

Self-Management Programme for Cancer Survivors: Cancer Thriving and Surviving



TYPE
STATUS

Implementation is ongoing

LAST
UPDATE

March 2021

IRELAND • NATION-WIDE
Survivorship

PROBLEM & OBJECTIVE

PROBLEM Cancer patients commonly feel unsupported when transitioning from active treatment to the survivorship period where they try to adjust to living with and beyond cancer.

OBJECTIVE The Cancer Thriving and Surviving (CTS) programme aims to respond to Ireland's National Cancer Strategy (2017-2026) to help and empower patients as they finish treatment and move into the survivorship period.

CONTACT

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<https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/5/cancer/profinfo/survivorship-programme/cts.html>

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KEY COMPONENTS / STEPS

- The programme includes sessions that address the recovery of self-confidence, adjustment to a changed self, and confidence to self-manage cancer-related problems and to promote recovery of well-being and successful transition to survivorship, following a cancer diagnosis.
- People are taught problem-solving skills to enable them to find their own solutions to issues with the help of family, friends and health professionals.
- The CTS programme is available to all cancer patients regardless of where they live.
- CTS employs a 'train-the-trainer' model to develop a national network of trainers to deliver the programme.
- A NCCP co-ordinator ensures quality assurance and support for leaders/trainers delivering the programme.
- Monitoring and evaluation are built into the programme from the start.
- Committed leadership facilitated the rapid learning and adaptation to an online format in response to the COVID-19 crisis.

KEY CONTEXTUAL FACTORS

- CTS is the first survivorship programme to be implemented nationally as a response to Ireland's National Cancer Strategy 2017-2026.
- Over the first three years, the National Cancer Control Programme (NCCP) has supported the delivery and rollout of the CTS Programme across Ireland.

MAIN IMPACTS / ADDED VALUE

- An August 2020 evaluation of CTS noted the following milestones achieved over first 3 years:
 - 111 programme leaders including 19 Master Trainers had been successfully trained
 - The programme had been delivered in 20 centres nationwide
 - Almost 600 cancer survivors had participated in the workshops
- Feedback from participants has been overwhelmingly positive. Participants noted that making an Action Plan was the most valuable aspect of the programme
- Patients who have completed the CTS programme have reported feeling:
 - More empowered
 - Better able to make informed decisions
 - Better able to cope with treatment and treatment-related side effects
 - Better able to navigate the cancer system.

LESSONS LEARNED

- Increasing the number of Master trainers in Ireland at the commencement of implementation allowed us to greatly increase the number of leaders trained. This train-the-trainer model meant we quickly had a national network of trainers ready to deliver the programme.
- Having a co-ordinator who is a leader and Master trainer allowed us to increase capacity to deliver the programme and scale nationally.
- The programme uses peer leaders and this is an essential part of the programme's success.
- Building a network of sites to deliver the programme including hospitals, community cancer support centres and voluntary organisations meant we could move quickly and there was cross support between experienced and novice leaders.
- Communication of implementation in positive terms created a demand from many sites to be a part of the delivery of the programme.

REFERENCES & DOCUMENTATION

- [Evaluation Report](#)
- [Poster](#)
- [Information leaflet](#)

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