

Cancer self help and support  
Good practice guidelines

4



**DOING IT  
RIGHT**

**WE ARE  
MACMILLAN.  
CANCER SUPPORT**

It is important, as your group develops, that you remain accountable to your members. This booklet looks at ways of managing money, raising funds and publicising your group or service. It also considers whether it could be relevant nationally, discusses national-local links and looks at ways you can ensure your group provides a quality service.



# Declaration of good practice for cancer self help and support

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- 1** We share clear aims and objectives
- 2** We run our activities according to our members' needs, in a clear and accountable manner
- 3** We welcome everyone equally, and we take steps to be open and accessible
- 4** We support and train our helpers and volunteers
- 5** We make sure that everyone understands and respects confidentiality
- 6** We listen to each other and respond with sensitivity
- 7** We provide accurate, practical information, but do not give advice or make recommendations
- 8** We ensure that any complementary therapy we offer is carried out professionally
- 9** We support each other through our losses, allowing time and space to talk about fears and grief
- 10** We work in co-operation with professionals

# Introduction

Starting up a cancer self help or support group can be daunting, especially if you've never done anything like it before. However, many people have successfully established a group or service, driven by their commitment to help others affected by cancer.

Setting something up brings many new and exciting challenges, and there is plenty of support available, including this booklet. It aims to help you by drawing on the views and experiences of many others who have set up groups/services in the past.

This is the first of four booklets in the Good practice guidelines series. The others are:

**Booklet 1: Getting started**

**Booklet 2: Running it well**

**Booklet 3: Supporting each other**

Each booklet includes a list of key resources if you want to look at any aspect in greater depth.



# Managing money

Whatever the size of your group, you need to keep control over your money.

Managing money is often viewed as a specialist area, so a group's treasurer is often seen as the expert and can end up working in isolation. But everyone in a group has a responsibility for public funds. We all manage our personal finances, and know whether we have enough money to buy something. It doesn't take much more than that to understand and handle a group's finances.

## Guidelines on working together – finance

- 1 Identify or review the main financial tasks
- 2 Define the treasurer's role
- 3 Save time and money
- 4 Account for all money that changes hands
- 5 Prevent misuse, fraud and theft
- 6 Seek outside support

## 1 Identify or review the main financial tasks

These could be:

- deciding how much you have to spend
- day-to-day bookkeeping
- accounts
- dealing with the bank
- budgeting.

## 2 Define the treasurer's role

This could be to:

- work in consultation with the committee
- delegate, if need be, and supervise the work done
- make sure the books are intelligible and accessible to others
- report on the state of your finances whenever required (financial matters could be a standard agenda item for each committee meeting).

**(For further details see the next section – 'Guidelines for group treasurers' on page 15.)**

### 3 Save time and money

You could do this by:

- working out exactly what you need – don't over-order
- thinking things through – something free or cheap is not always what you really need
- shopping around for the cheapest bank account – some are free for groups
- avoiding accumulating money for the sake of it
- having a detailed yearly budget so that everybody is clear about the group's planned income and expenditure
- claiming for all expenses and if people don't want to take them, pay them back as donations. This gives a more realistic account of the true costs
- including an amount for inflation and contingencies in your budget.

### 4 Account for all money that changes hands

You could:

- have a written policy on what expenses can legitimately be paid
- have a form that must be used to claim expenses
- get receipts for all financial transactions

- prepare regular financial reports – a simple income and expenditure report given to each committee member and displayed on the group's notice board often suffices.

### 5 Prevent misuse, fraud and theft

The group could:

- make sure each member knows how much money is raised and how it is spent
- have an account in the group's name (and not use a member's personal account)
- authorise three or four members to sign cheques, with two signatures required on each cheque
- pay cash into the bank as soon as possible after receipt
- use cheques rather than cash for payments
- record every petty cash transaction, with the signatures of both the person to be repaid and the treasurer
- review the treasurer's position if regular financial reports are not forthcoming
- examine financial reports in detail, and ask questions if you don't understand
- invite an accountant to explain to everyone how to present and read financial statements.

## 6 Seek outside support

It's always worth asking for information and advice, particularly for a new group or treasurer. You could ask:

- other cancer support groups in your area
- your local or regional Council for Voluntary Service
- your bank, which may offer free advice.

### Financial records

All groups should keep accounts, and in many cases will have a legal obligation to do so. Most small organisations start keeping financial records by writing them down in ruled accounting books, available from most stationers. It is also possible to use a computer spreadsheet, such as Excel. However, computerised accounting systems can be much easier to control, and make it easy to produce periodical reports. The software should enable straightforward entry of income and expenditure, and then automatically produce income and expenditure reports and balance sheets when required. Sage *Instant Accounting*, for example, is able to do this for you.

### Auditing/examining accounts

You may have a legal obligation to have your accounts independently examined or audited. This will depend on your legal structure, charitable status and annual turnover (the amount of business you do in a year). Even if it isn't a legal requirement, some funders may require an audit.

If your accounts need to be audited or independently examined, it is advisable to use an accountant/examiner who has experience of dealing with voluntary organisations/charities. If your accounts are straightforward, you may be able to find an accountant who is willing to carry out the audit/examination for a reduced, or no charge (but if you are a registered charity make sure they know about the relevant accounting regulations).

You could:

- ask if anyone in the group knows an accountant or someone with relevant experience that would be prepared to audit your accounts on a voluntary basis
- ask your bank for assistance
- ask local organisations who they have used
- contact your local Council for Voluntary Service for recommendations
- contact the Association of Charity Independent Examiners
- contact the Institute of Chartered Accountants.

## Key resources

Further reading and resources are listed below. Macmillan can also provide information, publications and training.

### Publications

**The good trustee guide: a resource organiser for members of governing bodies of unincorporated charities and charitable companies** (2003) NCVO Publications (ISBN 0 719915 36 8). Available from [www.ncvo-vol.org.uk](http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk) Includes a section on financial responsibilities.

**The good financial management guide for the voluntary sector** (2002) Paul Palmer, National Council for Voluntary Organisations (ISBN 0 719916 06 2)

**The good financial management training manual** (2001) Paul Palmer, National Council for Voluntary Organisations (ISBN 0 719915 87 2) Companion volume to *The Good Financial Management Guide*.

**Introductory guide to the charities accounts** (Scotland) regulations (1992), Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (ISBN 1 870904 40 0) An introductory guide to the accounting requirements for Scottish charities which includes sample formats for presenting accounts of large and small charities.

**A practical guide to accounting by charities: new accounting regulations and the revised SORP** (1996) Kate Sayer, Directory of Social Change (ISBN 1 873860 95 1)

**A practical guide to financial management for charities and voluntary organisations** (2003) Kate Sayer, Directory of Social Change (ISBN 1 903991 29 3)

**A practical guide to VAT: for charities and voluntary organisations** (2003) Kate Sayer, Directory of Social Change (ISBN 1 900360 62 4)

**Voluntary but not amateur: a guide to the law for voluntary organisations** (2004) Duncan Forbes, London Voluntary Service Council (ISBN 1 872582 32 X). Available from [www.lvsc.org.uk](http://www.lvsc.org.uk) Includes a chapter on financial management

The Charity Commission also publishes a number of booklets relating to accounting regulations for charities – see below for contact details.

### Organisations

**Association of Charity Independent Examiners**, Bentley Resource Centre, High Street, Bentley, Doncaster DN5 0AA, tel: 01302 828338, [www.acie.org.uk](http://www.acie.org.uk)

**Charity Commission for England and Wales**, 13-15 Bouverie Street, London EC4Y 8DP, tel: 0845 300 0218, [www.charity-commission.gov.uk](http://www.charity-commission.gov.uk)

**Directory of Social Change**, 24 Stephenson Way,  
London NW1 2DP, tel: 020 7209 5151,  
[www.dsc.org.uk](http://www.dsc.org.uk)

Provides publications and training in financial  
management.

**National Association for Voluntary and**

**Community Action**, The Tower, 2 Furnival Square,  
Sheffield S1 4QL, tel: 0114 278 6636,  
[www.navca.org.uk](http://www.navca.org.uk)

**National Council for Voluntary Organisations**,  
Regent's Wharf, 8 All Saints Street, London N1 9RL,  
tel: 0800 279 8798, [www.ncvo-vol.org.uk](http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk)

Provides a range of services relating to financial  
management, including a discussion forum, finance  
briefing and guidance sheets and sources of financial  
management advice.

**Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action**,  
61 Duncairn Gardens, Belfast BT15 2GB,  
tel: 028 9087 7777, [www.nicva.org](http://www.nicva.org)

**Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator**, 2nd Floor,  
Quadrant House, 9 Riverside Drive, Dundee DD1 4NY,  
tel: 01382 220446, [www.oscr.org.uk](http://www.oscr.org.uk)

**Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations**,

The Mansfield Traqueer Centre, 15 Mansfield Place,  
Edinburgh EH3 6NB, tel: 0131 556 3882,  
[www.scvo.org.uk](http://www.scvo.org.uk)

**Voluntary and Community Unit**, Department of  
Social Development, Lighthouse Building, 1 Cromac  
Place, Gasworks Business Park, Ormeau Road, Belfast  
BT7 1JB, tel: 028 9082 9424, [www.dsdni.gov.uk](http://www.dsdni.gov.uk)

**Wales Council for Voluntary Action**, Baltic House,  
Mount Stuart Square, Cardiff Bay, Cardiff CF10 5FH,  
tel: 029 2043 1700, 0800 288 8329 (helpdesk),  
[www.wcva.org.uk](http://www.wcva.org.uk)

Your local Council for Voluntary Service can provide  
information and publications on finance. Refer to  
your local telephone directory or see  
[www.nacva.org.uk](http://www.nacva.org.uk)

# Guidelines for group treasurers

## Good practice point 2

We run our activities according to our members' needs, in a clear and accountable manner

### What does a treasurer do?

The role of treasurer is important, demanding and rewarding. A treasurer has responsibility for the group finances: He or she keeps the cash books up to date, pays the petty cash and prepares budgets and accounts. The treasurer makes sure that the accounts are intelligible and accessible to group members, and should be able to report on the state of the group's finances whenever required.

What the treasurer does will vary from one group to another, depending on its size and the person's experience. In some cases, the treasurer may have other responsibilities within the group. In others, the tasks of treasurer are shared between several people.

You need to agree how you wish to be kept informed of the group finances. It is useful to have finance as an agenda item at each committee meeting or, if the amounts involved are very small the treasurer could simply send a copy to everyone annually.

It's sometimes the treasurer's role to act as 'devil's advocate' when the committee is putting together strategic plans. A treasurer should actively consider the financial implications of proposals, balancing the risks and benefits, and looking for possible problems. He or she should be satisfied that strategic planning always takes into account financial implications.



Everyone must feel that they have shared in financial decisions. Mistakes may happen, and money may sometimes be wasted, but you can learn by your mistakes as well as your successes. If you are seen to be active and useful, even if this involves taking the odd financial risk, you are more likely to become well known and well supported.

## **Treasurers in registered charities**

In registered charities, treasurers are generally officers of the organisation, and, as such, have the responsibilities of a trustee.

There is an underlying duty on all trustees, but particularly the treasurer, to ensure that the resources of the organisation are used only on the stated aims and objectives of the organisation – so he or she needs to be well-acquainted with the organisation's constitution or other governing document.

## **Skills and qualities required in a treasurer**

Certain skills are required for the role to be performed effectively.

The treasurer should:

- have at least a basic knowledge of bookkeeping in order to maintain financial records or effectively supervise others who perform this task

- know how to construct an income and expenditure statement and balance sheet
- be able to keep in mind the requirements of enforcing and legislative bodies when the group is making plans.

Because it is the treasurer's responsibility to follow legal requirements imposed on charities, he or she can sometimes be seen as putting a damper on what members want to do. Successful treasurers have the knowledge and flexibility to find a way of pleasing group members and meeting the requirements at the same time. If there is no such compromise available, then the treasurer must be prepared to make, and stand by, unpopular decisions.

It is a good idea to have task lists for all the roles in your organisation (**see 'Roles' in Booklet 1 Getting started**). If you are drawing up a task list for a treasurer, you may want to use the following as a model.

# Treasurer

## General role

\*A trustee is a member of the management committee. They are usually voted on. Some committees have a fixed term for trustees.

The duties of the treasurer are those of a trustee\*, together with a specific responsibility to work in close co-operation with the chairperson and management committee to provide advice and support on matters of a financial nature.

## Primary duties

- advise the committee on the development of financial policy
- draw up, present, and seek approval of accounts, financial statements and budgets in accordance with the financial policy
- keep up to date with all legislation and regulations affecting the financial management of the group and advise the management committee of their responsibilities accordingly
- examine all strategic plans and policies formulated by trustees and those who run the group, advising on the financial implications of these plans, and ensuring that the resources required are available
- take responsibility for developing and implementing proper accounting procedures and controls to demonstrate to the committee the financial integrity of the group



- ensure that a proper audit of the accounts is carried out, co-operating with the auditors in providing information and making any changes they recommend
- present reports to the committee on the financial status of the group, pointing out key factors and making recommendations for any appropriate action
- monitor the proper and effective use of investment resources in compliance with the group's governing document, policies and legal requirements.

## **Other duties**

- ensure that any financial activities comply with charity and company law, the group's governing document, and all other regulations and legislation
- ensure that all resources, financial or otherwise, are applied only in accordance with the group's stated aims and objectives
- take part in developing policies, strategic planning and goal setting, and evaluating the group's activities
- act at all times to ensure the good name of the group, driving and supporting its efficient management and the effective use of its resources.



# Fundraising

Raising money for your self help and support group can be as simple (such as sponsored activities or jumble sales) or structured (mail shots to local firms) as you like.

How much money you need to raise varies tremendously. Some small groups find they can operate without having to raise any money. Most other groups need to raise funds, but require only small amounts to run effectively. They organise a few fundraising activities, such as a raffle or one or two jumble sales a year.

However, if you want to offer more activities and services, then fundraising becomes a higher priority. It's important to stay focused on what you really need money for, and to keep in mind your group's aims and objectives. It can be tempting to fundraise for the sake of it or to apply for grants because they are on offer – even though they mean changing track to comply with the funders' criteria.

Having a good idea is not always enough, you should also appear organised and demonstrate that you can deliver and inspire confidence. The following fundraising guidelines may help.

## Good practice point

**2**

We run our activities according to our members' needs, in a clear and accountable manner

## Guidelines on working together – fundraising

- 1 Think carefully before embarking on fundraising
- 2 Decide who will be responsible
- 3 Develop a fundraising strategy or plan
- 4 Make sure you comply with relevant legislation
- 5 Take care over funding requests and applications
- 6 Keep on good terms with current and potential funders
- 7 Present yourselves as a responsible group

## 1 Think carefully before embarking on fundraising

You could ask yourselves:

- what you need to raise money for
- whether you risk losing sight of your main aim
- if raising money is the only way to meet your needs (other ways might be a free venue or a donation from a local firm).
- whether your group can apply for a grant from Macmillan.

## 2 Decide who will be responsible

You could:

- form a sub-group, so that fundraising activities do not distract from support work
- make sure that no one is pressurised into raising money, as some people may find it too demanding.

## 3 Develop a fundraising strategy or plan

This will encourage people to:

- plan ahead, saving time in the long run: a three-year plan, reviewed annually, can outline the group's needs, action plan, costs and people involved
- budget, so you can decide exactly what you want money for, how much you require and over what period
- research into sources of funding
- not rely on just one source of funding.

The strategy or plan could:

- record details of all fundraising activities the group has agreed to hold during the year
- make it clear who has responsibility for each activity – whether it is an individual, the whole group or a sub-group
- include a process for review.

## 4 Make sure you comply with relevant legislation

This could include fundraising by:

- collecting money in public places
- house-to-house collections
- running bingo sessions
- organising a raffle
- employing a professional fundraiser.

## 5 Take care over funding requests and applications

You could prepare by:

- working out what makes your group special
- targeting your applications rather than trying everywhere
- finding out about local funders (consult your local Council for Voluntary Service)
- applying to local funders first
- putting time and effort into the wording of the application – there are courses available that can help in writing and preparing funding proposals
- finding out about potential funders’ priorities and interests
- providing details of the group’s achievements
- asking for the full amount that you need, even if it’s a large sum.

## 6 Keep on good terms with current and potential funders

You could:

- work out how much money you could raise on your own first – funders will be impressed by your efforts to help yourselves
- say thank you, because fundraising is about building relationships, and you may want to apply again
- keep funders informed of the project’s progress
- try again at a later date if you are refused funding
- adopt new ways of presenting yourselves.

## 7 Present yourselves as a responsible group

You could do this by:

- using headed paper (with your charity number if applicable) for your application, and keeping a copy
- including with your application a copy of your accounts, an annual report or even a business plan (including the aims and objectives of the group, names of committee members, annual accounts and plans for the coming year or years) – many funders require all or some of these
- becoming a registered charity (many funders require this) (see ‘Charitable status’ on page 64)
- contacting your local Council for Voluntary Service if you are not a registered charity – they might be able to accept a grant on your behalf.

## Key resources

Further reading and resources are listed below. Macmillan can also provide information, publications and training.

### Publications

**Avoiding the wastepaper basket: a practical guide for applying to grant-making trusts** (1996)

Tim Cook, Steve Simpson and Alan Dingle, London Voluntary Service Council (ISBN 1 872582 61 3)  
Jargon-free guide, with tips for making successful applications, using real-life examples.

**The charity shops handbook** (1995) Hilary Blume, Directory of Social Change (ISBN 1 873860 77 3)

**The complete fundraising handbook** (2001) Nina Botting and Michael Norton, Directory of Social Change (ISBN 1 900360 84 5)

**The directory of grant-making trusts 2007/8**, Directory of Social Change in association with CAF (ISBN 1 903991 79 4)

**Fundraising from companies** (2004) Jill Ritchie, Wiremill Publishing (ISBN 1 905053 00 2)

**Voluntary but not amateur: a guide to the law for voluntary organisations** (2004) Duncan Forbes, London Voluntary Service Council (ISBN 1 872582 32 X)

Includes a section on legislation relating to fundraising.

**A guide to the major trusts 2007/08**, volumes 1 & 2, Directory of Social Change (ISBNs 1 903991 77 0 (vol 1), 1 903991 78 7 (vol 2))

**The guide to UK company giving 2007/08**, John Smythe, Directory of Social Change (ISBN 1 90399176 3)

**Directory of grants and funds for Scotland (2004)**  
Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (ISBN 1 870904 98 2)

### **Organisations**

**Charities Aid Foundation**, 25 Kings Hill Avenue, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent ME19 4TA, tel: 01732 520000, [www.cafonline.org](http://www.cafonline.org)

**Charity Commission for England and Wales**, Harmsworth House, 13-15 Bouverie Street, London EC4Y 8DP, tel: 0845 300 0218, [www.charity-commission.gov.uk](http://www.charity-commission.gov.uk)

**Directory of Social Change**, 24 Stephenson Way, London NW1 2DP, tel: 020 7391 4800, [www.dsc.org.uk](http://www.dsc.org.uk)

Publishes a large number of publications and runs courses on fundraising.

**Funderfinder**, 65 Raglan Road, Leeds LS2 9DZ, tel: 0113 243 3008, [www.funderfinder.org.uk](http://www.funderfinder.org.uk)

Produces the Grant-making trusts CD-ROM, and software packages (for groups and individuals) to enable you to search for potential funders – your local CVS or library may provide them. Free packages to help grant-seekers prepare funding applications can be downloaded from the website.

**Institute of Fundraising**, Park Place, 12 Lawn Lane, London SW8 1UD, tel: 020 7840 1000, [www.institute-of-fundraising.org.uk](http://www.institute-of-fundraising.org.uk)

**Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action**, 61 Duncairn Gardens, Belfast BT15 2GB, tel: 028 9087 7777, [www.nicva.org](http://www.nicva.org)

**Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations**, Mansfield Traquair Centre, 15 Mansfield Place, Edinburgh EH3 6BB, tel: 0131 556 3882, [www.scvo.org.uk](http://www.scvo.org.uk)

**Wales Council for Voluntary Action**, Baltic House, Mount Stuart Square, Cardiff Bay, Cardiff CF10 5FH, tel: 0800 288 8329, [www.wcva.org.uk](http://www.wcva.org.uk)

## Websites

### **[www.companygiving.org.uk](http://www.companygiving.org.uk)**

Contains the same information listed in *The guide to UK company giving*, and is regularly updated.

### **[www.fundraising.co.uk](http://www.fundraising.co.uk)**

Information relating to all forms of fundraising, including details of training and publications.

### **[www.trustfunding.org.uk](http://www.trustfunding.org.uk)**

Contains all the same data as Funderfinder's Grant-making trusts CD-ROM, but is regularly updated. Subscribers are sent e-mails alerting them when updates are made.

### **[www.dsc.org.uk](http://www.dsc.org.uk)**

The Directory of Social Change publishes regional funding guides. The website also has a guide to charitable trusts in Northern Ireland.



# Publicising yourselves

All self help and support groups or services, whatever their size, need publicity to survive. People will only join, use your services, support you and give you money if they have heard of you. Every letter, email, phone call, poster, leaflet, announcement and face-to-face meeting you make is publicity that can help create a good or a bad image of your work.

## Good practice point

### 2

We run our activities according to our members' needs, in a clear and accountable manner

Good public relations (PR) is about communicating the benefits of your work in a clear and accessible way. You need to show people the relevance of your services to their own lives, and demonstrate how you can and do make a difference.

## Guidelines on publicity

- 1 Plan ahead
- 2 Decide on your key messages
- 3 Define your target audience
- 4 Ensure you make an impact
- 5 Make sure your publicity reflects the group's approach to equal opportunities
- 6 Ask for assistance
- 7 Share the workload
- 8 Consider the best way to reach your target audience
- 9 Monitor and evaluate

## 1 Plan ahead

- decide on your priorities – for example, getting new members, recruiting volunteers, finding premises, fundraising
- agree what you need most at different times, and plan your publicity work accordingly
- always consider publicity from the beginning
- consider cost implications
- give plenty of notice for events – particularly if you invite busy people such as your local mayor or MP
- be clear about what you want to achieve and why
- make sure you can cope with interest publicity may generate – for example, will someone be available to answer phone calls or reply to emails?

## 2 Decide on your key messages

Draw up a list of three key points you want to get across every time your group is publicised, so that you build up a consistent identity in the public mind. If you achieve this, people will have a better chance of understanding what you are about and what you offer. For example:

- you provide confidential free support services close to home for people with cancer and their families
- support services include a freephone helpline, a drop-in centre, home and hospital visiting, and free complementary therapies

- you need donations to raise the funds needed to offer vital services keep it short and simple (KISS).

### 3 Define your target audience

Work out who you want to reach most with your publicity. This could be:

- potential members in your community
- families of people with cancer
- existing members who don't come to meetings
- existing or potential sponsors, donors and supporters
- important figures and groups in your community, such as health professionals, community workers, voluntary groups, local hospices and social workers.

### 4 Ensure you make an impact

- keep reminding people that you exist – use all the means at your disposal, including leaflets, posters and word of mouth
- identify the most effective publicity for different events and activities. For example:
  - leaflets, public announcements and free listings in newspapers for a small fundraising event such as a coffee morning
  - additional channels of communication, including the local newspaper and radio

stations, posters in your local hospitals and surgeries for a large meeting for the public and professionals in your area. (This method is very effective for raising interest in a new group.)

### 5 Make sure your publicity reflects the group's approach to equal opportunities

This could include:

- ensuring that your publicity reflects that you are welcoming and open to all
- including images that represent all sections of society
- producing material in relevant community languages if those languages will be spoken at the group
- reviewing where you distribute your publicity material, making sure you include black and minority ethnic press, community groups, groups for people with disabilities or mental health problems, student unions, etc.

### 6 Ask for assistance

Don't be afraid of asking for support from local people who may be happy to donate their skills to a good cause. They could include:

- local designers, to help you with the design of your publicity materials
- local printers who may offer discounts (designers might be able to suggest printers)
- public relations and advertising firms, which may give you some of their time and advice.

## 7 Share the workload

Everyone has a role to play in 'talking up' the group. However, it is a good idea:

- to give clear responsibilities to avoid wasted effort. For example:
  - identify who in your group either has some experience of publicity work, or is interested in doing such work
  - find out about group members' personal contacts – and use them – after all, publicity is all about networking, and spotting good opportunities
  - if you are a small group with one or two key events a year, have one person responsible for publicity
  - if you are a big group organising a range of activities, avoid over-burdening one person by dividing jobs up. Examples of how to do this follow:

### Planning and preparation

- researching what you need to publicise, the best way to do it and the costs
- identifying suitable media contacts
- keeping everyone informed.

Skills required: research skills, an attention to detail, an ability to brief and involve group members about key decisions.

### Ensuring the group's publicity material is produced well

- writing and laying out newsletters, press releases, leaflets and posters
- designing, or finding graphic designers willing to help with design
- proof-reading publicity materials to check for errors
- organising production and printing of publicity materials
- keeping to a standard layout and style that gives you a clear identity.

Skills required: clear writing skills, good team player, attention to accuracy of text and layout, design skills.

### Giving interviews and talks (see box on following pages)

- presenting the human face of your group/service

- working closely with your group/service to ensure you are giving out the right information, and respecting group members' wishes
- including your group's/service's key messages in every talk and interview
- responding to questions clearly and accurately.

Skills required: storytelling skills to get people's interest.

### **Networking**

- talking about the group at every opportunity and arranging to meet key figures in your community including health professionals, community leaders, social workers and local voluntary organisations.
- carrying a notebook and your contact details with you at all times so you can exchange information with people you meet.

Skills required: ability to get on with people and make connections.

## **8 Consider the best way to reach your target audience**

The methods of publicity you use will depend on what you are publicising, and who you want to attract. They could include:

- Targeted mailings – sending letters to named individuals, using headed paper with your contact details.

- Phone calls – a phone-round might be the most effective way of reaching small numbers of people. It is also a good way of following up a mailing to confirm receipt and get feedback.
- Face-to-face meetings – group representatives can arrange to meet key people from your target audience and introduce your work.
- Leaflets and posters – leaflets and posters giving your contact details and outlining your services could be displayed in prominent locations in your community – for example, libraries and health centres. These need to be replaced and refreshed regularly.
- Newsletters – newsletters listing your activities can be distributed to members, health professionals and other interested individuals.
- Announcements – ask other organisations to announce details of your meetings and other events at their meetings.
- Talks – members and representatives can give talks about your work to other organisations.
- Invitation – invite people to your group to find out what you can offer them.

No one way is better than another. The best method is to use lots of different ways to publicise yourself. Remember – McDonald's continues to advertise even though everyone has heard of them.

# Giving a talk about your group

## 9 Monitor and evaluate

It is useful to look at how effective your publicity has been. You could:

- keep a record of any press coverage (**see 'Guidelines to working with the media', page 44**)
- show it to sponsors and donors as evidence of the value of your services
- keep a record of all contacts with the press, so that you can build up relationships and build on any momentum you have created
- after each event discuss and evaluate as a group whether you are happy with publicity
- identify how it could be improved in the future.

There are many ways to give an effective public talk – a lot depends on your own personality. But if you're not sure on the best way to present your group in public, or you find it hard to organise information, you might want to use the following as a basic guide.

### Know your audience

Before you make your speech, research who you will be speaking to so that you can refer to their work and interests. Think about why your audience would be interested in what you are doing and how your services can benefit them.

### Introduce yourself

Explain how you got involved in your group, how it helped you, and (if relevant) how you moved from finding to giving support.

### Make it personal

Throughout your speech, try to tell a story that your listeners can relate to. Don't be afraid to speak from the heart. It makes more impact.\*

\*Remember to respect the confidentiality of your group at all times if you use stories that are not your own.

### Introduce your group

Talk about how your group started and the challenges it has faced.

## **Bring the audience up to date with your services**

Explain what your group does now and how you are involved. Talk about the range of services you offer.

### **Emphasise your achievements**

Give an overview of what you have achieved – try to have a few facts and figures to hand, such as how many people with cancer you have helped, or how many family members.

### **Hit them with your conclusion**

Wind up by reminding the audience that you are a voluntary group, reliant on fundraising and donations. Tell them how they can help.

## **Guidelines to working with the media**

- 1 Making contacts
- 2 Writing a press release
- 3 Talking to the media

## **1 Making contacts**

If you want to use media outlets such as newspapers, local radio or local television to publicise your group, there are some pointers on how to make contact:

- make sure you have read their publication, listened to their radio station, or watched their TV programme
- identify the right person to contact
- the first time you call, don't launch straight into your story – politely check if it is a good time to talk. If not, ask when to call back
- once you have them listening, check their deadlines: when do they like to be contacted?
- ask how they like to receive information: some people prefer news releases to be posted, some prefer faxes or emails
- ask what kind of stories and pictures they are interested in
- always get their direct phone line number and other necessary contact details
- keep a note of each journalist's reaction to your call: open a file, record dates, what you discussed, and any coverage you received
- when you next call, remind the journalist what you talked about before
- invite them to any events you hold
- never complain: you will need the goodwill of the media in future.

## 2 Writing a press release

A press release, sent to the right people at the right time, can be a very effective way of gaining publicity. Here are some tips on how to produce a good one:

- get it typed
- print it on A4 paper, and put 'Press Release' and the date at the top
- include any embargo date and if there is none include 'for immediate release' at the top
- use your headed paper, logo or type your name, address, phone number, fax and email at the top of the first page
- keep it brief (ideally a maximum of two sides of A4)
- lay it out clearly
- if it goes over one page, put 'more follows' at the end of the first (and subsequent) pages
- put 'Ends' at the end of the release
- assume the person receiving the release will know nothing about you and your work
- use a short and catchy heading
- include the main points of the story in the first paragraph
- make sure it contains the five Ws: who, what, where, when and why (in any order)
- always include contact details: the press contact's name, telephone numbers (work, home, mobile) and email should be clearly printed at the end

- include additional information about the group and how to contact it after 'Ends', under the heading 'Notes for editors'.

### Sample press release

1 May 2005  
For immediate release  
Press information

#### Local MP backs new cancer group

Local MP for Blank, Blank Blank, will give her backing to the cause of supporting people with cancer at the launch of Blank Cancer Support Group on 11 October at 11am at the community centre on Blank Street.

The group's founder, N Blank, commented: 'We are delighted to have this vote of confidence from our local MP. We will need all the support we can get from business people, elected representatives and community leaders to help us to help people with cancer. Our group will offer support services including home and hospital visiting, complementary therapies and counselling. People can find out more by contacting our helpline.'

Ms Blank, MP added: 'We are all increasingly affected by cancer and it is vital that there should be support for people close to home when they most need it. I am delighted to be present at the opening of this group and wish its founders every success.'

Ends

For more information please contact B Blank, tel: blank (evenings and weekends) or blank (daytime)

#### Notes for editors

Cancer Support Group Blank will be run by people with cancer for people with cancer, providing emotional and practical support close to home.

It will offer the following services: home and hospital visiting, telephone support, counselling, and complementary therapies.

People with cancer, their family members, partners and carers can contact the group at blank, tel: blank. The line is open from 9am to 5pm, weekdays.

### 3 Talking to the media

If your press release gets the interest of the media, you will have beaten off fierce competition, so well done. It's possible they will now want to interview you or another member of your group:

- prepare for the interview: establish in advance what the journalist will want to ask, how long the interview will be, and how it will be used
- make notes beforehand: write down the three key points you want to get across – that way you will be more in control
- when you are being interviewed, picture the person you would like your comments to be addressed to, and imagine you are talking to them. That way you will talk on the right level
- during the interview remember to:
  - be confident – you know more about your subject than the journalist
  - be clear – get straight to the point, and give anecdotes to get the message across
  - be concise – don't feel you have to be the expert on everything
  - be in control – get your three key points across whatever happens (having a reminder card to hand can help).

Here are some other tips you might find useful when talking to the press:

- give examples and use comparisons to make your story accessible
- speak from your experience and give useful pointers based on your knowledge: for example 'I wish I'd found support outside my family earlier. I'd advise others to think about what support might be helpful to them'
- ask the journalist to read your quotes back to you at the end of the interview to ensure you have been fairly represented.
- ask if it is possible to see a copy of the article you will be quoted in before publication to check for accuracy (journalists often don't agree to this)

Be aware that having your name and photo in the media might bring about more attention than you are prepared for. If you are a very private person, find someone who doesn't mind this.

## Key resources

Further reading and resources are listed below. Macmillan can also provide information, publications and training.

### Publications

***The DIY guide to public relations: for charities, voluntary organisations and community groups*** (1999) Moi Ali, Directory of Social Change (ISBN 1 900360 53 5)

***Promoting your cause: a guide for fundraisers and campaigners*** (2002) Karen Gilchrist, Directory of Social Change (ISBN 1 900360 95 0)

### Organisations

Please feel free to contact **Macmillan Cancer Support** for advice. We offer training in publicising your group and presentation skills, tel: 020 7091 2010, [www.macmillan.org.uk](http://www.macmillan.org.uk)

**Charities Aid Foundation**, 25 Kings Hill Avenue, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent ME19 4TA, tel: 01732 520000, [www.cafonline.org](http://www.cafonline.org)

**National Association for Voluntary and Community Action** may be able to offer information and training – look in the phone book or see [www.nacvs.org.uk](http://www.nacvs.org.uk)

**Directory of Social Change**, 24 Stephenson Way, London NW1 2DP, tel: 08450 77 77 07, [www.dsc.org.uk](http://www.dsc.org.uk)

Runs courses in communications skills.

**The Media Trust**, Riverwalk House, 157-161 Millbank, London SW1P 4RR, tel: 020 7217 3717, [www.mediatrust.org](http://www.mediatrust.org)

Helps charities with communications and dealing with the media.

**London Voluntary Service Council**, 356 Holloway Road, London N7 6PA, tel: 020 7700 8107, [www.actionlink.org.uk](http://www.actionlink.org.uk)

Runs courses in communications skills.

# Linking yourself with a national organisation

National organisations helping people with cancer vary enormously in size and focus. Some, such as Macmillan Cancer Support and Cancerbackup, offer a range of services to people affected by cancer. Others, such as the United Kingdom Brain Tumour Society (UKBTS) and COU-RAGE (supporting people with radiotherapy injuries), focus on a particular type of cancer or theme.

Links between national patient-led organisations and local groups can have benefits, but can also bring tensions – mainly because of possible conflicts between national and local priorities.

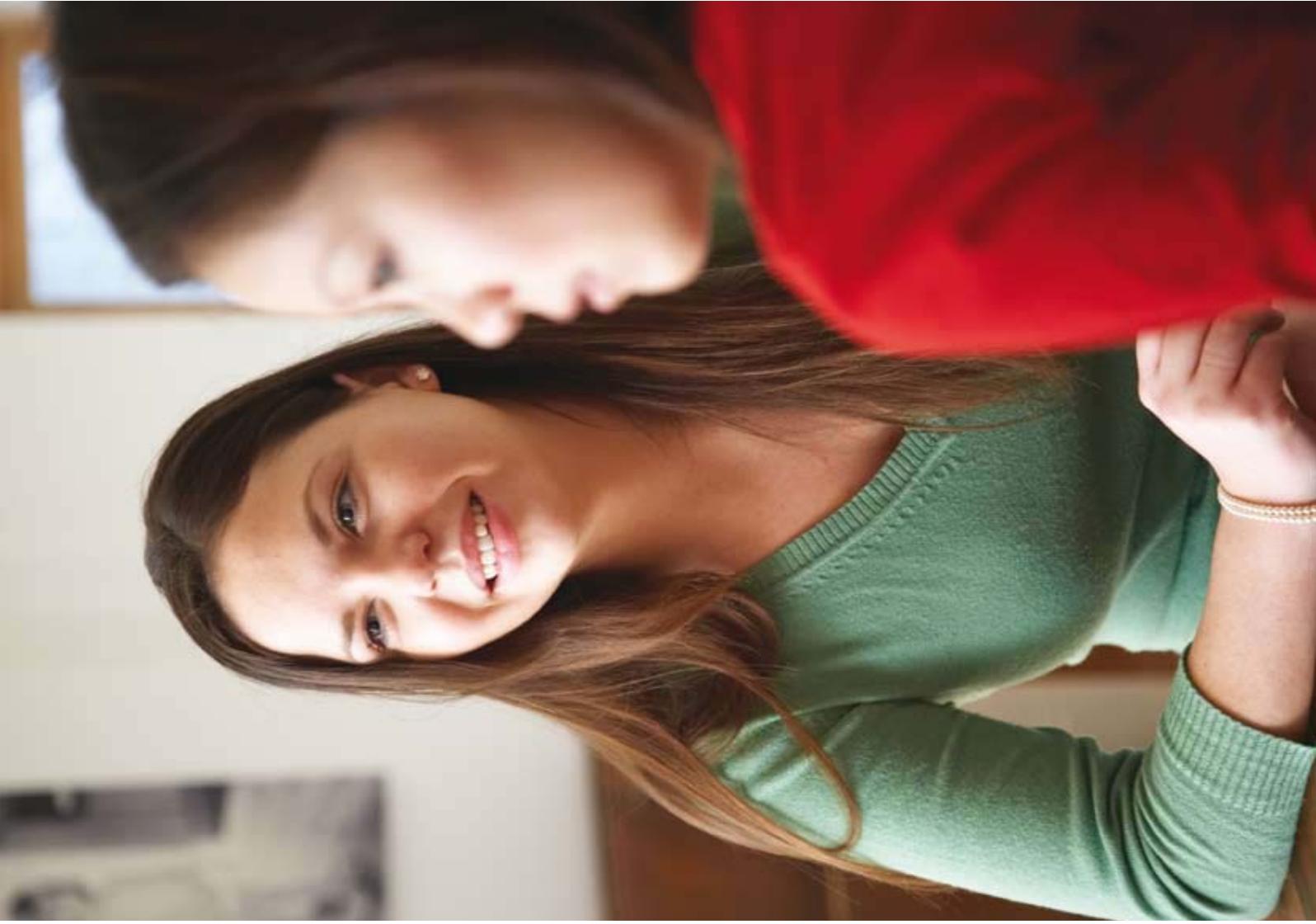
## The benefits of national-local networks

Local groups can be regarded as branches, autonomous groups, local committees with delegated powers, or franchises of the national organisation (the National Council for Voluntary Organisations can provide more information on the nature of these different structures). There are strong reasons for being part of such a network.

Here are some of the benefits:

### Gaining a national/local profile

National and local groups can complement each other's work and prevent duplication. A local group



can benefit from being attached to an organisation with a good national profile and the national body can benefit from good work carried out on a local level. For instance, a national organisation might carry out research on cancer policy issues that local groups can use as the basis for a local campaign, and local groups could provide examples and case studies to the national body.

### **Support**

Setting up a local venture can be daunting for people with limited experience in the field, and support from people with the know-how can be invaluable. A national body may also be the source of resources and fundraising help for local groups.

### **Information**

National organisations can be a good central source of information about services for local groups.

### **Contacts**

National and local organisations can often provide each other with speakers, contacts with other groups and organisations, networking opportunities and international links.

### **Communication**

If groups work as part of a network, information that is relevant to their work can be distributed efficiently – for instance through a national newsletter.

### **Keeping the organisation dynamic**

Because they represent the local needs of people affected by cancer, local groups can be a source

of stimulation and help ensure that a national organisation does not get set in its ways.

### **Administration**

National bodies can often cover some basic administrative tasks and help with establishing charitable status. They may be able to provide a charity number to their affiliated groups, and are likely to have a model constitution that groups can use.

## **Potential difficulties in local-national networks**

There may be teething problems when developing such links, but don't be disheartened. Concentrate on observing what works and what doesn't so that mistakes can be averted in the future.

Areas to look out for are:

### **Criteria for affiliation**

Although local and national organisations may cover common ground, the way in which they wish to work may be different. Local groups have to agree to fulfil certain criteria if they wish to carry the name of the national organisation, and some find this problematic. You have to decide whether it would be more beneficial to adapt and be affiliated, or to stay the same and go it alone.

### **Administration**

Local groups sometimes find that some of the work that comes with being part of a national network,

such as paperwork, takes more time than anticipated. The group may feel under pressure from the national organisation.

### **Keeping informed**

Communication needs to be a two-way process.

Both national and local bodies need to ensure that everyone is informed and involved. Some appoint a dedicated liaison person for this purpose.

### **Lack of support**

Sometimes a group has expectations of the support it will receive from the national body that are impossible to fulfil.

### **Financial obligations**

A locally-affiliated group may be asked to raise funds or pay a subscription to the national body. What proportion of the monies raised go into the national pot is a common cause for debate. Groups should ensure that their members are informed and involved in financial matters from the early stages.

### **Difficulties working together**

There are bound to be disagreements, but thought and attention to detail in the early stages of a relationship can save time and trouble later. Flexibility, good communication and democratic practice are often the key to a harmonious relationship.

### **Perceived top-down control**

Groups attaching themselves formally to national organisations need to be aware of the ways they

can feed their views into the national network. An effective national organisation will be committed to ensuring that all voices are reflected in the work of the organisation.

### **Group working**

The way members relate to each other when running local groups can be different than in national organisations. In small groups, the members involved are often juggling this work with other demands on their time.

### **Perception of groups**

Groups that are part of a national organisation for specific cancer will be seen to be specialists in this area. They will be expected to have up to date information on the latest research and treatments. If the group/service cannot provide this they need to think about where they can refer the person affected by cancer.

# Becoming a national organisation

## Early stages

If you intend to make your group national, don't try to set up too much too soon, especially if there are a limited number of members involved.

## Planning as a group

Some national organisations start as a result of one or more individuals wanting to ensure better support for others with similar experiences. There is often a high degree of personal involvement. This may mean that as the organisation evolves, and other people come on board with their own ideas of what needs to be done, difficulties can arise. The early planning process might take account of this, and perhaps provide for some key players to step back once the national organisation is established.

As many members as possible should be involved early on in the planning. Agreeing common goals and the pace at which the organisation wishes to work can be difficult for those who started out with specific ideas of how things should go. It's a good idea to review regularly how everyone feels to ensure you're on track.



## An appropriate constitution

Bear in mind that your constitution will have to reflect the responsibilities of a national organisation (which needs to report to all its members) rather than the local outlook of a local organisation.

## Quality issues

National organisations need to pay particularly close attention to their reputation, which will also affect the reputation of locally affiliated groups. By working towards demonstrable quality standards, national groups can encourage attention and involvement from both the public and health professionals.

Constantly evaluating the work of the national organisation and ensuring that members' needs are being met can attract new groups for affiliation, provide a model of good practice for local groups and attract funding and sponsorship. **For more information see 'Quality standards', page 74.**

## Getting support

Individuals working in national organisations need support just as much as those in local groups. It's a good idea to discuss what members would find most useful, for example whether they would prefer peer or professional support (**see 'Support' in Booklet 3 Supporting each other**). Regular review or evaluation of support needs is recommended.

## Maintaining relationships with local groups

National and local bodies have very diverse needs, and meeting those needs takes time and commitment. Trust and confidence can be lost if the local groups feel out of touch with what the national body is doing. Creating good communication channels can therefore help ensure that you continue to meet the needs of your members.

Newsletters, forums, networking opportunities and regional meetings can all help you work towards a united national structure. Let local groups know how you can be easily accessed to provide information and support. It may be relevant to produce a branch manual that offers good practice guidance on how they can work with the national body.

## Support from Macmillan Cancer Support

Macmillan can provide continuing support to people involved in evolving national organisations. This is offered face-to-face or by telephone, or via bespoke training and literature. We also give financial support to new initiatives, and can provide opportunities for links and dialogue with other organisations.



## **Key resources**

Further reading and resources are listed below.

### **Publications**

#### **Self-help groups: getting started, keeping going**

(1998) Judy Wilson, RA Wilson and Jan Myers  
(ISBN 0 874259 00 3)

### **Organisations**

#### **National Council for Voluntary Organisations,**

Regent's Wharf, 8 All Saints Street, London N1 9RL,  
tel: 0800 279 8798, [www.ncvo-vol.org.uk](http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk)

# Charitable status

This is a complex subject, but one which some groups will have to consider. Some basic information is given below, for further information see *Voluntary but not amateur* or contact the Charity Commission, the Scottish CVO or Northern Ireland CVA (see Key resources).

## Charitable purposes

There are currently four broad headings for charitable purposes:

- the relief of financial hardship
- the advancement of education
- the advancement of religion
- certain other purposes beneficial to the community.

In addition, all purposes must be for the benefit of the community or a certain section of it.

**Definition: A charity is an organisation established exclusively for charitable purposes. So, if your group has exclusively charitable aims, it is technically a charity and, if in England or Wales, may have to register with the Charity Commission.**

**What are the advantages and disadvantages of having charitable status?**

## Advantages

These include:

- tax relief – including income and corporation tax, stamp duty, capital gains tax, inheritance tax, VAT and Gift Aid on donations
- business rate relief
- fundraising – some groups, companies and organisations will only fundraise for, or donate to, registered charities
- advice – the Charity Commission can give free advice on all aspects of charity law.

## Disadvantages

These include:

- political activity – charities cannot have directly political aims
- trading – there are restrictions on a charity's trading activities
- users on the committee – if a charity's service users are on its committee, it is essential to ensure there is no conflict of interest
- liability for breach of trust – a charity's committee members can be personally liable if any losses result where they have acted in breach of trust

- administration and openness – being a charity can involve a lot of administration. For example as charities are publicly accountable, accounts must be made available to any member of the public on request.

## Key resources

Further reading and resources are listed below. Macmillan can also provide information, publications and training.

### Publications

**Charitable status: advice note 1**, Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action, available from [www.nicva.org](http://www.nicva.org)

Looks at advantages and disadvantages of charitable status for groups in Northern Ireland and gives step by step guidance on how to obtain it.

**Charitable status: a practical handbook** (2003) Andrew Phillips, Directory of Social Change, (ISBN 1 900360 83 7)

**Guidance: setting up a charity in Scotland**, IR2004, Inland Revenue, available from SCVO or [www.hmrc.gov.uk/guidance/charity-scotland.htm](http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/guidance/charity-scotland.htm)

**SCVO's guide to constitutions and charitable status** (2004) Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (ISBN 1 870904 54 0)

This guide takes you through the process of altering your constitution or setting up a charity in Scotland. It also outlines the best legal structure to adopt, the procedures for becoming a charity and model constitutions approved by the Inland Revenue.

### Organisations

**England and Wales** **Charity Commission for England and Wales**, 13-15 Bouverie Street, London EC4Y 8DP, tel: 0845 300 0218, [www.charity-commission.gov.uk](http://www.charity-commission.gov.uk)

Responsible for charities in England and Wales – there is no equivalent body in Scotland or Northern Ireland.

**Scotland and Northern Ireland** **Charity Advice Service, Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action**, 61 Duncairn Gardens, Belfast BT15 2GB, tel: 028 9087 7777, [www.nicva.org](http://www.nicva.org)

**Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations**, Mansfield Traquair Centre, 15 Mansfield Place, Edinburgh EH3 6BB, tel: 0131 556 3882, [www.scvo.org.uk](http://www.scvo.org.uk)

**Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator**, 2nd Floor, Quadrant House, 9 Riverside Drive, Dundee DD1 4NY, tel: 01382 224046, [www.oscr.org.uk](http://www.oscr.org.uk)

## Websites

**Inland Revenue:** [www.hmrc.gov.uk/charities](http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/charities)  
Information relating to running charities.

**Voluntary and Community Unit,** Northern  
Ireland Department for Social Development:  
[www.dsdni.gov.uk](http://www.dsdni.gov.uk)



# Legal structures

Unless you intend to employ staff or take on property, it is probable that you can remain an unincorporated association and you are not required by law to seek any approval before setting up.

Details of other forms of structure are given in *Voluntary but not amateur* (see **Key resources**).

## Constitutions

It is useful for any organisation, however informal, to have a governing document – a set of basic rules agreed by the team that describe how you will operate. This can cover who the members are, your aims, and how you will make sure that everyone has their say at meetings. The rules can have various names – rules, constitution, memorandum and articles (for a company) or trust deed (for a charitable trust).

A formal constitution (rather than a basic set of rules) needs to be carefully worded in legal language. If you decide to write your own, you will need legal advice. Alternatively, the Charity Commission for England and Wales, the Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action or the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations can assist you in drafting a constitution. They publish a booklet that gives details of what a constitution/governing document is and the process that groups should follow when preparing one, including financial controls. It also has a section

where groups can access template constitutions and create their own by stating their objectives. However, it is not recommended to follow these templates strictly because groups across the UK operate very differently and have different purposes. Moreover, these models cover all types of charitable activities. You may find it most useful to look at constitutions from groups similar to yours.

## Key resources

Further reading and resources are listed below. Macmillan can also provide information, publications and training.

### Publications

***The charities manual: a complete guide to voluntary organisation management***, ed. Jacki

Reason, Institute of Chartered Secretaries and Administrators (ISBN 1 867201 12 5)

***The charity trustee's handbook*** (2001) Mike

Eastwood, Directory of Social Change/Charities Aid Foundation (ISBN 1 900360 88 8)

***Just about managing? Effective management for voluntary organisations and community groups***

(2006) Sandy Adirondack, London Voluntary Service Council (ISBN 1 872582 86 3)

**Voluntary but not amateur: a guide to the law for voluntary organisations** (2004) Duncan Forbes, London Voluntary Service Council (ISBN 1 872582 32 X). Available from [www.lvsc.org.uk](http://www.lvsc.org.uk)

**Choosing and Preparing a Governing Document** (2007) Charity Commission. Can be downloaded at [www.charity-commission.gov.uk/Library/publications/pdfs/cc22text.pdf](http://www.charity-commission.gov.uk/Library/publications/pdfs/cc22text.pdf)

#### Websites

**Charity Commission for England and Wales**  
[www.charity-commission.gov.uk](http://www.charity-commission.gov.uk)

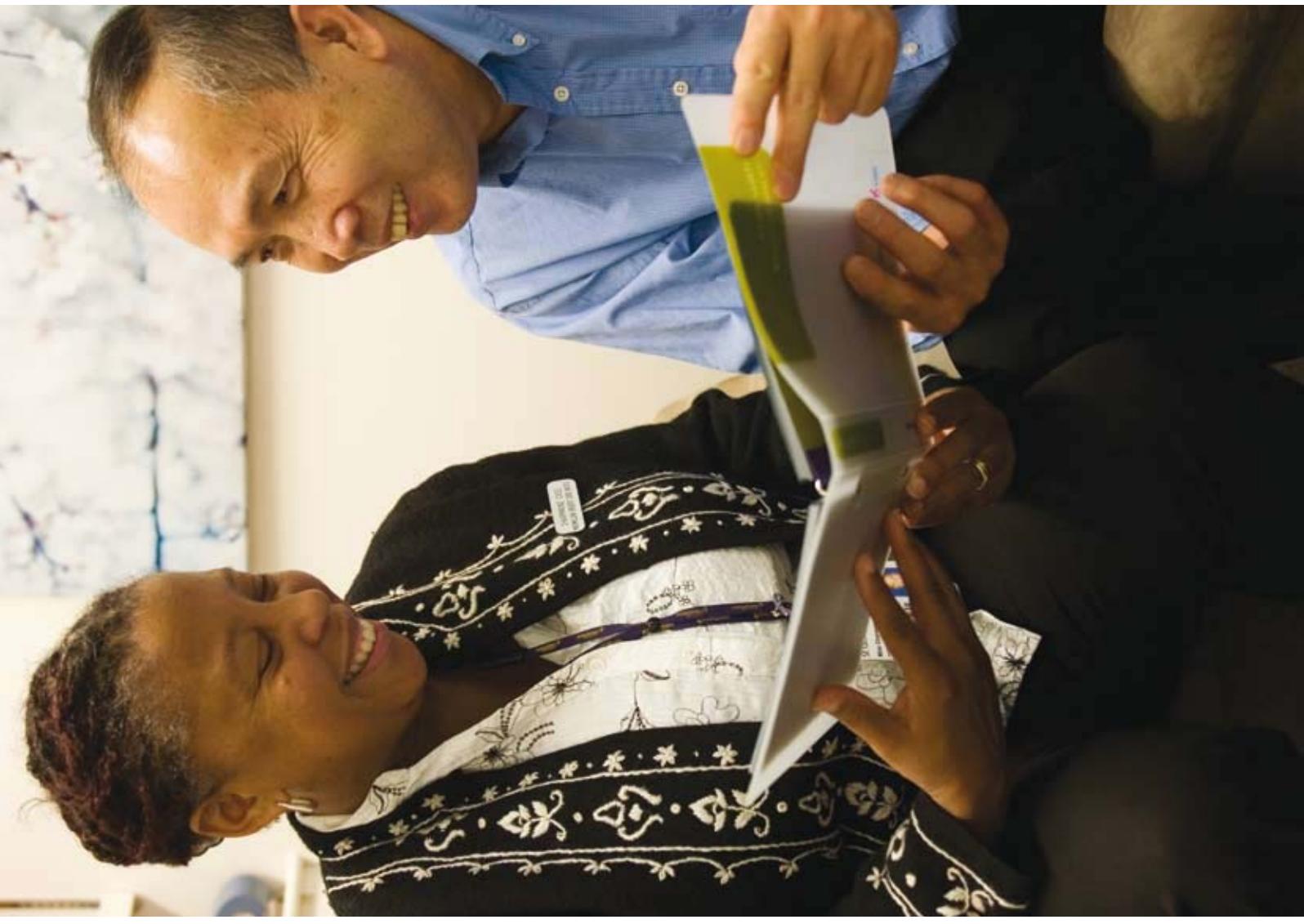
**Inland Revenue** [www.hmrc.gov.uk/charities](http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/charities)  
Information relating to running charities.

**Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action (NICVA)** [www.nicva.org](http://www.nicva.org)

**Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO)** [www.scvo.org.uk](http://www.scvo.org.uk)

**'I wish that we had agreed upon a fixed term for the chair of our committee. He has been in the post for far too long and is stifling any new initiatives.'**

Anonymous participant from a Networking Day



# Quality standards

## What are quality standards?

Quality standards are a means of demonstrating to anyone with current or potential involvement with the group that it is well run and accountable to its members; that there is the means to assess and improve the work carried out and that this is reviewed on a regular basis.

People sometimes think that formal-sounding terms such as 'quality standards' cut across valued principles about the informality of support. But this is not necessarily the case. People looking for support can be reassured if you can demonstrate good practice and quality. Having quality standards encourages credibility in the eyes of the public, health professionals and potential funders.

Addressing issues of quality can also motivate people and demonstrates that you reflect what your members want. It is a way of being accountable to all those who have an interest in the services that you offer.

## What do quality standards mean for you?

How you approach the issue of quality is up to you, and will largely depend on your aims. In setting up a new group, or reviewing the work of an existing one, asking questions about your aims and objectives may help set the quality agenda.

For example:

- are you looking to approach organisations for funding?
- will demonstrating good practice measurable against a recognised model help you gain funding?
- would you gain the support of more local health professionals if you could show that you follow certain quality standards?

Cancer self help and support services that recognise the need for quality standards will try to address and maintain good practice. This may be according to a recognised model or standard, which has been discussed and agreed to by members.

## Getting to grips with quality standards

Groups sometimes find it difficult to decide how to address the issue of quality standards in the provision of services. Conflicting pressures of time and money, concerns about under-performing and resistance to change can all play a part.

Anticipating these concerns and giving sufficient time to the issue can be central to a group's success. It may be useful to contact other groups that use existing systems to gain the benefit of their experience.

As a first step, it may be helpful for your group to work through the following questions:

- what kind of service do you want to offer people affected by cancer?
- how will you know you are achieving this?
- does the group reach standards it has set for itself?
- what will you do if you feel your goals are not being achieved?
- how can you tell if your group could improve its services further?
- what can you do to improve services?

Be clear about why you want formal standards and what you hope it will achieve for your group or organisation. Be simple and realistic about what is achievable. If addressing issues of quality takes more time than providing key services you'll need to think again to establish a more comfortable balance. A commitment to achieving good standards of service is essential to ensuring a successful group that can be of benefit to people affected by cancer.

## **Quality standards you can use**

There are a number of ways of working towards good practice or quality standards, some more formal than others.

### **1. Macmillan Cancer Support's Good practice guidelines**

A Good Practice Resource Pack was originally produced in 1997, as the result of liaison between Cancerlink and representatives of the groups network. It included good practice guidelines for self help and support groups.

These guidelines have since been reviewed, updated and added to, with the aim of helping groups further address issues around good practice and efficient working. The result is this series of four Good practice guidelines booklets, of which this is the last. You may find it reassures potential funders and health professionals that you work using these booklets.

### **2. Macmillan Cancer Support's Cancer Support Certificate**

Macmillan also offers the Cancer Support Certificate, a qualification developed for people who support others affected by cancer. It is accredited by the Open College Network, which grants educational awards in many subjects to adult learners, especially to people for whom traditional qualifications are inaccessible or inappropriate. This qualification enables groups to improve some of their practices, which in turn is a means of establishing better links with health professionals. Contact Macmillan for further details.

### **3. Investing in Volunteers**

Based on the principles of Investors in People, this focuses on good practice in managing volunteers (see 'Key resources' for further information).

## Key resources

Further reading and resources are listed below. There are many other ways of acquiring quality standards.

### Publications

**The adoption and use of quality systems in the voluntary sector: research report (2004)** Quality Standards Task Group, NCVO (ISBN 0 719916 42 9). Order from [www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/publications](http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/publications)

**Approaching quality: a guide to the choices you could make (1999)** Quality Standards Task Group, NCVO (ISBN 0 719915 51 1)

**First steps in quality (2005)** Charities Evaluation Service (ISBN 1 897963 20 30), [www.ces-vol.org.uk](http://www.ces-vol.org.uk)  
'Entry level' information on quality assurance. Can be downloaded from the website.

**Getting ready for quality: learning from experience (2004)** Quality Standards Task Group, NCVO (ISBN 0 719916 43 7). Order from [www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/publications](http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/publications)

### Websites

**Charities Evaluation Service**  
[www.ces-vol.org.uk](http://www.ces-vol.org.uk)

**Investing in Volunteers**  
[www.investinginvolunteers.org.uk](http://www.investinginvolunteers.org.uk)

**Investors in People**  
[www.investorsinpeople.co.uk](http://www.investorsinpeople.co.uk)

**National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO)** [www.ncvo-vol.org.uk](http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk)

### Training

**The Charities Evaluation Service (CES)**,  
tel: 020 7713 5722, [www.ces-vol.org.uk](http://www.ces-vol.org.uk)  
Offers a range of consultancy and training services, providing advice and information regarding evaluation and quality systems in the voluntary sector.

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# Self help and support or user group?

The other booklets in the **Good practice guidelines** series cover the following subjects:



**Booklet 1, Getting started**, is for people thinking of setting up a new group or service, and covers planning, frequently asked questions, setting aims and objectives, allocating roles and making the most of meetings.



**Booklet 2, Running it well**, offers guidance on standards such as confidentiality, equal opportunities, working with professionals and providing complementary therapies, as well as a section on 'troubleshooting' problems that may arise in your group.



**Booklet 3, Supporting each other**, is for those groups who plan to offer a structured support service, and covers issues such as training and supervision, as well as dealing with loss, terminal illness and bereavement.

Self help and support groups are for people affected by cancer to share information, give and receive support, and to meet others with similar experiences. Their purpose is to help people to find ways to cope with their cancer experience.

Many of the good practice guidelines in these booklets will also be appropriate for user groups, which are for people wanting to use their experience of cancer to make changes in the way that health services are delivered. Their purpose is to gather ideas and information and feed them back to health professionals through the appropriate channels.

Macmillan Cancer Support improves the lives of people affected by cancer. We provide practical, medical, emotional and financial support and push for better cancer care. One in three of us will get cancer. 1.2 million of us are living with it. We are all affected by cancer. We can all help. We are Macmillan.

For further copies, call us on 0800 500 800  
or visit [www.be.macmillan.org.uk](http://www.be.macmillan.org.uk)

**Macmillan Cancer Support**  
**89 Albert Embankment, London SE1 7UQ**  
**Tel 0800 500 800**  
**CancerLine 0808 808 2020**  
**[www.macmillan.org.uk](http://www.macmillan.org.uk)**

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