

Cancer Awareness Week 2025: Impact Analysis Report

Cancer Awareness Week 2025, a week-long event organized by WEvolve in collaboration with the Department of Psychology, School of Psychological Sciences at CHRIST (Deemed-to-Be University), was a comprehensive initiative to raise awareness about cancer, its prevention, treatment, and the psychological challenges faced by the patients and their caregivers. The event's theme was "United by Unique," which aimed to foster engagement through various activities, including expert talks, interactive sessions, cultural programs, and community outreach efforts.

Let us delve deeper into the effectiveness of the initiative, its reach, and key learnings for future events.

Objectives:

- To educate students, faculty, and staff members on cancer, its prevention, and the importance of early detection and treatment.
- To provide a platform for oncologists, psycho-oncologists, survivors, and caregivers to share their experiences and contribute to the knowledge.
- To integrate psychosocial aspects into cancer discussions, highlighting the role of mental health and emotional well-being.
- To engage the community through street plays, walkathons, and panel discussions.

Key Highlights of the Events:

Educational Impact

The keynote address by Prof. R. Srinivasa Murthy emphasised the evolving landscape of cancer care, integrating the biopsychosocial-spiritual model. The panel discussion, "United by Unique for Cancer," featuring oncologists, psycho-oncologists, survivors, and caregivers, provided a multidisciplinary perspective on cancer treatment and mental health. Awareness sessions throughout the week helped students understand the challenges of caregiving, burnout, and the importance of psychological support in cancer care.

Participation and Interdisciplinary Collaboration

Faculty and students from psychology, clinical psycho-oncology, and other disciplines actively participated, fostering cross-disciplinary learning. Despite enthusiastic planning for intercollegiate events, attendance was lower than anticipated, indicating difficulties in attracting external participants. Activities like the Treasure Hunt creatively integrated smoking and vaping awareness, making it an engaging learning experience for participants.

Impact through Community Engagement and Outreach

The Walkathon and Street Play effectively raised public awareness, utilizing impactful slogans and placards to emphasize cancer prevention and early detection. Notably, the interactive street play at Nexus Mall powerfully illustrated cancer's psychological and social burdens, resonating deeply with the audience. To reach a broad audience and ensure inclusivity, cancer prevention and detection pamphlets were made available in English and Kannada, catering to diverse linguistic communities.

Challenges and Setbacks

Unfortunately, the Hair Donation Drive had to be cancelled due to insufficient participant eligibility, as many did not meet the necessary hair length criteria. Due to the postponement, the Cancer Screening and Awareness Run could not achieve its planned outreach numbers. Additionally, despite extensive outreach efforts, some intercollegiate events saw lower-than-expected participation, indicating the need for improved promotional strategies.

Stakeholder Impact

The event had a significant impact on various stakeholders. Students and faculty enhanced their knowledge of cancer awareness, prevention, and the role of mental health in cancer care. Cancer survivors and caregivers found a platform to share their stories, fostering a sense of community and support. The general public benefited from increased awareness about cancer and the importance of early detection, mainly through the street play and walkathon. Medical and mental health professionals strengthened the discourse on the need for psycho-oncologists in mainstream cancer treatment.

Recommendations for Future Events

For optimal participation in upcoming Cancer Awareness Weeks, we propose a unified plan that includes social media integration, university network activation, and incentive-driven engagement. Improved logistics planning will reduce the possibility of last-minute cancellations for screening and donation drives. Expanding community engagement through partnerships with local health organizations can further broaden the reach of awareness programs. Technology, including webinars and virtual panels, will expand accessibility, allowing us to connect with a larger and more geographically dispersed audience.

Conclusion

Cancer Awareness Week 2025 successfully met its objectives by fostering awareness, interdisciplinary collaboration, and community involvement. While some logistical challenges arose, the overall impact was significant, with students, faculty, and the community gaining valuable insights into cancer care and prevention. The learnings from this event provide a strong foundation for organizing even more effective and inclusive awareness programs in the future.