



## ➔ FACTSHEET 3

Confirming your remit  
and three-year plan



Now that you have had the first meeting of your gynaecological cancer advocacy group, it is important to confirm your remit - that is, why you are forming your group and the services you envisage offering.

**Each advocacy group is individual, but ask yourself:**

- Will your group focus on all or just one type of gynaecological cancer? If all, do you have enough volunteer to do so?
- Will your remit involve advocacy for preventive measures such as screening or vaccination, and access to treatment or rehabilitation services not offered in your country?
- Will you provide a website or Facebook group for your members and their families to stay in touch in between meetings? If so, do you have the right person to handle this task?
- Will you set up a telephone helpline or provide individual email support to women with gynaecological cancer and their families? (Bear in mind that this can be very labour intensive and expensive because it is likely to need a lot of support to maintain the service.)
- Will you publish a regular online and/or print newsletter?
- Will you offer financial grants and other services to women with gynaecological cancer and their families?
- Will you start local self-help and support groups for your members?
- Will you hold an annual conference or meetings for your members?
- Will you campaign to raise awareness of gynaecological cancer among the general public and professionals in your country?
- Will you aim to influence policymakers in your country's health service and government to improve services for women with gynaecological cancer?
- Will you aim to influence research priorities or help fund research into gynaecological cancers?
- Will you work with health professionals and researchers? It is very important to be authentic. Don't forget that will increase your credibility in the long run.

## ➔ Your three-year action plan

Finalising your remit should be one of the first tasks of your Management Committee (Factsheet 2). This is because your remit will be the basis for your plan of action over the next three years.

The best way to start this process is to agree your mission statement - that is, one or two sentences that describe your mission or purpose. To make this task less of a challenge, at your first Management Committee meeting, give everyone a sticky note and ask them to write down a few words that sum up the purpose of your group. Then post the notes on a wall and use them to formulate the statement. A coach can help you in your work.

Different countries have different type of helps, but in many countries either government or pharma companies has free courses on helping volunteers form a non for profit. Speak up, do your research and ask for help.



# Mission

If you have not already chosen a name for group, your mission statement will help you to make a final decision. It is very important to share your mission statement with your supporters as soon as you can, because your mission statement sums up your role. It can also be used on your website or in advertising materials to describe your group to other people. Your mission statement also helps you to formulate a short description of your aims (that is, how you plan to fulfil your mission statement), which will help you determine the actions you need to take to achieve your remit.

The diagram shows the remit and threeyear plan for a fictitious group, the Cervical Cancer Information Exchange, which has been started in a country where there is currently little independent information for women diagnosed with cervical cancer.

The Management Committee has decided to begin by developing an information website, find a good webname which will involve increasing the group's membership, find a good webname and recruiting medical advisors and sponsors. In addition, since some people prefer to receive print information or receive one-to-one advice, the group plans to investigate the feasibility of developing factsheets and possibly setting up a telephone and email helpline. Personal introduction of the management committee and chief of executive is important to bring that theme and the organization closer. You can take some patients' stories to show how important your work is.

## Preparing your group's mission statement

When preparing your group's mission statement it may help if you address key questions such as:

### Why do you want to establish a new group?

- *For patients, daughters and sons, families?*  
*To create public awareness? Influence health policy?*
- *What are the specific needs of the individuals you want to reach?*

### Who will be the members of the group and why will they join?

- *Patients? Families? Health professionals? Social workers? Individuals interested in fighting for the cause?*
- *What will you do for them that meets a need?*

### What role will the group play in society?

- *Supportive?*
- *Informative?*
- *Educational?*
- *Mobilising change?*
- *Partner with other existing groups?*

### What values are important to the group?

- *For instance: integrity? Independence? Respect? Equal access? Transparency?*



This group's three-year plan is designed to be sufficiently ambitious to encourage supporters and sponsors, while at the same time being realistic about the time and resources required. In the same way, achieving your remit will depend on your resources. These may include money, people and their time, any equipment (for example, a dedicated computer), and help with specific tasks such as organising your membership, designing your website, or overseeing your marketing and publicity. So your three-year plan should include suggestions on how you will attract people to support your group (Factsheet 4), membership models (Factsheet 6), as well as budgeting and fundraising (Factsheet 8).



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## Choosing your group's name

The name should aim to succinctly and clearly express your group's remit and describe your activities. It is also important to avoid the following pitfalls:

- Check that there are no other groups or even companies with the same or a similar name (a simple internet search is usually very helpful).
- Avoid using a name that could offend the general public and potential supporters and sponsors. Also check that any acronym formed by your group's name cannot be seen as offensive.
- Avoid a name that misleads people about your remit.
- Make sure you have permission to use the name (for example, if you use someone's name), or if another organisation is already using it as a trade mark or internet domain name.
- Have your name in English too.

The best if you have almost one sponsor at the beginning - from its support you can start a more professional website.