DONCASTER KHIDMAH

Terms of Reference

Cancer Support Group WhatsApp Community

1. Purpose of the Group

The purpose of this WhatsApp group is to provide a safe, supportive, respectful, and inclusive space for individuals affected by cancer. This includes people living with cancer, cancer survivors, carers, family members, and others seeking mutual support.

The group aims to:

- Provide peer support and encouragement.
- Share experiences, coping strategies, and practical information.
- Promote wellbeing and reduce feelings of isolation.
- Signpost members to relevant services, charities, and support resources.
- Foster a community based on respect, compassion, and understanding.

This group is not intended to replace professional medical, clinical, psychological, or emergency support services.

2. Membership

Membership is open to individuals who:

- Have been affected by cancer directly or indirectly.
- Agree to abide by these Terms of Reference.
- Demonstrate respectful and supportive behaviour towards other members.

Group administrators reserve the right to approve, decline, or remove membership where appropriate.

3. Expected Standards of Conduct

All members agree to:

Respect Others
- Treat all members with dignity, kindness, and respect.
- Value differing experiences, beliefs, and opinions.
- Avoid judgemental, discriminatory, or offensive language.

Maintain a Supportive Environment
- Offer support without pressure or criticism.
- Avoid arguments, personal attacks, or hostile behaviour.
- Recognise that each person's cancer journey is unique.

Be Mindful When Posting
- Consider how messages may affect others.
- Avoid excessive messaging, spam, or repeated forwarding of content.
- Use appropriate language and maintain sensitivity when discussing difficult topics.

4. Confidentiality and Privacy

The WhatsApp group is based on trust. Members must:

- Respect the privacy of all participants.
- Not share screenshots, messages, photographs, personal stories, or member information outside the group without explicit consent.
- Not use information gained through the group for personal, commercial, or professional advantage.

While all members are expected to maintain confidentiality, absolute confidentiality cannot be guaranteed through digital platforms. Members participate at their own discretion.

5. Medical Information and Advice

Members may share personal experiences and information. However:

- Information shared within the group must not be considered professional medical advice.
- Members should consult qualified healthcare professionals regarding diagnosis, treatment, medication, or healthcare decisions.
- Members must not present personal opinions as medical fact.
- Administrators may remove content they believe could be harmful or misleading.

6. Safeguarding and Welfare

If a member raises concerns indicating a risk of serious harm to themselves or others, administrators may take appropriate action to seek assistance or signpost relevant support services.

The group is not monitored continuously and should not be used for emergencies.

In an emergency, members should contact:

- NHS 111
- Emergency services (999)
- Their healthcare team
- Appropriate crisis support services

7. Prohibited Content

The following are not permitted:

- Harassment, bullying, intimidation, or abusive behaviour.
- Hate speech or discrimination based on race, religion, disability, gender, sexuality, age, or other protected characteristics.
- Misinformation regarding cancer treatments or health matters.
- Commercial advertising, sales promotion, or fundraising without prior administrator approval.
- Political campaigning or content likely to cause division within the group.
- Content that is unlawful, offensive, or inappropriate.

8. Role of Administrators

Administrators will:

- Seek to maintain a positive and supportive environment.
- Monitor compliance with these Terms of Reference.
- Address concerns or complaints fairly and sensitively.
- Remove inappropriate content where necessary.
- Take action where group rules are repeatedly breached.

Administrator decisions are intended to protect the wellbeing and safety of all members.

9. Removal from the Group

Members may be removed if they:

- Breach these Terms of Reference.
- Engage in behaviour that harms the safety or wellbeing of others.
- Share confidential information without permission.
- Repeatedly disrupt the purpose of the group.

Where appropriate, warnings may be issued before removal, although administrators reserve the right to remove members immediately where serious concerns arise.

10. Acceptance of Terms

By joining and participating in this WhatsApp group, members confirm that they:

- Have read and understood these Terms of Reference.
- Agree to abide by the standards outlined in this document.
- Understand that the group is a peer-support forum and not a substitute for professional medical or mental health support.
- Accept responsibility for maintaining confidentiality and respectful conduct.

Member Declaration

Before joining the group, you must read and understood the Terms of Reference for the Cancer Support Group WhatsApp Community and agree to abide by them.

This document should be reviewed annually or whenever significant changes to the operation of the group are required.