

## GUIDANCE FOR INTERESTED AUTHORS

### **An Invitation to Contribute**

The experiences recorded will be of greatest value if the ideas, actions and attitudes that have helped past sufferers to overcome or minimize the impact of cancer on their lives can be passed on to the next generation of patients. If you have a 'Cancer Experience Story' capable of bringing help, hope, optimism or relief to someone facing challenges that are similar to those you already know about, then we hope you will respond to our invitation.

### Content of 'Stories'

- To be of greatest interest and relevance to our readers, all 'Stories' will be told by and be about people living throughout the towns and countryside of Northern Ireland.
- All cancers will be featured, 'Stories' may have to be selected to be of greatest value to as many people as possible although representative examples concerning some of the rarer cancers will also be included.
- 'Stories' from all age groups are sought
- Contributions will be particularly welcomed from family carers whose role in patient care is all-too-often overlooked and whose emotional involvement and stress may be not be appreciated. Stories from medical professionals, perhaps concerning a particular patient, will similarly be welcomed.
- Individual authors are given the choice of withholding the identity of the patients and family or, alternatively, identifying the people involved (with their permission) but the anonymity of all health care professionals and their places of work must be preserved.
- For people wishing to contribute, but preferring not to write the 'Story' themselves, editorial or audio-recording help can be offered through the editorial team.

## 'Stories' can be of four different types

Quotation: 'One or Few Liners' – This could be a memorable 'Quotation' that expresses an insight into some aspect of the understanding of cancer. Each would be short (fewer than 100 words) and record something that is definitely worth telling to others. It might be a few words that someone had passed on to them which really gave hope at a particularly difficult time.

### Short story :Single incidents worth telling

Each short story would describe a significant or unusual event or observation, to do with a particular single aspect of the diagnosis, treatment or care of cancer. These would be relatively short, around 500 words, or fewer.

### Longer Story

These would describe an individual experience of cancer, explaining how someone coped with particular problems that resulted from their illness, providing pointers that may be helpful to readers faced with similar difficulties. A longer 'Story' would, typically, be between 1000 and 5000 words in length.

Poems- where individuals have expressed their thoughts in poetry

### Publication of Stories

Every author submitting an article will work with NICan's editorial team to ensure a high standard of content and presentation. Where any editorial or other changes are recommended, these will be discussed with the author and his/her agreement to suitable changes decided before publication.

Accepted contributions will be published first on a NICaN sponsored website, dedicated to cancer patients and their carers.

Authors will have the opportunity to see and approve an edited copy before publication.

Although it is not possible to pay contributors, it is hoped that selected contributions will appear in newspapers, to publicize interesting and topical aspects of cancer risks, treatments and cures.

Any fees subsequently received will be distributed to appropriate cancer charities, as decided by NICaN. There is a possibility that, later, selected material might appear in book form. Again, profits would go to appropriate charities.

Authors will be acknowledged personally or through a preferred 'pen name'.

The content of the 'Cancer Experience Stories' website will be updated at suitable intervals by NICaN and the 'User Feedback Facility' will be an important indicator of the site's present effectiveness and future themes.

About you - the author

It will be helpful to readers if they can have a little background information about each person writing the story. Please include a short summary (approximately 100 words) which paints a picture for the reader and sets your story in context. For example you may wish to outline

- ❖ your background, life circumstances and any events leading up to the story
- ❖ why the particular experience referred to in the story/poem made such an impact
- ❖ when it happened e.g. x months/years ago
- ❖ the age you or other appropriate individuals referred to were at the time
- ❖ any other details you feel are relevant in setting the scene

You will then receive a note to acknowledge that your story has been received.