

Discussion groups for people with ABC/mBC

Dutch Breast Cancer Association (BVN)



OVERVIEW: Patients with ABC/mBC in the Netherlands have limited access to psychological support and there is a lack of willingness to mix with patients with BC. This initiative organises accessible, monthly discussion groups specifically for patients with ABC/mBC, led by trained cancer coaches, allowing patients to connect, learn from each other and ultimately improve their QoL.

Area of focus:
Peer-to-peer support groups or platforms for patients with ABC/mBC

Target population:
Women with ABC/mBC in the Netherlands

Objectives: Connect patients with ABC/mBC, allowing them to learn from each other and empowering them to build resilience and maintain control. Ultimately, provide support and improve QoL for patients living with ABC/mBC

Unmet needs addressed:

- Limited awareness about how to live with ABC/mBC while maximising QoL
- Little time for psychological support for patients with ABC/mBC in hospital

Key components: Monthly discussion groups for people with ABC/mBC (8–10 people per group) in accessible oncology walk-in centres, led by trained cancer coaches and nurses. Often discussion groups have a set theme (e.g. take control, loved ones etc.)

Challenges:

- For consistency, the groups intake only twice a year, but turnover due to poor prognosis can be challenging
- Groups were originally run by patient volunteers, but it was difficult for them to distance from their own experiences, so the organisation switched to professional cancer coaches

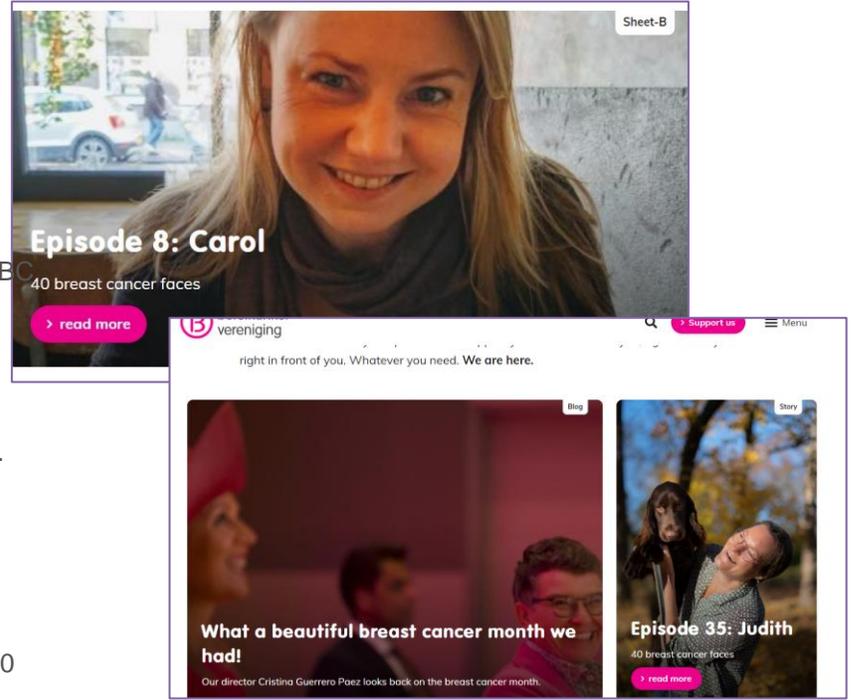
Outcomes: The initiative currently reaches 40 patients with ABC/mBC across four groups, with plans to expand to 10 groups by 2021

Development: Per support group, the initiative requires: 2 trained coaches, 2 BVN employees, 4 volunteers, 2 nurses and 2 walk-in centre employees

Cost: €5,000–€10,000

Timeline: The first group started 10 years ago and expanded to 4 groups in 2020

Targeted to reach: 60–150



For more information:
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Based on written submission from Mirjam Velting, BVN, 2020. The Hard-to-Reach ABC/mBC Communities Toolkit was developed as a collaboration between Pfizer Oncology and the ABC Global Alliance, with funding and support provided by Pfizer. ABC Global Alliance members and Pfizer colleagues were invited to submit breast cancer community-based initiatives that address specific needs of underserved patient populations with advanced/metastatic breast cancer. Initiatives were evaluated against criteria determined by a steering committee with members from both Pfizer and the ABC Global Alliance. Initiatives were selected for inclusion in the toolkit to highlight best practices in addressing the unique needs of this patient population. All organizations who submitted their initiatives for consideration have provided permission for the initiative information to be included in the toolkit and shared publicly. Pfizer and the ABC Global Alliance bear no responsibility for the contents of the toolkit.