



Survivorship Chair Handbook

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Relay For Life Survivorship Chair Role Profile

Why we need you

Cancer Research UK is seeking a committed individual to lead Survivorship activity for their community's Relay For Life. The opening Lap of Honour for cancer survivors is a celebration of life and a uniquely empowering experience for those living with cancer. A capable and compassionate individual is needed to invite survivors, coordinate their activities on Relay day and provide opportunities for survivors to meet throughout the year.

Anyone who has lived with cancer is invited to join a Relay as their guest of honour. This includes those newly diagnosed, those undergoing therapy for cancer as well as those who have been successfully treated.

What will I be doing?

- Recruiting a sub-committee to work with you on Survivorship.
- Identifying and inviting cancer survivors to attend the Relay as guests of honour.
- Creating a network of cancer survivors linked to the Relay and making those survivors aware of Cancer Research UK's activity and cancer information services, as well as the Relay event.
- Planning and coordinating activities for survivors at the Relay, in particular the Lap of Honour and reception.
- Engaging survivors before and after the Relay.
- You will be a representative of Cancer Research UK and as such will uphold the vision and purpose of the organisation at all times

What skills do I need?

- Ideally, you will be a cancer survivor, but this is not essential. If you feel a connection with cancer survivors then this could be the role for you. You will need to have sensitivity and compassion towards survivors and their concerns.
- A basic understanding of what cancer is and the different types of cancer that exist
- Confident of approaching groups and individuals to explain what Relay is and how they can be involved.
- Creative approach to plan and coordinate activities
- You should be IT literate and ideally have access to a computer.

How much time do I need to commit?

You will need to start actively recruiting/inviting cancer survivors as soon as you can prior to the Relay, and attend all Relay For Life committee meetings (these will probably be monthly and then weekly as the Relay approaches). You will need to respond to ad hoc enquiries from survivors about the Relay and arrange follow-up activities after the Relay with Survivors who have attended.

What support will I be given?

As well as being part of an enthusiastic and supportive Relay For Life committee, you will have access to a dedicated Cancer Research UK staff contact with whom you can liaise (via your Event Chair) should you have any queries.

What benefits can I expect?

Research has shown that the more survivors there are at a Relay For Life, the more successful the event is. You will be playing a major part in raising money to help beat cancer and bringing survivors together to share their experiences with each other and with the community. The Relay itself is also a lot of fun and a great way to meet and make friends with people in your community!

Where will I be based?

This role will certainly get you out and about! You will be the hub connecting the cancer survivors within your community and, although some of the work can be done from home (emailing, writing letters and phoning), you can't underestimate the value of meeting survivors face-to-face explaining how important they are to the event and inspiring them to become involved with Relay.

2. What Is Survivorship?

Cancer Research UK Relay For Life Survivorship activity aims to support and empower those who have experienced a cancer diagnosis.

At Relay For Life, anyone who has heard the words "you have cancer" is a survivor. Survivors can be people who are undergoing treatment, as well as people who have been successfully treated.

Relay is a celebration of life and an empowering experience for anyone who has been touched by cancer with activities such as the Lap of Honour, Survivors Reception, judging of competitions and offering survivors the opportunity to be involved with the ceremonies. Relay For Life also welcomes our Caregivers. This can be anyone who has or is currently helping to look after someone who is on their cancer journey is also invited to attend and to take part in the survivorship activity.

Survivorship and Relay For Life

Cancer survivors are welcomed to Relay For Life as guests of honour to meet and share their experience of cancer. If the Relay is a track-based event, Survivors are invited to open the Relay by walking the very first lap, the survivors' Lap of Honour. The Lap is a very special time when cancer survivors are invited to walk the track together, sometimes supported by their families and friends. For many, the experience of gathering with other survivors is extremely powerful and reminds everyone attending the Relay why they are there. The Survivor Lap of Honour can be adapted to suit the format of your Relay. For example, if your Relay is based in a park, the Survivors could do the first round of your course together.

Survivors may want to participate in different ways. Develop a range of opportunities so that your survivors can choose their own level of participation.

- Walk the Lap of Honour and attend the survivorship reception
- Attend as a visitor but not participate in the survivorship activity
- Address the teams during a ceremony
- Join the committee, enter a team or fundraise.

Relay For Life recognises the impact that research makes to the survival and quality of life of cancer patients across the UK. It is also a time to remember those people who have been affected by cancer and to highlight the importance of continuing our vital work.

Build a sub-committee

In order to have as many survivors from your local community involved with Relay as possible you'll need some assistance so it's advisable to recruit and manage a Survivorship sub-committee which will increase your networks and offers cancer survivors the opportunity to get more involved with Relay.

Delegating tasks

You can delegate specific tasks to your sub-committee which could include:

- Making survivors aware of the work of Cancer Research UK, its cancer information services and the Cancer Research UK Relay For Life event.
- Send Invites to cancer survivors to attend the Relay as guests of honour.
- Host at least one pre event awareness evening for all survivors attending the event.
- Organise a survivors' reception at the Relay. Meet, greet and host the cancer Survivors, Caregivers and their families
- Plan on the day activities for the survivors to get involved with such as manning the candle of hope stall.
- Encourage the Survivors to publicise Relay to their own group and networks
- Offer Survivors the opportunity to fundraise.
- Support the organisation of the Opening Ceremony. The survivors' Lap of Honour is the highlight of this ceremony. Maintain relationship with Survivors post Relay e.g. informal 'get-togethers' to update on the Relay and Cancer Research UK throughout the year.

3. Inviting Survivors

How to Invite Survivors

Survivorship is one of the core elements of Relay so it's important to get as many Survivors involved with the event as possible. Below are some top tips for inviting survivors:

- Plan your survivorship activity in advance so you can talk about the special elements when inviting Survivors.
- Research your community, networks and the contacts within the Relay Committee to create a list of contacts.
- Think about how you're going to contact Survivors – write letters, display posters in local oncology centres, call cancer support groups etc... (The best way to explain the different elements of Relay is face to face so we'd recommend you try to meet potential survivors or go along to Survivor support groups and talk to them)
- Put together a brief sheet detailing the different elements of Relay that cancer Survivors can get involved with
- Attend team captains meeting to explain Survivorship at Relay and ask them to invite any Survivors they may know.

4. Registering Survivors

It's important that all cancer survivors are registered prior to the relay in order for you to be aware of any specific requirements the survivors may have for the day, and to be able to communicate with

them about Relay.

All survivors need to register online via the Relay For Life Website. Speak to the event chair for access to the registration data so you can view the Survivor sign ups. It will be your role to order the T-shirts for Survivors and their carers (if needed). Speak to the event chair for access to the merchandise website.

5. Survivorship Activity

Before the Relay

In the run up to the Relay For Life there is a range of different ways you can engage Survivors in your event:

- Organise a get together for Survivors to discuss what they would like to see on the day of the Relay and offer them the opportunity to take ownership of specific activities.
- Invite Survivors to recruit other Survivors and promote the different aspects of Relay.
- Invite Survivors to team captain's meetings.
- Ask Survivors to fundraise for Relay through promoting Candle of Hope
- Invite Survivors to your Relay Launch
- Work with those Survivors who would like to share their stories with the local media.
- Produce a newsletter for Survivors or enter a Survivorship Update article into your Relay Newsletter and make sure it gets sent to all your Survivors.

On the Day of Relay - Opening Ceremony

The Opening ceremony needs to create impact as it is the start of the Relay, and as previously mentioned, will set the tone for the whole event. Ensure you brief all the teams to line the track and cheer on the Survivors as they walk their Lap of Honour if your event is track based.

Create impact by:

- Ensuring the Opening ceremony is well planned and rehearsed (it should last no longer than 15 minutes) Ensure that you know the content of the speeches in advance – they should be uplifting and motivational.
- Inviting a Survivor to speak and share their reason for joining Relay. This reminds participants that their fundraising makes a difference and gives Survivors the option to get involved.
- Inviting other inspirational speakers such as a scientist or Senior Nurse to talk about the advances in cancer research.
- Using uplifting and celebratory music.
- Provide teams with bubble bottles and ask them to blow bubbles as the Survivors take to the track to create an uplifting feeling.
- Changing the ceremony every year. Remember returning teams will want a different slant on the ceremony.
- Making sure you recognise and celebrate the community coming together and why everyone is involved in the Relay:
 - Survivors coming together as a group, giving hope to those attending and each other.
 - Teams joining together to celebrate their achievements in raising funds to support Cancer Research UK

- Community coming together as one to beat cancer and learn new cancer awareness messages.
- Working together to raise vital funds for research, so that together we will beat cancer.

Music

A good tune really gets everyone going and can really raise the atmosphere to new heights. You could have a live singer to start or use any number of motivational songs. Remember it may take some of your survivors longer than others to walk their lap so have a couple of tracks lined up.

Songs

- Nothing's Gonna Stop Us Now, by Starship
- Shine, by Aswad
- I'll Stand By You, by The Pretenders
- Survivor by Destiny's Child
- Walking on Sunshine by Katrina and the Waves
- What have you done today to make you feel proud by M People
- The Greatest Day by Take That
- Shine by Take That
- Beautiful Day by U2
- Fantastic Day by Haircut 100
- Gotta Be by Desree

Survivor Reception

Provide a warm and welcoming atmosphere, decorate the tables, provide drinks and snacks. Make the reception interactive, give your survivors an activity that will bring them together.

A 'Book of Hope' where they can share their thoughts and messages of inspiration. These quotes can then be used to promote the Relay the following year, either locally or nationally.

A Chain of Hope – Use strips of coloured paper and invite the survivors to make one link for each year they have survived cancer. Join all links together and display at the event, you could even announce total number of years during one of your ceremonies. This activity can give hope to those newly diagnosed sitting alongside another creating their 12th link.

Hands of Hope – Get a craft shop to donate muslin and washable fabric paint. Ask Survivors to put their handprint on the muslin, sign their name under their print and write next to it how long they've been a survivor. After the event, hang the banner in the community – make a Relay display at your local council reception, or at a cancer treatment centre.

To further enrich the survivors experience at Relay, other participants and guests (such as dignitaries, scientists and a few team members) could also be invited into the survivor's reception to share experiences of being involved with Relay.

Survivor Gift

Here are some ideas to get you started:

- [Tree of Life](#) – Approach your local garden centre and see if they will donate

small trees or shrubs. A living gift that can be taken home and planted is a significant reminder of Relay. Give these to survivors after the Survivors' Lap

- **A Blossom of Hope** - Ask a local florist to donate fresh flowers (carnations and/or roses are good for this) and give these to survivors as they leave the track following the Survivors' Lap, or at the reception.
- **Happiness Kit** - Fill a small square of material with an eraser, penny coin, marble, rubber band, piece of string and heart. Tie the material into a parcel, secure with ribbon and attach the following tag:

Happiness Kit

An eraser so you can make your own mistakes disappear

A coin so you can never say you are broke

A marble in case someone says you have lost yours

A rubber band to stretch yourself beyond your limit

A piece of string to tie things together when they fall apart

A heart to remind you that someone loves you

- **Special Candle** - Give a candle to light the way

After the Relay

Keep in touch with the Survivors after Relay to keep them updated and invite them to next year's event.

- Ask survivors if they'd like to offer their story for national & local promotion of Relay and Cancer Research UK. If they agree, please liaise with your staff contact to arrange an interview with the Cancer Research UK Press Team or Patient Liaison Team.
- Keep in touch with survivors after the Relay by sending them Christmas cards and Birthday cards.
- Send survivors any Newsletters that your Relay produce or produce a survivor's newsletter just for them.
- Ask survivors what they enjoyed so you can add new ideas to your survivorship activity for next year. Share the responses with your staff contact so we can share your news with other Relays.
- Invite the Survivors to join the Survivorship committee.

Survivorship Top Tips

- Recruit and promote year-round. Good places to recruit include local oncology centres, support groups and doctors' surgeries.
- Contact local cancer support groups and ask if you can attend to a meeting to talk about Relay and invite their members to attend.
- Meet with oncology staff and ask if they would promote your Relay.
- Ask your Team Recruitment Chair to encourage teams to invite survivors.

- Ask survivors to help you promote the Relay – some may be willing to accompany the Chair to give talks in the community to promote the event.
- Ensure all survivors are registered prior to the Relay – encourage them to register on-line.
- Have survivorship activity at your Relay launch – if your committee are holding a launch.
- Hold a Survivorship meeting to give Survivors a flavour of the event and ask them to invite other survivors.
- Involve the survivors in the planning of the survivorship activity or to join the sub committee.
- Ask your survivors if they want to enter a team into the Relay.
- Ask survivors if they would be willing to share their story of survivorship to the local media – this is a great way to promote the Relay to the wider community and spreads the message of Hope.
- Ensure all survivors are aware of what will happen on the day, where they need to be and when.
- Have a chaperone to welcome survivors at a designated meeting point and to take them to the reception area – ensure adequate seating.
- Have a chaperone take survivors to the track at agreed time for the Opening Ceremony.
- If you have a 'Survivors' banner, ensure that banners are issued to walk with.
- Offer carergivers and family members the opportunity to walk with survivors.
- Make sure you have uplifting music for the first lap.
- If your event is track based, brief teams to line the track and cheer as survivors walk the 1st lap. Use the opportunity for teams to celebrate the survivor journey together.
- Ask a survivor to give a speech at the opening ceremony, ensuring that key messages are included.
- Offer Survivors the opportunity to get involved in the delivery of cancer awareness messages/activity following their reception.
- Liaise with Logistics Chair to ensure disabled access and designated parking is available near the site for Survivors.
- Ensure there is an area protected from the elements and adequate seating for the Survivors' Reception
- Once the Opening Ceremony is completed ensure you meet them and take to the designated reception area. Remember that some survivors may want to walk the initial team lap, so ensure someone is there to take them to the reception. Encourage survivor's families to join them at the reception.
- Arrange activities such as massages and local scientist talks.
- Have the reception area in the heart of the venue so that survivors do not feel isolated.
- Ensure there is a thank you message to all survivors – a card from the Survivorship Committee perhaps.

- Engage with your survivors on the day and further involve them in the whole event, e.g., judging competitions, joining a team and delivering cancer awareness messages.
- Engage them with regular communication following the event, e.g., thank you letters and newsletters.
- Ask survivors to help write thank you letters for donations and sponsorship. This is very personal and meaningful for the recipient and a great practical way for Survivors to help with the Relay.
- Hold a special dinner or get-together after the Relay to celebrate its success and thank the survivors for their support. This needn't cost much – everyone could bring a dish!
- Get together throughout the year as new survivors are recruited. This will get the new recruits involved in the network and get everyone looking forward to the Relay.

6. Template Invite Letter

This can be adapted to a variety of audiences.

Date

Dear

I am writing to invite you and your family to join us for the Cancer Research UK Relay For Life. Relay is a team event to honour Cancer Survivors, celebrate those whose lives have been touched by cancer, raise awareness about cancer, and raise money to support Cancer Research UK's life-saving work to find new ways of preventing, diagnosing and treating cancer.

- The Survivors' Lap. The event will begin with the Lap of Honour which will begin at < insert start time> Survivors walk the triumphant opening lap with the other teams/participants cheering them on before joining the Survivors for the 2nd lap.
- Survivors' Reception. This usually follows on from the lap and Survivors and their families come together at the heart of the event. It's a chance to mingle with other Survivors, enjoy a celebratory drink and meet the volunteers and participants that make Relay such a success.
- The Candle of Hope Ceremony. A ceremony that remembers those lost to cancer, honours those being treated for cancer and celebrates the lives of Cancer Survivors. At <insert start time> the lights are dimmed and inspirational music fills the air as Candles of Hope (LED candles placed in small, white bags) start to glow. Each one dedicated in memory or in celebration of loved ones. The candles continue to glow through the night, as walkers continue to relay around the track.

We hope you can join us for this wonderful event. We invite you and your family/friends to be our guests for one of these ceremonies, or to put together a team and join the fun. Our next meeting for all participants, or guests for the event is on (insert day, date and time) Please feel free to come along and discover more about the programme for the weekend.

In the meantime, if you have any questions, please do get in touch.

With every good wish,
Yours sincerely

Survivorship Chair/Member

Cancer Research UK Relay For Life – < location >

Contact No:

Email: