Encouraging advocacy for breast cancer

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Campaigning for Cancer
South Africa
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• Breast cancer survivor
• Fought medical funder for access to treatment
• Discovered lack of focus on advocacy for breast cancer
• Founded breast cancer advocacy organisation – PinkLink
• Designed model based on international advocacy organisations
Advocacy in the developed world

- Advocacy acts as a catalyst to drive health system changes
- Advocacy is accepted as an integrated part of the treatment of cancer
- Buy and participation from all stakeholders
- Perception of NGO’s as professional, credible organisations
- Advocacy removes fear and ignorance
- Accepted that advocacy positively empowers patients
- Empowering patients affects their outcome
Advocacy in South Africa

- South Africa has a history of political activism
- Consumer driven advocacy is in its infancy in South Africa
- Role & power of advocacy is not clearly understood
- Stakeholders are not aware of their roles & responsibilities
South Africa: The Current Reality of Advocacy

MEDICAL FRATERNITY

PHARMA

FUNDERS
PRIVATE
PUBLIC

PATIENT

### Diagram Description

- **FUNDERS**: Includes private and public sectors.
- **PRIVATE**: Refers to private funding sources.
- **PUBLIC**: Refers to public funding sources.
- **PHARMA**: Represents pharmaceutical companies.
- **MEDICAL FRATERNITY**: Represents the medical fraternity.
- **PATIENT**: Central to the diagram, indicating the patient is at the core of advocacy efforts.

The diagram illustrates the interconnectedness of different sectors in advocating for patient needs.
Understanding the issues

• Cancer is not on the government's agenda
• No national cancer plan implemented
• No national cancer registry
• Provincial inequity of access to treatment
• Overriding prescribing doctors orders
• Overcoming cultural stigma
• Lack of access to primary healthcare facilities
Challenges facing Patients

• A lack of understanding on entitlement to rights
• Ignorance of stakeholders
• Difficulty to comprehend information
• Accessibility of information
• Escalation processes are cumbersome and ineffective
• Treatment decisions are based on cost rather than efficiency
• Lead times from diagnosis to treatment
Addressing the issues

- Using reference cases to highlight issues
- Facilitate discussions amongst all stakeholders
- Engage government and funders positively
- Provide scientific evidence to justify improved access to treatment
- Collaborate with other NGOs to form more powerful voice
- Develop responsible, credible breast cancer advocates
- Improve relationships with media and their knowledge
- Propose sustainable solutions
What are we doing?

- Stakeholder forums
- Pro bono partnership with top legal firm
- Facilitating collaboration
- Lobbying for national cancer control plan
- Medical advisory board of experts
- Escalation tools & guidance for patients
- Collaborative advocacy & support call centre with PLWC
- Building international relationships
Contact us

www.cancerhelp.co.za

www.pinklink.org.za