

Life After SCA

Presented by the HeartRescue Project



Tips for creating a newsletter

A great way to keep survivors and members of the community informed is through a newsletter. While social media is often relied upon, there are still many people who cannot be reached on Facebook or Twitter and prefer a newsletter, which they know will provide regular updates on important news. You can create a printed newsletter with physical distribution (i.e., through the mail or hand delivered) or an electronic newsletter that can be sent via email or posted on a website. You can also do a combination of both.

Paper newsletters are more costly, due to the expense of printing and distributing. They also sometimes require a bit more planning, as they have specific space constraints and you'll need to have an idea how many you want to print. You will also need to collect more information from the people who receive the newsletter in order to mail it to them, and it is more time consuming to get the final product into people's hands. The advantages are that you can leave copies in public places in order to reach new people, and depending on the age and habits of your members, it may be a preferred method to read the information.

An electronic version may require less investment of both money and time, and can be shared easily by members with other people, expanding the number of people you can reach. You will only need to collect email addresses in order to send the newsletter and can also share a version on your website if you have one. You will need to manage your email addresses and delete those people who ask to be taken off your list, but most email newsletter programs have integrated list-management tools. Depending on how many people you hope to reach, and how often, there are free or very low-cost services. Most services provide user-friendly instructions for how to create templates and manage your address list. Here are some options:

- MailChimp.com
- TinyLetter.com
- ConstantContact.com
- iContact.com

With either distribution model, the basics are the same:

- Determine the goal of your newsletter. Will you be providing in-depth information or data to readers in the form of articles? Or will the newsletter be simply a way to keep members aware of events and happenings within the group?
- Name your newsletter. The name should be descriptive of your group and the intention of your newsletter.
- Try to be consistent as to when you distribute your newsletter, whether that is monthly or quarterly, or whatever schedule best fits your needs. Consistent distribution will have your members looking forward to the newsletter and using it as a resource.
- Break the content into sections and keep those consistent for each edition. Sometimes it helps to plan out a few issues in advance to see what kind of information can be grouped together. Some examples might be:
 - Announcements and upcoming events
 - New members of the group
 - A survivor profile or maybe a rescuer profile
 - Additional resources for survivors
 - Reminders to follow the group's social media profiles
 - If you have regular meetings, the newsletter can offer summaries or minutes for those who missed the meeting.

Consider sending your newsletter not just to members of the group, but also to your community partners, especially if you acknowledge their participation and donations. Sending it to potential sponsors, or including it with letters asking for support, also helps increase awareness of the support group and how it helps survivors. It should make the next round of donation requests a little easier.

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LifeAfterSCA.org provides resources to help survivors of sudden cardiac arrest and their families. **Because every SCA survivor who gets a second chance at life also deserves a second shot at living.**