



Fact Sheet 2

Things to Think About Before Starting a Self Help Group

- Is there already a similar group that you could join? Rather than re-invent the wheel, could your knowledge and experience help strengthen an existing group?

- How much time and commitment are you prepared to put into the formation and running of the group?

- Is the nature of the group likely to be transitory or long term? Are people likely to move on quickly because their issue has been resolved and their needs met, or will they be likely to be long term members eg with a chronic illness, genetic condition etc?

- If the group will attract only short term members, are you prepared to be the lynch pin who will keep the group together over a more extended period of time?

- Where and how will you find others to join you?

- Where will the group meet?

- Who is the group for? Is it solely for people with a particular health condition or issue, or would carers, family, friends, professionals or interested community members be welcome?

- What type of group will it be – face to face, online or other?

- Are you willing to give out your phone or email details as a contact for the group?

- Will the group have geographical boundaries?

- Are you prepared to deal with the various conflicts and problems which may develop as decisions are made and discussions take place?

- Are you willing to adopt a democratic decision making process within the group?

- Will you be open to the ideas of other members, valuing each person equally?

- Are you happy to encourage skill development and leadership among members?

- Are you prepared to network with other groups, organisations and professionals?

- Are you willing to allow the group to grow and evolve, even if it means making changes to your original vision?

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