

Community Outreach Tips

11 tips for Preparing and Planning:

1. Start planning at least 2 months before the event.
2. Form a planning committee. You may need several meetings to plan and prepare for your event. Keep meeting minutes. They will help you when you write up your summary after the event and will also help you plan for future events.
3. Decide on the focus of your event. This may be based on your CoC or NAPBC committees, your high volume cancers or a new cancer service at your facility. Choose the date/time, which may coincide with a specific cancer awareness date and the location of your event. An event can be set up at your facility or you may be part of a larger event with other organizations at an outside venue.
4. Decide on who will help with your event, both to get prepared and at the actual event. Depending on the focus, specific or general cancer prevention/awareness, you can bring together your program's experts for the event. Consider having a variety of cancer care professionals participate including oncology nurse navigators, oncology nurses, oncology advanced practice professionals, cancer genetic counselors, dietitians, breast imaging/radiology techs and endoscopy staff. Ask relevant managers if they have nurses/staff who could offer their time, possibly to fulfill a professional goal.
5. Create 3-5 main learning objectives based on the focus of your event. This will help you narrow down the educational materials and activities.
6. Determine what methods would be best to share information in the place your event will be held. Plan to use a variety of methods to attract and educate participants of all learning styles. Engagement methods include:
 - a. Graphic displays such as posters and models. Posters can be helpful in giving your participants something to look at if you are busy or just an additional way to learn new things. Models and visual/tactile aids, such as models of foods to eat/not eat, a breast self-exam model, shot glass full of sunscreen, etc., can be very helpful as most people learn best this way. You can find a lot of great aids at a teacher's supply store as well as online shopping sites like Amazon.
 - b. Interactive methods such as games and scavenger hunts.
 - c. Healthcare professionals sharing their knowledge, in the form of a panel, speaking about a certain cancer prevention/screening or presenting case studies and having a Q and A session.
7. Decide what educational materials you would like to provide. There are several organizations that offer [free materials](#) to order or print. You can also create a document for your tables with one or more QR codes, linking them to education/resources, if you are short on space or run out of educational materials.
8. Do you need to capture metrics on learning outcomes? This can help show the effectiveness of your event and can be as simple as asking two questions: what did you learn that you didn't know and how are you going to use what you learned? You can ask these verbally or have a short quiz or survey prepared. If you do the latter, consider having some pre-written common or expected answers in a checklist form to make it quicker. The shorter it is, the more likely

people will be to participate. Make sure to have the option for participants to add in answers. For verbal questions, you can just ask questions or ask by using a fillable pocket learning cube, picking a question out of a bowl or testing knowledge in a game like fashion.

9. Entice participants with prizes and giveaways, depending on your facility policies. This can also include bonus or rewards points for staff.
10. Once the details of your event are finalized, decide on what you will need such as how many tables/chairs and supplies. Create a timeline and assign duties. Follow up on these at your planning committee meetings.
11. Contact your marketing team. They can help spread the word about your event through flyers, emails and social media posts. They can also arrange for photos to be taken on the day of the event. Post flyers for your event on hospital bulletin boards, at information desks, by the cafeteria, etc.

At the Event:

- Give yourself time to set up and tear down.
- Record the amount of people who attended. This can be done by giving everyone a sticker, intro/welcome handout or map of the tables (if you have several tables) and counting how many of these you gave out. If you want to know how many of each type of visitor came by (patient, staff...) you could give each a different colored sticker.
- Find teachable moments whenever you can. Listen to what people say. Address something specific to them, like cancer in younger adults, higher incidences of many cancers in African Americans, etc. Some people are anxious to learn while others need a little friendly encouragement.
- Document commonly asked questions, comments and positive feedback. You can write these down or use a short verbal or written quiz or survey as listed in the previous section. Test the participants existing knowledge and knowledge after you educate them. Verbal questioning, offers a chance to have an immediate discussion, but is also harder to track, in which the reverse is true for written questions.
- For participants with barriers, give resources for assistance to get screening exams and information in foreign languages. Refer them to a nurse line or physician referral line for more information or assistance if needed.
- Don't forget to photograph the event and have your marketing team post it on their social media sites.
- Write up a summary of your event while it is fresh in your mind. Report this to your accreditation committees. In your report include the top 3-5 things participants learned, what you did that resulted in successful outcomes and lessons your committee learned from the event that can help you in planning in the future. Don't forget to add the planning and participating in the event to your self-evaluation/goals for the year.