

Cancer Caregivers Needed: Give help, Get Help

Cancer Hope Network provides resources and peer support for cancer caregivers – and is looking for seasoned caregivers to serve as volunteer mentors.

CHESTER, NJ, UNITED STATES, May 24, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- More than 1 in 5 adults in the US are caring for a loved one. Many of them are caring for a loved one battling cancer. At Cancer Hope Network, we've seen a growing number of requests from caregivers and loved ones looking for support. As

Cancer Hope Network's current group of [cancer caregiver volunteers continue to provide high-quality support](#), the organization is looking for cancer caregivers who would like to serve as volunteers.



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Sarah Miretti Cassidy

The gift of caregiving

Cancer caregiving is a powerful gift, an opportunity to serve a friend or family member facing one of life's great challenges. It's inspiring and hopeful to help a loved one through the storm of cancer. Navigating appointments and making sure medications are taken on time and the patient's support community is informed can be empowering (Doing something that's tangible and helpful!). But it can also be terrifying (What if my loved one dies?) and lonely (Keeping a brave face to spare a loved one worry.) Caring for a loved one who's been diagnosed with cancer can also be emotionally draining and professionally

challenging (Missing work! Maintaining health insurance!).

The challenges of cancer caregiving

In the best of circumstances, cancer caregiving is isolating and scary, an emotion packed journey. But cancer caregiving doesn't come to the best of circumstances. It is indiscriminate in who or

when it hits.

Life doesn't magically become perfect when the doctor gives a diagnosis and longstanding family dynamics aren't always smoothed with the addition of heartache. No matter how well meant, compliments and encouragement ("You're so strong." "They're so lucky to have you.") can't keep eyes open when fighting exhaustion after a loved one has a rough night due to side effects.

Cancer caregivers sometimes fight and care in quick succession. CHN Support Volunteer Alyssa had just finished her own treatment for head and neck cancer when both parents were diagnosed with two different cancers. Caregiver volunteer Kaci supported her husband through his four-year fight with glioblastoma. Two months after his death, as her three small children began recovering, her mother was diagnosed with breast cancer.

CHN's peer mentors understand those competing emotions and contrasting realities. They are here to listen. They're here to provide guidance, resources, and hope.

[Learn more about serving as a cancer caregiver mentor](#)

How caregiver volunteers can help

Serving as a peer mentor with Cancer Hope Network is a convenient, meaningful way to give back. For caregivers living with immunocompromised survivors, the fact that training happens online and matches are made by telephone make it an ideal virtual volunteer opportunity.

Support Volunteers help fellow caregivers learn the new language of oncology and deal with the wide range of emotions their loved one is feeling (READ: [Reasons Behind the Rage](#) from our community of survivors and caregivers).

Volunteers, along with CHN's professional Programs Team, can help new caregivers find help and resources (CanCare offers social worker led case management, Cancer Support Community offers tips for getting started as a caregiver, the American Cancer Society's Caregiver Resource Guide includes a wide variety of resources – including information on respite care)

More than anything, Cancer Hope Network mentor volunteers are great listeners. They'll help navigate the challenges of caregiving (for many folks, life before cancer didn't involve quite so many ports or drains, an evolving number of prescriptions or quite so much puke) and provide the calm confidence of only a seasoned caregiver can.

To connect with a caregiver volunteer, visit cancerhopenetwork.org or call 877-HOPENET (877.467.3638). Interested in serving a volunteer? Visit cancerhopenetwork.org/caregiver-volunteer to start the process.

About Cancer Hope Network

Founded in 1981, Cancer Hope Network provides free one-on-one peer support to adult cancer

patients and their loved ones. Their 400+ survivor Support Volunteers have faced more than 80 types of cancer. (More than 98% of the cancers that will be diagnosed this year.) Together with caregiver volunteers, survivor volunteers provide support from diagnosis, through treatment and into survivorship. All volunteer and client matches are overseen by a team of healthcare/social work professionals.

1. AARP, National Alliance for Caregiving. (2020). 2020 report caregiving in the U.S. caregiving.org. Retrieved 2022, from https://www.caregiving.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/AARP1316_ExecSum_CaregivingintheUS_508.pdf

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