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History and Purpose

Mission

To provide personalized peer support empowering those affected by cancer and its treatment.

Vision

To be a global leader in providing peer support to enhance the well-being of those affected by cancer and its treatment while advancing evidence based research.

History

Scott Hamilton, Olympic figure skating champion, was treated for testicular cancer at Cleveland Clinic Taussig Cancer Institute in 1999. Upon his recovery, Scott identified three angels who helped him through his journey. Scott's oncologist at Cleveland Clinic was his first angel; his oncology nurse, his second angel; and his family and friends, his third. What he felt was missing; however, was a fourth angel: someone who had been there and would understand what he was feeling. This led to his idea to create a program in which cancer survivors and patients could talk to their peers about the cancer experience, bringing about the survivor-to-patient/caregiver mentoring programs. The 4th Angel Mentoring Program was created in 2002. In November 2016, the Pediatric Caregiver Program (pilot) was launched to support parents/guardians taking care of sick child.

4th Angel is an innovative, interactive approach to cancer support in which patients and caregivers are matched with trained volunteers. While emphasizing one-on-one contact, matches are primarily made based on similar age and cancer experiences to best empower caregivers and patients with knowledge, awareness, hope and a helping hand.

4th Angel Program Statistics

- To date, 4th Angel has over 1037 active patient and caregiver mentors.

- On average, 4th Angel completes over 100 matches per month (both internal and external).
- Received 1694 requests for assistance in 2016. Made 1248 matches in 2016.

4th Angel Mentor Criteria

- Must be six months or more post-active treatment to be a patient mentor.
- In order to be a pediatric caregiver mentor, the child should be at least six months into or off of treatment.
- If the above criteria are met, potential mentors fill out an application.
- The 4th Angel Coordinator contacts and screens prospective patient/caregiver mentors.
- A background check is completed.
- Patient/caregiver mentor completes group training via conference call. Recently developed online training using the new MyLearning application. Both trainings cover mentor roles, boundaries, expectations, confidentiality, emotions and impact on self and relationships, resources, and FAQs.
- Possess a positive outlook and supportive nature.
- Provide feedback by completing a feedback form that is sent to mentors and mentees to let us know how the match went and any additional suggestions, questions or comments they may have for improving the program. Program coordinator follows up as necessary.

The 4th Angel Matching Process

An individualized process, matching closest to the wishes of the mentee requesting support (i.e. diagnosis, treatment, stage, age & gender).

- Connect by phone or email
- Current matches take approximately 1 to 3 days to complete.
- From initial contact and onward, the mentor and mentee determine how frequently they would like to connect.
- Length and frequency of contact varies with each match.
- Program coordinators serve as a navigation resource for both mentors and mentees throughout the mentoring process.

Referrals & Recruitment

- Currently, we are able to provide support across all disease types, but are always recruiting mentors.