



➔ FACTSHEET 8

Budget and sponsorship



A budget is a financial plan for your estimated or intended expenditure and income over a particular period of time (for example, during the financial year or during the next five years). Careful budgeting is important because it helps your group to assess the money and other resources you will need to meet the objectives and priorities identified by your strategy for growth and impact (see Factsheet 7).

You are likely to need to prepare an overall budget for your group and one or more project budgets. A project budget is a prediction of the costs associated with a particular project. This is normally broken down into specific activities, with costs assigned to each activity.

Budget development

You may wish to set up a special committee who will assist the Treasurer to develop your group's budget for the coming year and present it to the Board for approval. You may even consider asking a professional accountant in your community to volunteer as the group's Treasurer. This will ensure that your budgets are professionally presented and that your documents and reporting are compliant with the financial laws in your country.

When developing a budget it is important to be clear about restricted and unrestricted funding:

- Donors to a patient group may designate or 'restrict' the use of their donations to a particular purpose or project.
- 'Unrestricted' funds are donations that are available for patient groups to use for any purpose, and usually contribute to the operating expenses of the organisation.

Once the budget is prepared and approved, don't let it gather dust. For the budget to be useful and effective, everyone should take it seriously. The budget should be compared with actual expenditure on a regular basis (i.e. monthly or quarterly) to allow Board members to measure whether your group's goals, set by the budget, are being met.

Do you need to raise money?

This may seem a surprising question, as many patient advocacy groups regard fundraising as one of their key priorities. However, the resources you need do not necessarily have to be in the form of money and might include:

- Volunteers with specific knowledge; it is well worthwhile checking to see if any of your members and supporters has expertise in, for example, keeping financial accounts, office management, publicity and promotion, or legal advice.
- Gifts from your members and supporters, such as accommodation for your office or meetings, computers and other equipment, office furniture, free advertisements and other publicity.



What are your sources of funds?

If you decide that you do need to raise money, it makes sense to always have several sources of funds. If you were to rely on a single source, your group would have great difficulties if it were suddenly withdrawn.

It is also essential to be aware of and follow any laws or regulations relating to NGOs or charities in your country. These might, for example, be rules about sources of funding or the ways you can raise money, so always get advice if you are unsure.

Depending on your national laws, your sources of funding might include:

Members of your group, and your supporters among the general public	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Individual donations, including large donations from wealthy supporters• Collections: street, door-to-door, faith groups, sports grounds)• Lotteries or raffles• Events to raise funds or attract sponsorship• Legacies or bequests• Direct marketing: mailings, radio or television appeals• Social media: appeals on your Facebook page, your website, or Twitter• Crowd-funding websites for NGOs
European, national and local governmental and other public organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Financial grants to support a particular activity
Charitable trusts and large NGOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Financial grants to help with equipment, office space, or specific projects
Industry (see table)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sponsorship or donations from commercial organisations, such as the pharmaceutical and medical device industries• Employee payroll donations
Financial investments	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Financial returns on your bank accounts• Any shares and similar investments if allowed in your country
Commercial activities (possibly through a separate trading company but this will depend on the laws in your country)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Profits from a charity shop or similar ventures• Fees for services you provide to your health care system

Choose ways to raise funds that fit your circumstances and play to your strengths. For example, a charitable trust that aims to improve the health of women could well be willing to offer a grant to a gynaecological cancer advocacy group.

You should also be realistic about the amount of money that an activity is likely to raise. An advertising campaign or large charity dinner may ultimately cost more than the money raised in the form of donations (though they may also raise the profile of your group). Similarly, a bequest from a wealthy supporter may provide a large sum of money for your group, but it is not wise to depend on such donations as a source of regular income.

You are not alone!

Finally, there is no need to 'reinvent the wheel'. You are not alone, so use the ENGAGe network to get in touch with other gynaecological cancer advocacy groups to find out how they have been successful in raising the money they need to support women and their families.

Working with industry

Collaboration with pharmaceutical and other health care industries can result in important benefits for your group and for women with gynaecological cancers:

- Sponsorship from industry can enable your group to raise awareness of gynaecological cancers among the general public, produce educational materials for and offer other forms of support to women and their families, and help your members to participate in clinical trials.
- Patient advocacy groups and industry also share policy goals, both at European and national level; for example, equal access to treatment or laws enabling research.

The pharmaceutical industry is highly regulated by European and national laws (for example, that prevent promotion of prescription-only medicines to the general public). Many companies are also members of both national industry organisations and the European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations (EFPIA; <http://www.efpia.eu>) that produce codes of practice on relationships between industry and patient organisations.

However, patient advocacy groups in some countries have been criticised for working with the pharmaceutical industry. This unwanted publicity has, for example, occurred when a group campaigning against restrictions on access to expensive new treatments has received money or indirect support from a pharmaceutical company's public relations agency. One way of dealing with this issue is to develop sponsorship guidelines which define how your group will collaborate with industry—what is allowed and what is not allowed. For instance, that your group will not promote any company's products and will usually only work with more than one company.

If you decide that your group would benefit by working with the pharmaceutical industry and other health care companies, it is important to ensure your group remains independent, transparent and accountable.



Independent

Your group's independence is essential to retain its credibility with your members, supporters, government and health care system. So if you are going to work with the pharmaceutical industry, it is preferable to have more than one partner to avoid too close an association with a single company. You should also always feel that you are able to challenge an industry partner, either during a specific project or because of other actions by the company.

Accountable

To be able to demonstrate your group's accountability, it is advisable to have a written agreement with any pharmaceutical company providing financial support to your group. This agreement should set out the amount of money provided and precisely define the purpose of the funding. It should also make clear that the company is not able to influence the content of your activities or publications.

Transparent

Pharmaceutical company websites now often list financial grants and other support to patient organisations. In the same way, some patient groups in some countries have decided to declare any money or acknowledge sponsorship or any support from industry on their website, and on any newsletters or other literature that the company may have funded. In some countries, it is also important to state clearly if members of your group have received funding as individuals; for example, the costs of travel and accommodation to attend an event organised by industry. You can find out about transparency rules in your country by checking with the national association for the pharmaceutical industry. These organisations can be found on the EPFIA website at <http://www.epfia.eu/about-us/membership>.

Always think about how your industry partnership would seem to someone unconnected with your group; if in doubt, it is better to declare a source of support than to omit it.