

## **Tips for Support Group Leaders**

### **Promotion Tips**

- Provide local newspaper(s) and radio station(s) with support group meeting information to include on their community calendar of events
- Information is typically submitted on the website for the newspaper or radio station
- Newspapers will have the calendar listing in print and online
- Radio stations will post the calendar on their website
- Request that the newspaper run a small ad to promote the support group meeting at no charge; or at a reduced rate for nonprofits and use the support group funds to cover the cost
- Distribute a press release with prostate cancer statistics and support group meeting information during September (Prostate cancer awareness month) or June (Men's Health Awareness Month)
- Pursue interviews in newspapers and on radio
- See the Us TOO media kit at <https://www.ustoo.org/Us-TOO-Media-Kit> and let us know if we can help you craft a press release

### *Distribute materials at local events*

- Men's health fairs
- Women's health fairs (prostate cancer affects women, too; and they're often the gatekeeper for family wellness/healthcare)
- Lunch rooms of large local employers, factories, or corporate offices

### *Identify/leverage existing programs at local partners*

- University's school of public health
- Local health department
- Community and/or public health clinic
- State comprehensive cancer control programs

### *Use "borrowed interest" to get noticed*

- Approach local celebrity or prominent business leader diagnosed with prostate cancer to help increase local education and awareness
- Distribute flyers/brochures in the offices of local urologists and gynecologists
- Enlist support group attendees or their kids/grandkids to promote meetings on social media (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn)

### *Promote special meeting formats to attract new energy periodically*

- Bring your adult son/daughter
- Bring your wife/partner/significant other
- Bring your nurse/doctor
- Have local chef prepare a prostate-healthy meal at the meeting; announce it for anyone to attend
- Host a prostate-healthy dinner for couples during February for Valentine's Day

### **Meeting Facility Criteria**

- Location central to most attendees
- Easy access from major roadways
- Free parking (or minimal charge)
- Ample space in room with a door for private conversations
- Community center
- Town hall
- Public library
- Junior college, college, university
- Church, synagogue, mosque
- Hospital meeting room

### **Tips to Keep Attendees Coming Back**

- Have all attendees sign in to each meeting and ask permission from new attendees to include their email address and phone number, if they're interested in getting updates
- Establish a group email distribution list to keep everyone updated on the schedule for upcoming meetings
- Two days prior to each meeting, call each person to remind them to attend
- Have drinks and food at every meeting (see tips below for getting these donated)
- After a new person's first visit, follow-up the next day with a phone call to thank/welcome them, get feedback and address any questions or concerns
- Get feedback from all attendees and incorporate into future meetings
- Enlist assistance from attendees to help expand/improve the meetings
- Poll the group to determine the level of interest in having periodic meetings to include spouses/partners of attendees; option is to start the meeting with a general discussion followed by separate/private meeting for the men and another for the women

### **Food and Drinks**

- Approach local restaurants, coffee shops, bakeries and grocery stores to be an in-kind sponsor of your meetings by providing free food and drinks for all attendees at each meeting
- If there are several in-kind sponsors, it will only be necessary for the business to provide the items a few times each year rather than every month
- Encourage meeting attendees to frequent the businesses providing in-kind sponsorship to thank them and let them know that they are a preferred business destination in appreciation of the food/drink being provided to the group
- Another option is to secure the food/drink at a deep discount and use support group funds to cover the cost