MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

ORIENTATION DOCUMENT FOR MENTORS AND MENTEES

**UNCANCER INDIA**

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If you are interested in enrolling for the program (or) if you need any clarifications regarding the contents of this document please contact the program manager.

## Program Manager

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**Welcome to the Mentorship Program from unCancer India! The following document helps you with the details of this program and guides you through the program.**

**Introduction:**

Each year nearly 1.2 million new cases of cancer are being diagnosed in India and many are still unable to access quality healthcare. There are significant gaps in healthcare leading to difficult, painful and unguided journeys for cancer patients. unCancer India wants to bridge this gap through the support and service of mentors in order to effectively deal and cope with the challenges of Cancer that these people face along their journey.

**What is a Mentorship Program?**

A mentorship program is a platform of interaction for mentors and mentees. Each pair has one mentor and one mentee. Both parties have a unique role to play. Generally, a mentorship program helps a mentee gain guidance and support from a mentor who has faced similar situations like them, but has now worked past them successfully. Since this is a mentorship program for the cancer community, the major areas of help and support are around cancer related concerns. Mentors and mentees would be matched based on cancer type, age, gender, location and similarity of attitudes and beliefs.

**Purpose:**

The purpose of the mentorship program is to enable people (mentors and mentees) to interact with each other on a safe and effective platform. Research indicates that cancer patients, survivors and caregivers face unique concerns and crisis that they may not be able to share with people who are not as well acquainted with cancer. To that end, a mentorship program ensures that mentors who have roughed the weather and experienced the crises that cancer poses, can now provide the required guidance to mentees, who are still in the midst of it all.

**Objectives:**

* To provide a safe and useful interactive platform for people to interact as mentors and mentees
* To provide the required structure to make sure the program meets its purpose
* To make sure that the mentors and mentees are well-matched
* To provide guidelines to the mentors and mentees about their roles, needs, responsibilities and terms of use.
* To troubleshoot for any hiccups in the mentor-mentee relationship
* To gain feedback from the users and improve service accordingly

**Roles:**

The Mentorship Program Has Two Main Stakeholders: Mentors and Mentees

**Mentor:**

A mentor is someone who guides the mentee as and when required. A mentee is someone currently going through cancer treatment, or a fellow survivor whose treatment process just got over, or a fellow caregiver who may be overwhelmed and needs help. Mentees are often going through tough times and need all the help and support they can manage to get. A mentor is a unique source of support because he or she has similar experiences and has sailed through them.

This makes it easy for the mentee to connect with a mentor, get relevant information and also know how to deal with certain unique concerns that would arise out of having one particular cancer. Therefore, as mentors, you would be expected to be there when mentees want to share tough experiences, and provide guidance wherever you can – talking about how you dealt with things when they were happening to you.

***Am I Eligible to be a Mentor?***

You are eligible if:

* You have had cancer yourself or have cared for someone with cancer
* You can dedicate 2 – 6 hours a week to mentor someone
* You can stay in the program for at least 6 months to a year
* You are comfortable using the internet (as the mentorship is mostly an online platform)
* You are willing to learn certain skills that will make you a good mentor

***What sort of guidance is expected of me?***

There is a wide range of concerns where you can hear out mentees or share your experiences. Some common areas that mentees are confused about: What happens after diagnosis? What is the course of treatment? Will it affect my life a lot? Do I need to leave work? Will I get better? How long will that take? Will this treatment cause a lot of pain? How to deal with it? And so on (You can view common questions asked by mentees and their model responses in the Q and A document).

You can interact with them over the phone/internet or in person for these exchanges. If you have time and have signed up for it, you can also accompany the mentee on hospital visits, support group sessions or any other therapeutic activities.

***Why should I mentor?***

Remember when you or your loved one had just been diagnosed? You were really worried and confused about what should be your next step, whether things will be okay, and how to manage – there was too much information, or too less, at your disposal!

Now, with this program, you can help someone else find help and direction much more easily. Research indicates that mentoring helps to improve a person’s satisfaction and wellness levels and gives a mental boost, a ‘feel good’ effect that acts as a catalyst to achieving happiness.

In a unique way, you will forge a beautiful relationship with your mentee, and they will always be grateful for your timely guidance.

***Some reasons why people mentor are:***

-Because they have gathered a lot of information about cancer in the course of their/ loved one’s cancer treatment tediously and now want a good way to disperse it to someone who needs

-They had a mentor-like figure that was helpful and they want to give back to the community

-They know the pains of cancer and treatment and want to help in any way they can

-They have lost someone to cancer and are seeking closure

-Mentoring someone helps them heal their own pain

**Mentee:**

A mentee is someone currently going through cancer treatment, or a survivor whose treatment process just got over, or a caregiver who may be overwhelmed and needs help. This program has been designed to provide support to mentees. You can ask questions and share your concerns with the mentor. You can also use their experiences with cancer and how they dealt with it, to plan your own treatment.

Some common areas that mentees may want to talk about: What happens after diagnosis? What is the course of treatment? Will it affect my life a lot? Do I need to leave work? Will I get better? How long will that take? Will this treatment cause a lot of pain? How to deal with it? And so on.

You can contact your mentor via phone, email or meet them face-to-face, depending on the mutual comfort level. You can ask them to accompany you to hospital visits, support group sessions or any other therapeutic activities.

***Am I Eligible to be a Mentee?***

You are eligible if:

You currently have cancer, have just finished treatment, or are caring for someone with cancer

You can contribute time to interact with the mentor

You are comfortable using the internet (as the mentorship is mostly an online platform)

You agree to respect the time and space boundaries of the mentor

**Selection Process:**

In order to make sure that the mentors and mentees are correctly matched with parameters like age, gender, cancer type, location and similarity of attitudes and beliefs, we have a selection process in place that applicants (for both mentor and mentee positions) need to go through.

The process is as follows:

1. You fill in an application form where we would inquire for certain basic things we need to know to give you a good match
2. We talk to you either on the phone or face-to-face and then inform you about selection
3. We provide guidelines for the relationship and you sign certain terms which help us protect the interests of both mentors and mentees.
4. You get enrolled into the program!

Who are we looking for?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| We are looking for mentors who are: | We are looking for mentees who are: |
| * Kind and empathic * Have some basic information about cancer * Have a willingness to help * Can give time to the program * Willing to learn skills for mentoring * Can use the internet with ease * Have basic communication skills, and * Believe in the mentorship program | * In need of social and emotional support and guidance * Understand the limits of the mentorship program * Can use the internet with ease * Are respectful of boundaries with the mentor * Have basic communication skills, and * Believe in the mentorship program |

Now that you know about the details and benefits of this program, write to us at [uncancerindia@gmail.com](mailto:uncancerindia@gmail.com) with the subject ‘mentorship program’ to enroll today!

If you have any queries about the program that you would like to address before you enroll, write to us at [uncancerindia@gmail.com](mailto:uncancerindia@gmail.com) with the subject as ‘query regarding mentorship program’.

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