

Rare and less common cancer charities and COVID-19: summary of Cancer52 response to date

As at 23rd April 2020

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic is being felt across the breadth of our health system and beyond. We know that this is a deeply challenging time for our charity members, people with rare and less common cancers and everyone who cares for them.

It's a rapidly evolving situation so our intention is to keep our information updated, including how Cancer52 is working to provide support and signposts to key guidance as it's issued.

In essence Cancer52 is

- supporting our members to share information and experiences between us and with NHSE and other stakeholders;
- collating our members' feedback and experience of the impact on both their charities and the patients they work with; and
- sharing this feedback and experience with government and other key stakeholders.

All member communications

- Since mid-March we have sent out increasing quantities of information and updates via our member e bulletin list.
- Since the end of March our CEO has held weekly virtual meetings with members to update them about our COVID-19 activities, asks and next steps and to take on board their concerns.
- Over 100 people from our member charities have joined these calls to update them about our COVID-19 activities, asks and next steps and to take on board their concerns.
- If you would like to join our all member email list for e bulletins and alerts about meetings please [email us](#).

Survey and briefing

- At the beginning of April and prior to any government commitment to supporting charities we wanted to provide evidence to demonstrate the impact of COVID-19 on patient support cancer charities working with people with rare and less common cancers.
- At the beginning of April we circulated a survey to our near 100 members to collect this information. The results were used to develop a briefing. It outlines the significant challenges our member charities are facing. It has been circulated to members and key stakeholders since 14th April.

Funding

- Since the end of March Cancer52 has reached out to industry and trusts to identify funding opportunities for both Cancer52 itself and its members. We've done a brief summary of opportunities that may be helpful for members.
- We are pleased to report that much of industry has responded positively and speedily and with good intent.
- On 8 April, the Chancellor announced a £750 million support package for frontline charities. Since the announcement, we have been seeking clarity on how this support package will work and making the case for the inclusion of our member charities.

Advertising member volunteer opportunities for furloughed staff

- Some cancer charities are having to furlough skilled and experienced staff. They cannot work for their own charity, but it is possible that they would like to volunteer for Cancer52 charities.
- To help with this, and with thanks to the AMRC for allowing us to review and use their paperwork on this topic, we are now advertising member charity volunteer opportunities in our mailing bulletins.
- If you have any questions about this, please contact info@cancer52.org.uk

Twitter & Facebook

- We also use [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) when we can to promote and share new and important information.

Any thoughts or concerns?

- This is a difficult time and we want to make sure we are supporting our members as best we can. If you have any suggestions on this, please do let us know either by email or by joining one of our weekly teleconference calls. Check the e bulletins for details.

Our other work

- We now have a strand of work called 'match fit' – which basically means it's not directly COVID related but that it is really important and will need to get back into full swing once this (whatever 'this' now is) is over.
- And we very importantly on 5th April made available [our great new policy report](#) on where we were a year on from the NHS Long Term Plan for rare and less common cancers. We have this as a great 'marker in the sand' for when our match fit work starts again. Read it on [our website](#).