

HOW TO START A NEW Us TOO CHAPTER

by Charles (Chuck) Maack – Prostate Cancer Advocate

- + Contact the National Headquarters of Us TOO Intl., Inc. at www.ustoo.org for initial sponsorship, support, and start out materials (flyers, pamphlets, posters, etc. – they are free!).
- + Determine an Urologist or Oncologist in the area thought of highly by many, and seek his or her sponsorship to assist in contacting necessary people and organizations that will provide a meeting place for both a Coordinating Committee and for General Meetings.
- + With the help of that physician sponsor, locate other prostate cancer survivors in the area willing to work with you to get a chapter formed (a great candidate would be an active or retired physician prostate cancer survivor). This could be your beginning Coordinating Committee. Your initial planning should start here, then with the help of this nucleus of men (and women!) you can all set out to accomplish the subsequent “get started” tasks.
- + Contact the local Medical Center to determine if that center has an auditorium or large meeting room at which you could hold General Meetings in the evening once a month, and would provide the use of that room at no cost. Even a smaller meeting room could suffice until the participation increases. Other site considerations could be a church, organization, or business with a sufficient size meeting room
- + With the help of the physician sponsor, find a Urology or Oncology office with its own conference room at which you could hold your Coordinating Committee meetings and that would be provided one day/evening for an hour each month at no cost.
- + With the help of the physician sponsor, determine if there is a community service organization (health/medical for example) that would provide the printing and free mailing of a monthly flyer each month to notify men of the date, time, place, topic, and presenter of the coming month General Meeting. Often the best place to look for printing and mailing assistance is the local Medical Center, or if more than one are in the area and the first cannot assist, go to the next. To get names and addresses to initially invite, start with other prostate cancer survivors – names and addresses that urology and oncology offices will likely provide once they know why these names and addresses are needed. If they cite privacy restrictions in providing this information, ask if they will mail a flyer provided by you to all their patients with prostate related problems. In your flyer being provided them, describe the aims of your Chapter as an important support element to help that patient deal with this health problem, and be sure to include contact information.
- + Once the foregoing are accomplished, make a list of topics that should be presented over the next several months (and a good start would be one your sponsoring physician could present, honoring his sponsorship), then either personally contact or

write/email the physicians in the community (usually urologists, oncologists, radiologists, nutritionists, psychologists, etc. whose expertise would be more in keeping with prostate cancer) you think could make a good presentation for the topics you have decided on, requesting if they would volunteer their expertise in making the presentation of that subject at your monthly General Meeting on (date, time, place). Follow-up your letter or email until the physician/professional confirms he/she will make the presentation.

- + Once your Chapter has been established, contact National Us TOO again to provide details about your Chapter to be included on their website under Support Group Chapters.
- + Consider if there is a website hosting organization in the area that would provide and host a website at no cost for your Chapter as a community service. If they will, contact National Us TOO to provide the Us TOO Chapter website template that can be used by your host to provide your Chapter website. Also check with the local Medical Center to determine if they would provide a webpage link on their website regarding your Chapter.
- + Contact the local daily newspaper to find if your meetings can be included each month as a community service in their health section or Support Groups section under the health subject "Prostate Cancer." Then provide your Chapter name, meeting location, date (2nd Monday of every month, for example), time, and a contact telephone number. If they have a Community Events section or page that is run each month on a date that would always be before your General Meeting date, regularly provide these same details plus the topic and presenter of the coming meeting.
- + Check with television and radio stations who broadcast in your area to determine if they have a health coordinator who would include mention of the existence of your Chapter in future health reports.
- + Check if there is a local medical outreach program. If so, determine if they can assist in getting the word out about the existence of your Chapter.
- + If the American Cancer Society has an office in your area, arrange to work with them in areas regarding prostate cancer. Work with the Society, participating with them at Health Fairs where you can display and provide prostate cancer material and handouts alongside their material.
- + Take several copies of the Us TOO flyers received from National, onto which you have added details about your chapter, to every Urology and Oncology office in the area requesting they provide a flyer to every patient determined to have prostate cancer or other prostate related problems.
- + The Coordinating Committee should meet sometime each month shortly before the coming General Meeting to discuss ideas, subjects each member has possibly

researched, various prostate cancer therapies, other men/women they might want to ask to join the committee, and future General Meeting topics and possible presenters. It is suggested that a specific day and time be determined (the Wednesday before the coming week General meeting, and from noon to 1:00 P.M., for example) so that the office providing the meeting room can schedule this day and time every month on their annual calendar scheduling.

- + In order to qualify as a non-profit charitable organization eligible for tax exempt status in accordance with the requirements of the Internal Revenue Service and your own home State, and in order to accept monies as tax exempt donations for your chapter's operation it is necessary to file with your Secretary of State "Articles of Incorporation" to satisfy not only your State but also the Internal Revenue Service as to your tax exempt status. A check with local attorneys will likely find one willing to assist in the preparation of the Articles of Incorporation as a community service. A call to your Secretary of State can determine where the Articles of Incorporation are to be mailed and the fee for registering as a non-profit corporation. The fee for non-profit corporations is usually minimal. A call to the Internal Revenue Service will also be in order to have mailed to you the appropriate forms to file to the Internal Revenue Service for an Employer Identification Number (EIN). The attorney assisting you with preparation of Articles of Incorporation could also assist you with this requirement. This registration is also necessary to qualify your Chapter for tax exempt status. Accessing the Internet to the "Internal Revenue Service" can lead to being able to further access to read and print out the Internal Revenue Code Sections that explain the rules that define tax exemption status. Specific Code Sections that apply at the time of this writing include 501(c)(3), 509(a)(1), 170(b)(1) and 170(c)(2).
- + With the help of all Coordinating Committee members, seek financial sponsors to help get things off the ground. Urology and/or Oncology groups often would be willing to provide such assistance and may also cover the expense involved in registering with your Secretary of State and with the Internal Revenue Service. Also seek foundations that provide annual donations to non-profits, providing them details of your Chapter, its function of helping prostate cancer survivors and their families as well as all men seeking assistance with prostate related problems, and requesting your chapter be considered in their annual funding plans. Additionally, a donation box could be available at General Meetings for those participating to make voluntary donations if it is their wish. The money derived from any sources can then be used to purchase a variety of prostate cancer books, pamphlets, tapes and DVD discs on cancer subjects, your own Chapter sticker or stamp identifying your Chapter to be affixed to the Us TOO flyers provided by National Us TOO headquarters, etc.
- + The Coordinating Committee should select/elect a Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Program Director, and Community Outreach Director, to name a few to lead in the coordination of effort necessary for those title functions. For purposes of the Articles of Incorporation, a President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer should be determined.

- + A person, usually the Chairman and/or Program Director, should start off each General Meeting thanking all present for attending, acknowledging new members, reminding of the meeting topics for future meetings, occasionally calling to everyone's attention the Coordinating Committee members present, inviting anyone with a question not answered during the presentation to meet with any of the Coordinating Committee members following the meeting, drawing their attention to the donation box at the entry, describing what any donations will be used for, advising them that the treasury consists strictly of donations, and assuring them that donating is not mandatory. Then the presenter should be identified by name and welcomed to the meeting with a round of applause. When it appears near the end of the meeting that the questions to the presenter are waning, the Chairman or Program Director should find an appropriate moment to cut in and tell the audience that anyone with additional questions can ask them from the presenter following the close of the meeting, then thank the presenter and request the audience give he or she a round of applause, bringing the meeting to a close.
- + At the General Meeting, committee members should be assigned to greet every person participating and get the names, addresses, phone numbers, and email addresses of each man.
- + The foregoing suggestions are certainly not all-inclusive. However they provide the information necessary to form a sound Us TOO Chapter.