



## How to start a newsletter?

A newsletter is a very effective way of communication among members of a group as well as a medium of information to all interested individuals.

### Some guidelines:

- find somebody (or several people) responsible for the content and the way of distribution
- define the target group (important for content and appearance)
- estimate the amount of money your group can spend
- the newsletter can be very „simple“ in structure and layout (photo copies) - but it can also be very elaborate (magazine type). The choice of paper can make a difference as well as the layout
- You may want to charge a fee for the shipping or have the expenses included in the membership fee.

At best to **start with the easy and inexpensive format** which you can do by yourself (on your own PC).

- You can simply make photocopies and staple the pages, the choice of the paper (color) may be important.
- Find a name for your newsletter.
- Set up a layout that you want to use again (recognition), use a certain order for the content: e.g. starting with an editorial, the table of content, ... and maybe ending with important addresses.
- Always include the name, address, telephone number etc. of the editor(s).
- Select articles from members of the group, ask doctors and nurses to contribute, look through professional journals (sometimes these articles will have to be „translated“ into lay person language to fit your readers).
- Always ask for permission before you print an article that is not your own and include the name and (institutional) address of the author(s).
- When using newspaper articles do not forget to cite the source (name of newspaper/ magazine, date).
- Do not use logos, emblems or pictures without permission (and include the reference).

Of course, you can also ask for professional help and get the newsletter set up, edited and printed by a graphical designer in a regular printing shop. You may find financial help, the whole newsletter or the printing costs may be donated - if not, it is a matter of finances.

*Gerlind Bode*