A (at least 30 minutes is best), to give people in the audience the opportunity to share their experiences and ask questions. At the Boston Regent screening, a senior correspondent and host from the local NPR station moderated the panel, lending even more credibility to the afternoon event.

- Get in touch with the #MEAction community to see if there is a researcher, advocate or medical professional who would be right to speak on your panel. Contact ben@meaction.net for assistance.

- A representative from the [Open Medicine Foundation](#) or the [Solve ME/CFS Initiative](#) may be willing to travel to your community for the screening.

- Prepare for the Event

Read the Unrest film [discussion guide](#) to prepare for the panel discussion.

- Film the Event

Videotape the introduction and panel discussion. Upload your video to #MEAction's Youtube page. (Email editor@meaction.net) Send your video to the local cable TV stations.

6. Get the Word Out

Invite local journalists. This is an ideal opportunity to educate your newspapers and bloggers about the compelling story of this disease. When you contact these journalists now about your ME event, you are actually building a relationship with them that you will be able to use in the future. Also, once a relationship is established, these journalists may contact you when future issues arise about ME. This is how people with ME will begin to control the narrative around ME. (See Boston's press release [here](#).)

1. Contact Local Journalists. Once you have a journalist's attention, direct them to the [media resources](#) the Unrest team has already prepared, such as the [Unrest press kit](#) that goes into detail about the film.

2. Promote on Social Media. Use Facebook, Twitter and Instagram to advertise your film screening. Create an EventBrite or Facebook event, like the one below, so that people can RSVP and share the event with their own followers. Request for Unrest to be a co-host so it can be listed on the Unrest Facebook Events Page. (Don't forget to use the hashtag #timeforunrest with all of your social media posts.)

Find photos of the Unrest poster [here](#).

3. Advertise your Screening on #MEAction. Let us know about your event so that we can advertise it through our social media channels. We can also email #MEAction members from your community about the screening. Contact us at editor@meaction.net.

4. Ask Others to Spread the Word. Get the snowball rolling; ask people in your network to spread the word about your community screening. Ask folks to share your Facebook event. Don't forget to ask your co-sponsors to share it a few times.

5. Prepare for the Press Interview. Speaking to the press is anxiety-provoking. You may find yourself rambling or forgetting important facts. Assign a point person for the event who will deal with the press and manage interviews. That person should be well-versed in the facts on ME in order to gain credibility with the journalist.

[Review our guide on "How to Talk to the Press."](#)