



Fire Fighter Cancer Awareness and Prevention



TRAINING BRIEF

Survivorship

Supporting those who have been diagnosed with occupational cancer

DISCUSSION

Action:

Refer the individual to the Firefighter Cancer Support Network (FCSN):

- FCSN provides timely assistance to fire/EMS personnel and their family members who have been diagnosed with cancer. If you or someone in your immediate family has received a cancer diagnosis, we can help. Call us toll free at 1-866-994-3276.
- FCSN responds quickly and delivers a FCSN signature toolbox free of charge. FCSN's toolbox contains critical resources to help you plan, communicate and take action with your doctors, your loved ones, and your brothers and sisters in the fire service. FCSN will stick with you through the diagnosis, treatment and recovery process.
- A mentor will be provided to assist through the entire process. The mentor is a cancer survivor.

Hearing from your medical doctor that you have cancer is overwhelming. Those diagnosed may feel lost, isolated and overwhelmed by medical terms and options. The implications of their future life and health can be debilitating.

Steps to consider for a peer or supervisor when a member tells you they have cancer:

- Be supportive, offer your presence and be a good listener.
- Offer to assist with rides to and from appointments and to be a note taker.
- Encourage them to maintain copies of all reports and scans if needed for further opinions.
- Refer them to the Firefighter Cancer Support Network (FCSN) website: www.firefightercancersupport.org
- Encourage others to send cards and letters in the mail supporting the individual.
- Encourage others to assist with any needs the family may have.
- Provide peer support. Peer to peer support with a supportive management team behind them will assist in the process.
- Understand that the assistance must fit the individual's needs. Be respectful, not intrusive. The member may want to keep the diagnosis private, respect that. Needs may be different for each individual.
- When a member comes forth with an occupational cancer diagnosis, a supportive reaction that uses positive dialogue and general concern can make all the difference in the world.
- Offer support from both the department and agency they work for.
- Supervisors need to be conscious of demeanor and ensure interactions offer hope and solidarity.