



National Cancer Survivor Month Awareness Toolkit

June 2024

NATIONAL CANCER SURVIVORS MONTH

June is National Cancer Survivors Month. This month honors all those who have been personally affected by a cancer diagnosis. In observance, the Survivorship Working Group of the Georgia Comprehensive Cancer Control Program and the Georgia Center for Oncology Research and Education (Georgia CORE) are leading an awareness campaign to highlight the unique needs of cancer survivors during and after treatment.

We are inviting partners to join us in amplifying our message and providing practical tools to support survivors on their self-care journey. Let's unite to empower survivors, caregivers, healthcare professionals, policymakers, and the wider community in understanding the unmet needs of cancer survivors.

This year, our campaign theme revolves around the crucial concept of self-care for survivors. We believe that prioritizing self-care is essential for survivors to increase their wellbeing post-treatment, and we're dedicated to spreading awareness about its importance.

Through informative messaging, visuals, and evidence-based information, we aim to inspire individuals to embrace self-care practices that nurture their physical, emotional, and mental well-being. Join us in championing self-care as a cornerstone of survivorship and empowering survivors to prioritize their health and happiness.

DATA AND STATISTICS

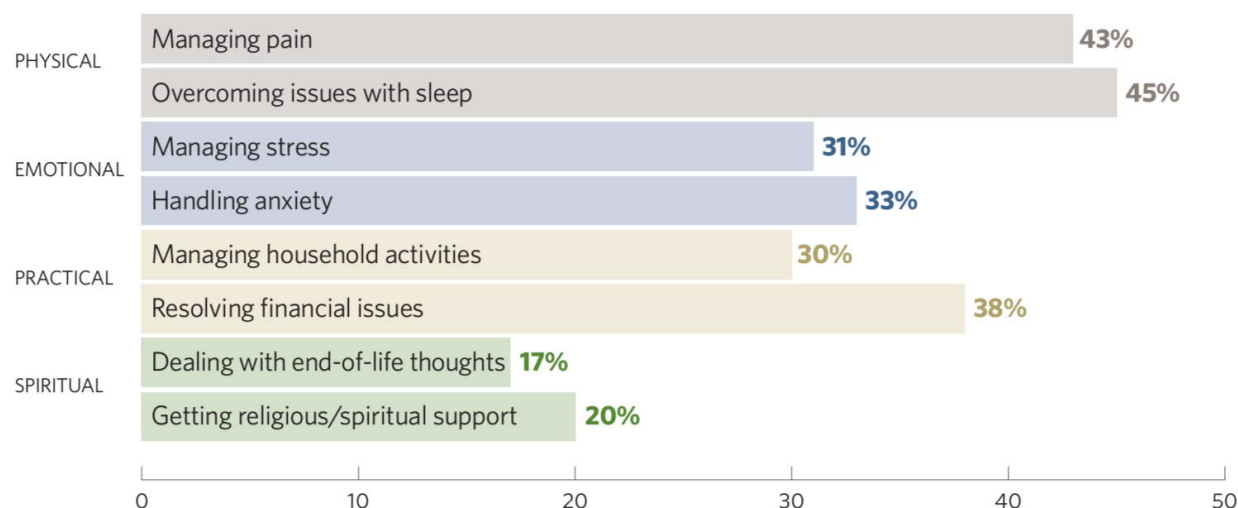
When speaking about cancer survivors, it's important to know the group of individuals that are being referred to. "An individual is considered a cancer survivor from the time of diagnosis, through the balance of his or her life. Family members, friends, and caregivers are also impacted by the survivorship experience and are therefore included in this definition" (National Institutes of Health).

Georgia is home to 485,770 cancer survivors (Cancer Treatment & Survivorship Facts & Figures 2022-2024) who know that survivorship is not linear. From treatment to surveillance, survivors face a variety of challenges upon adjusting to their "new normal" including:

- **Physical:** A lasting toll from chemotherapy, chronic pain, and radiation and other treatments
- **Emotional:** Depression and a powerful fear of cancer returning
- **Practical:** Mounting debt and difficulty resuming work and responsibilities
- **Spiritual:** Loss of faith or hope, even end-of-life thoughts

A survey of more than 800 Georgia-based cancer survivors revealed a wide range of physical, emotional, spiritual, and practical needs. Of the 800 surveyed, we saw significant needs amongst a high percentage of survivors.

Percentage of Georgia cancer survivors who say they need help with:



SOURCE: Georgia CORE and Georgia Cancer Control Consortium, 2015-2018

These needs are real, and they require our attention. This June and beyond, let's place increased focus on addressing these needs through communication and programming efforts aimed at providing support to those who need it most.

COMMUNICATING WITH SURVIVORS

Empathy and Active Listening: Listen actively, validate feelings, and allow survivors to express themselves without interruption. Build trust by demonstrating genuine empathy and compassion. Avoid rushing through conversations and allow survivors ample time to express themselves without interruption. By showing genuine empathy and listening attentively, healthcare providers can build trust and strengthen the therapeutic relationship.

Clear and Transparent Communication: Use plain language to explain medical information and treatment options. Encourage questions and address concerns to empower survivors in decision-making. Transparency fosters trust and empowers survivors to make informed decisions about their care.

Holistic Support and Collaboration: Take a comprehensive approach to survivorship care by addressing physical, emotional, spiritual, and practical needs. Collaborate with

multidisciplinary teams to provide personalized support and resources for survivors' well-being. Acknowledge that survivors may have physical, emotional, practical, or spiritual needs that need addressing during their survivorship journey. Encourage survivors to actively share their needs no matter how small or large. By working collaboratively and addressing all aspects of survivorship, healthcare providers can enhance the overall well-being and quality of life of cancer survivors (Schapira, 2003).



Communicating with Diverse Survivors

Providers can tailor communication to survivors of color, survivors from varying ethnicities, survivors of various educational levels etc. by being culturally sensitive, addressing health disparities, building trust, considering language and literacy levels, engaging with communities, and promoting diversity within healthcare settings. This involves respecting cultural beliefs, acknowledging historical mistrust, providing information in multiple languages, collaborating with community resources, and ensuring representation among healthcare teams (Surbone, 2006). These efforts can improve patient-provider relationships and enhance the quality of care for all survivors.

POTENTIAL SURVIVORSHIP MONTH PROGRAMMING IDEAS

Non-profits, advocacy organizations and healthcare organizations can offer a variety of events during Survivorship Month to raise awareness about cancer survivorship and the importance of self-care.

Ideas include but are not limited to:



Online Resource Database: If you have an online resources database, make our survivorship materials available to the survivors that you impact. We [have electronic brochures](#) available that have a wealth of information on the spiritual, practical, physical, and emotional aspects of cancer survivorship. If you would like to connect your survivors to our resource database, share [this link](#) with them.

Survivorship Workshops: Host workshops focusing on survivorship topics such as nutrition, exercise, managing finances after a diagnosis, continuing to work through a diagnosis, stress management, and coping strategies. Invite healthcare professionals, survivors, and experts to share insights and practical tips.



Wellness Fairs: Organize wellness fairs or health expos featuring booths, demonstrations, and interactive activities related to self-care for cancer survivors. Offer screenings, consultations, and resources for survivors to explore.

Educational Webinars: Conduct webinars or online seminars covering various aspects of survivorship care, including physical health, mental well-being, survivorship care planning, and long-term effects of cancer treatment. Make recordings available for on-demand viewing.



Support Group Meetings: Facilitate support group meetings for cancer survivors to connect, share experiences, and receive mutual support. Offer themed discussions or guest speakers on topics relevant to survivorship and self-care. Consider having more niche support groups as opposed to more general support groups so that survivors can create a better connection with the group. For example: In addition to the most seen cancer at your organization, host an Adolescents and Young Adults (AYAs) support group or a men's only support group as the needs of specific groups often differ from each other. [See support groups](#) available for survivors.

Art Therapy Sessions: Organize art therapy sessions or creative workshops where survivors can express themselves through art, writing, music, or other creative mediums. Art therapy can provide emotional healing and serve as a form of self-care.



Mind-Body Wellness Classes: Offer in-person or online mind-body wellness classes such as yoga, meditation, tai chi, or mindfulness workshops tailored specifically for cancer survivors. Consider partnering with an oncology-trained massage practice and host a class that includes gentle chair massages. These practices can promote relaxation, stress reduction, and overall well-being.

Nature Walks or Retreat: Arrange outdoor activities such as nature walks, hikes, or retreats for survivors to reconnect with nature, de-stress, and rejuvenate.

Healthy Cooking Classes: Host in-person or online cooking classes or demonstrations focusing on healthy and nutritious meals for cancer survivors. Provide tips for meal planning, recipe modifications, and incorporating cancer-fighting foods into daily diets.

By offering these events and activities during Survivorship Month, healthcare organizations can engage survivors, caregivers, and the community in meaningful conversations about survivorship, self-care, and life during and after a cancer diagnosis.



"I didn't want to die. However, I later shifted from 'trying not to die' to 'trying to live.' Cancer has taught me that life is short, and I need to be patient and live day by day." — Marquita Bass

POTENTIAL GEORGIA BASED-PARTNERS:

We have many potential partners in the Survivorship Working Group that may be a great match for your programming efforts. See potential partner organizations on the [Georgia CORE Resources Listing](#).

GET INVOLVED:

1. **Become a partner** by spreading the word about cancer survivorship. Keep reading to grab our social media messages and ready-made social posts.
2. **Don't have time to post content?** Simply like, comment, retweet or repost our content across [Twitter/X](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [Facebook](#).
3. **Organize an event** to honor the survivors in your community. Add your official event to [GeorgiaCancerInfo.org/Events](#).
4. **Share survivor stories** from within your community. See our [Survivors' Voices](#) for inspirational stories from survivors near and far.
5. **Share [these survivorship materials](#)** with those who need it most.
6. **Ensure survivors are aware** of various resources available to them. We have a [robust resource directory](#) with over 400 resources listed with more being added regularly.
7. **Want to stay engaged** after this campaign? Connect with Katreena Davis, Senior Program Manager at Georgia CORE and Survivorship Working Group Co-Chair at kdavis@georgiacore.org to start the discussion.



AWARENESS MONTH MESSAGING AND SOCIAL MEDIA ASSETS

Campaign Tag Line: "We see you. We hear you. We support you."

Campaign Hashtag: #SupportGACancerSurvivors

Download social media images from the [online media folder](#). Share as often as you like!

Social Media Captions

Facebook/LinkedIn/Instagram: June is Cancer Survivorship Month, a time to honor the strength and resilience of those who have faced cancer. Join us as we celebrate survivors, raise awareness, and support all survivors on their wellness journey.

#SupportGACancerSurvivors #CancerSurvivorshipMonth #SpreadHope

Facebook/LinkedIn/Instagram: To all the incredible survivors out there: We see you. We hear you. We support you. Your strength and resilience inspire us every day. Let's unite to raise awareness, spread hope, and champion the journey of survivors everywhere.

#SupportGACancerSurvivors #CancerSurvivorshipMonth #SpreadHope

Facebook/LinkedIn/Instagram: Survivorship is about more than just surviving – it's about thriving! This June, let's empower Georgia's cancer survivors to live their best lives by prioritizing self-care, staying connected, and embracing every moment with gratitude.

Together, we can make every day a celebration of life! #SupportGACancerSurvivors

#CancerSurvivorshipMonth #SpreadHope

Facebook/LinkedIn/Instagram: There are 485,770 cancer survivors living in Georgia and not all their needs are the same. This Cancer Survivorship Month, let's take the time to see them, hear them and support them in their journeys.

#SupportGACancerSurvivors

#SurvivorshipAwareness #CancerSurvivorshipMonth #SpreadHope

Facebook/LinkedIn/Instagram: Cancer survivorship doesn't end after treatment.

Because life after brings all kinds of challenges. Learn more at

GeorgiaCancerInfo.org/Survivorship #SupportGACancerSurvivors

#CancerSurvivorshipMonth #SpreadHope

Learn more about cancer survivorship by visiting GeorgiaCancerInfo.org/Survivorship.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

RESOURCE	DESCRIPTION
Georgia CORE's Survivorship Resource Center	A robust online resource that includes survivor stories as well as resources for survivors, caregivers and healthcare professionals.
Survivorship E-Brochures	Electronic brochures contain actionable content to address the physical, practical, emotional, and spiritual needs of survivors.
Compassion and Connection Meditation Series	A playlist of six meditation videos from Georgia CORE (filter videos for "Compassion and Connection Meditation Series".
Assessment of distress, unmet needs, and receipt of care plans among cancer survivors in Georgia	A convenience sample of Georgia cancer survivors was conducted to learn more about distress associated with unmet physical, emotional, spiritual, and practical needs, and receipt of assistance in those areas. This report details those findings.
National Coalition for Cancer Survivorship State of Survivorship 2023 Study	The National Coalition for Cancer Survivorship (NCCS) conducts an annual State of Survivorship Survey. This study captures a range of perspectives to better understand how NCCS can support its mission to advocate for quality cancer care for everyone touched by cancer.
Living Beyond Breast Cancer's BeACTIVE video series	An online exercise program created by the Living Beyond Breast Cancer community for survivors who are thriving—and exercising. While anyone can benefit from the exercises in the BeACTIVE series, it was created for people who have been impacted by breast cancer including those who may be going through or recovering from treatment, preparing for surgeries, regaining mobility after surgery, are years beyond their diagnosis or living with metastatic breast cancer.
Findhelp	An online resource database that allows anyone to find free or reduced-cost resources like food, housing, financial assistance, health care, and more.

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