



World Bladder
Cancer Patient
COALITION



BLADDER CANCER AWARENESS MONTH 2023



CAMPAIGN REPORT

THE IMPORTANCE OF RAISING AWARENESS

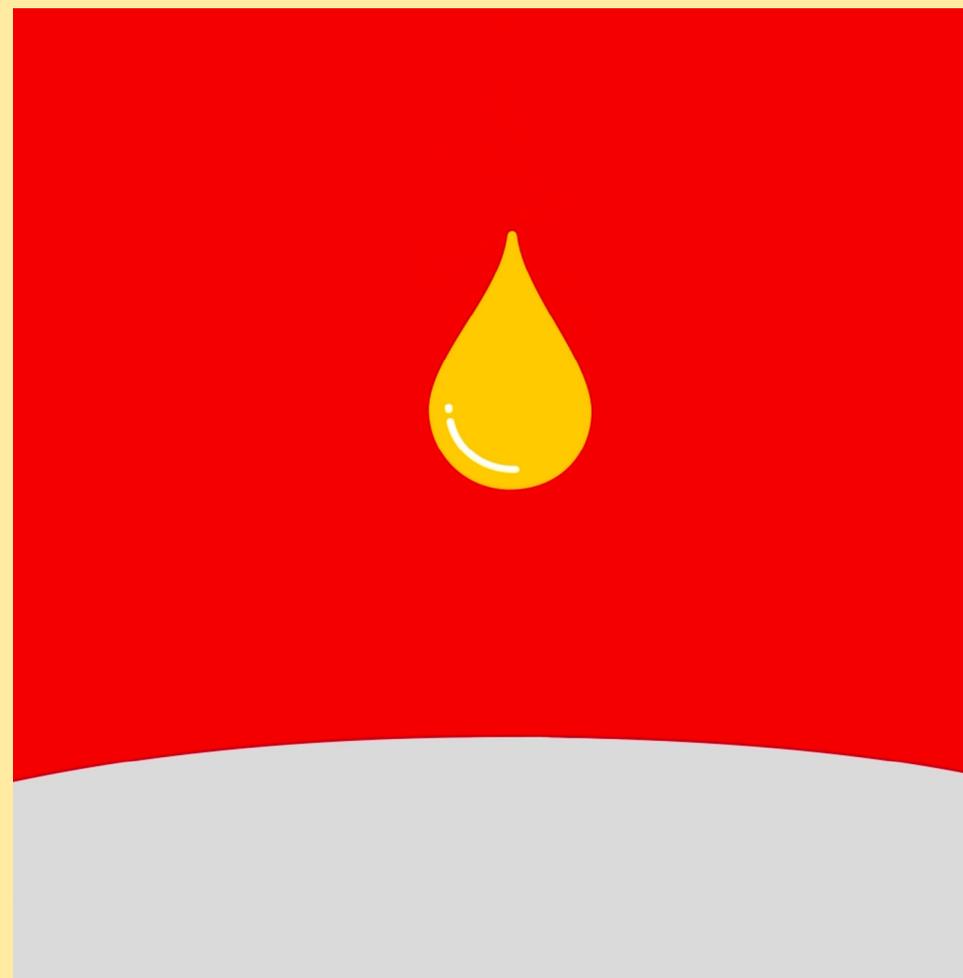
Every year, the month of May is a significant time for our coalition. It is when we mark Bladder Cancer Awareness Month (BCAM). During this time we unite as a global bladder cancer community, bringing attention to a disease that is too often left in the shadows. As it stands, there are over 1.8 million people living with bladder cancer, with more than 600,000 receiving a bladder cancer diagnosis each year. Still, for many, their diagnosis is the first time they encounter the term “bladder cancer”.

In 2023, we embarked on a new mission with the **“Feeling Unsure? Get Checked”** campaign, part of our continued efforts for Bladder Cancer Awareness Month. This initiative was crafted to address the frequent misinterpretation of symptoms, urging individuals to question what they perceive as “normal” and to reassess their symptoms. After all, what may seem rather ordinary could indeed be a symptom of bladder cancer.

With the shared commitment of our coalition and partners worldwide, we amplified our messages. We shone a light on the symptoms of bladder cancer, breaking down the barriers that often deter individuals from seeking medical advice. Our efforts have been rewarding, but much work remains to be done in increasing bladder cancer awareness worldwide.

Yet our journey doesn’t end here and together, we can bring about change. We remain hopeful that you will continue to join us in the years to come, every May for Bladder Cancer Awareness Month and beyond, in our ongoing mission to bring bladder cancer out of the shadows and into public awareness.

Alex Filicevas Executive Director of the World Bladder Cancer Patient Coalition



THIS YEAR WE SAID: FEELING UNSURE? GET CHECKED.

In 2023, bladder cancer awareness remains low, so World Bladder Cancer Awareness Month (BCAM) in May, is a crucial step towards changing that and saving lives. Together with our members and partners from across the world, we once again went against the grain to raise awareness for this forgotten cancer.

Our campaign aimed to bring attention to the misrepresentation of symptoms and encourage people to re-evaluate their symptoms, as what they thought they saw may actually be something different. During May, we sparked conversations that raise awareness about the disease by highlighting the symptoms of bladder cancer and overcoming any barriers to seeking medical advice with the call to action:

FEELING
UNSURE?
GET
CHECKED.

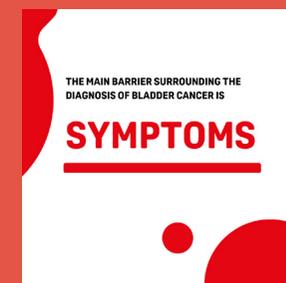
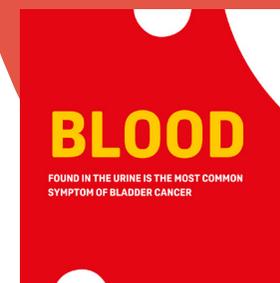
To capture attention and interest, we focused the campaign on the feeling of uncertainty. With this online-focused campaign, we set out to create a visual element centered around this uncertainty. The Unsure Icon was specially designed by **Noma Bar** to be seen and interpreted in different ways, just like the symptoms of bladder cancer might be. This was an evolution from last year's campaign, which used the feeling of embarrassment to connect with the wider audience.

With the launch of the Unsure Icon this year, we have taken a step toward our ambition of uniting the global bladder cancer community. This symbol, absent until now, offers a universally identifiable image that draws us together, filling the gap where a universally accepted icon for bladder cancer had previously been missing.



TOOLKIT

The animation video with the Unsure Icon which prompted viewers to pause and think twice about what they saw, was the main driving force of this year's campaign and it was available in six languages: English, French, Italian, Spanish, Hindi, and Arabic.





In addition to the Unsure Icon animation video, we created multiple ways for anyone to support and join the awareness month.

1

Recognising the crucial role of social media, our social media communication kit offered tailored multi-lingual messages to engage different audiences and raise bladder cancer awareness. This resource enabled our members, partners and individuals to deliver full month's worth of engaging content to raise awareness further. For an even greater impact, this year's attention-grabbing visuals shed light on the most common bladder cancer symptoms, risk factors, and impact of the disease around the world.

2

Our healthcare professionals focused posters aimed to resource advocacy communities with easy-to-use posters targeting healthcare professionals. Thus helping to ensure that the campaign message spreads not only with the general audience but also deeply into medical communities, amplifying the reach of our campaign.

3

We introduced a campaign activation toolkit for everyone, with additional resources available to members only. The toolkit was not just a compilation of resources, but a curated selection of tools designed to make participation as effortless as possible, provide inspiration, and empower individuals and organisations with everything they may need to join the campaign.

4

To ensure our campaign was inclusive and accessible to more people, we made all the resources available in multiple languages, including English, Spanish, French, and Italian. We also offered adaptations to requested languages, which added Arabic and Hindi to the collection. This allowed us to overcome language barriers and bring together an international community in support of bladder cancer awareness.

5

We particularly focused on understanding and best responding to the unique needs of our members in preparation for May. Our monthly coordination calls provided a platform for us to learn from our members, understand their challenges and expectations, and determine how we could best assist them in their awareness-raising endeavours.

Our ambition this year was not just to provide a suite of resources, but to remove as many barriers as possible to the active participation of anyone who wanted to raise bladder cancer awareness throughout May. We aimed to ensure that anyone interested in supporting our activities had all the necessary tools at their disposal, no matter their location and language. This allowed us not just to deliver a list of services; we created a platform that fostered active participation and helped animate the narrative of bladder cancer awareness.

OUR RESULTS

Building on the previous year's success, in 2023 we once again saw greater engagement, participation and people reached, having a much bigger impact than ever before. Together with our global community, our members, partners and bladder cancer patient advocates, our collective efforts point to success of raising awareness about bladder cancer.



Reached over **11 million people** across our social media platforms



Over **32,000 people** have seen our Unsure Icon animation



Over **100,000 people** visited our website from around the world



Over **10,000 retweets** on Twitter



Almost **30,000 profile visits** on Facebook

A BREAKTHROUGH YEAR

2023 proved to be a breakthrough year for us! Our social media impact increased, reaching an astounding **175%** growth compared to 2022. More importantly, our website traffic witnessed a significant growth in interest in learning more about bladder cancer, our work and the bladder cancer patient advocacy community with a **five-fold increase compared to the previous awareness month in 2022.**

This was a clear showcase that people worldwide are joining our efforts to raise bladder cancer awareness, using the variety of multi-language resources that we created to help us work toward this important objective.

“DON'T GO RED. GO TO A DOCTOR” CAMPAIGN FINALIST AT THE PRWEEK HEALTHCARE AWARDS

We are thrilled to announce that the **2022 Bladder Cancer Awareness Month** campaign “Don't go red. Go to a doctor” was finalist at The PRWeek UK Healthcare & Pharma Comms Awards in the category of **Best Public Health Awareness Campaign.**

Last year, we launched our “Don't Go Red. Go to a Doctor” campaign for Bladder Cancer Awareness Month

which aimed at breaking taboos, raising awareness of the warning signs of bladder cancer, and urging people to seek medical attention if they experience symptoms.

Being finalist at the awards is a fantastic recognition of innovative and different creative approaches to bring greater awareness and spark conversations about bladder cancer.



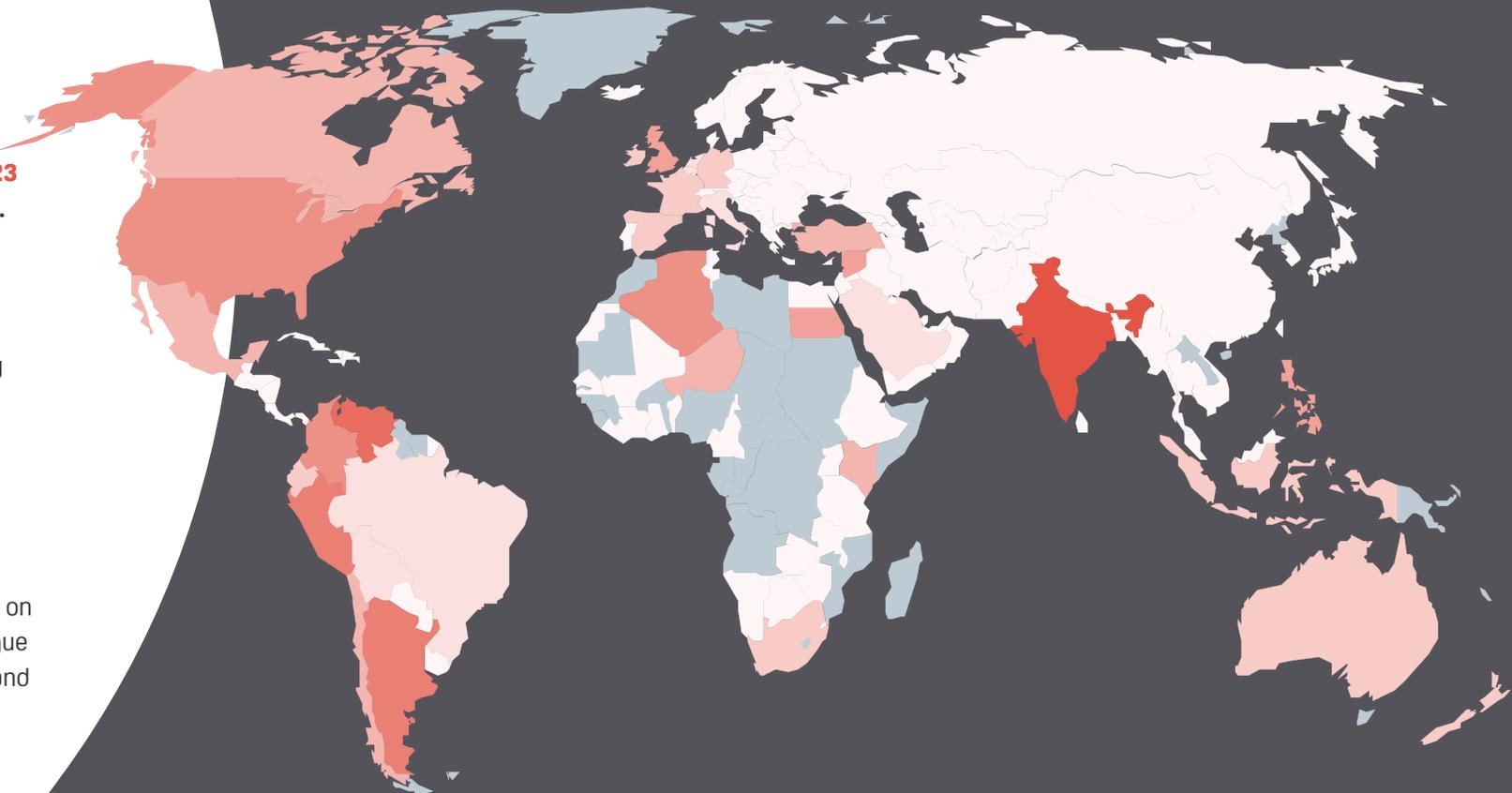
OUR RESULTS

People and organisations joined the conversation using campaign hashtags. The campaign hashtags: **#BladderCancerMonth23** and **#UnsureIcon** were used over 2,500 times.

This year, we have witnessed more global participation than ever before. We are thrilled by the sheer number of engagements that we received from people, from all backgrounds and ethnicities from all around the world during the Awareness Month.

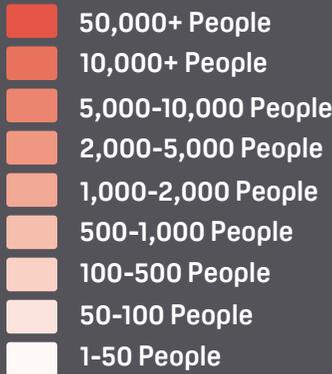
UNSURE ICON

Leading up to May, we teased the Unsure Icon across our social media and once we unveiled it on May 1, it sparked online conversations and intrigue with people trying to uncover its true meaning and sharing their interpretations.



WBCPC WEBSITE VISITORS

Over **105,000** from all over the world visited our website to find out more about bladder cancer.





ENCOURAGING GLOBAL PARTICIPATION



Towards a unifying bladder cancer symbol connecting our community, we shared hundreds of Unsure Icon pins with our members around the world. These pins, representing our shared mission, were then disseminated within their local communities. Our endeavour doesn't end there; we plan to continue distributing these symbols of unity throughout the year and during upcoming Bladder Cancer Awareness Months to come, further solidifying our worldwide connection and hopefully sparking many curious conversations, thus helping raise bladder cancer awareness.



In 2022, we proudly launched our first Bladder Cancer Awareness Month (BCAM) Grant Programme. This initiative was created to promote and strengthen bladder cancer patient advocacy and awareness raising in **low- and middle-income countries**. The programme aims to support organisations and initiatives by covering a portion of the costs associated with awareness-raising activities in their communities.



ENCOURAGING GLOBAL PARTICIPATION

Following the interest and success of last year's programme, we have broadened the BCAM Grant framework this year to award a more significant sum to each awardee and select a greater number of recipients compared to the previous year.

We are proud to announce the award of 4 grants to dedicated advocates in Brazil, Egypt, India, and Malawi. These were chosen from a diverse pool of 9 international applications.



BCAM GRANT AWARDEE SPOTLIGHT



BRAZIL – ONCOGUIA

Oncoguia’s objective was to disseminate high-quality information about the significance of preventing, diagnosing early, and treating bladder cancer.

To achieve this, they developed a virtual patient education campaign and established strategic partnerships with various institutions and organisations in Brazil.

While Bladder Cancer Awareness Month is observed in July in Brazil, Oncoguia also actively participated in awareness-raising activities during May. During this period, they **shared WBCPC’s social media messages**, including the **“Unsure Icon”** and other **pertinent facts and statistics**.



In July, they launched their campaign entitled: **“Ame Sua Bexiga”** (Love your Bladder), designed to offer precise information and support to enhance the quality of life for individuals affected by bladder cancer. The provided information encompassed symptoms, diagnosis, and treatment options.



Oncoguia **created a playlist** in collaboration with uro-oncologist Fernando Korkes, founder of the Cabem Mais Vidas Institute, which garnered over **10,000 impressions**. This playlist comprises **16 videos addressing topics relevant to patients**, such as signs & symptoms, diagnosis, treatment, quality of life, and more.



Furthermore, they created another **playlist**, consisting of **11 videos** that amassed nearly **10,000 impressions**. This playlist was specifically tailored for patients, aimed at dispelling common misconceptions surrounding bladder cancer.



On July 26, 2023, they organised a **live talk** under the theme **“Bladder Cancer, we need to talk more about it.”** The event was hosted by Oncoguia’s founder and president, **Luciana Holtz**, in conjunction with **Dr. Fernando Korkes**, a distinguished uro-oncologist and founder of the Cabem Mais Vidas Institute, and **Dr. Mauro Gomes**, Chief of the Pneumology team at Hospital Samaritano/SP. This insightful conversation was broadcasted across Oncoguia’s social media platforms, including Youtube, Instagram, Facebook, and LinkedIn. Since then, the archived event has garnered substantial engagement, amassing over **990 views**, 99 likes, and **12,336 impressions** across these platforms.



Oncoguia’s strategic efforts in bladder cancer awareness have been highly effective. Through a combination of educational campaigns, expert collaborations, and engaging social media activities, they successfully disseminated crucial information. Their live talk event, reaching a wide audience, highlights their commitment to open dialogue on bladder cancer. Oncoguia’s approach serves as a strong example of impactful advocacy in the field.

BCAM GRANT AWARDEE SPOTLIGHT



MALAWI - DIRECT IMPACT FOUNDATION FOR YOUTH (DIFY)

The Direct Impact Foundation for Youth (DIFY) completed a bladder cancer awareness campaign within the Senior Group Village Headman Chavula area in the rural Nkhata Bay district of Malawi. This initiative focused on conveying essential messages about bladder cancer. The campaign centred on discussing symptoms of bladder cancer and strongly emphasised the significance of seeking medical attention when experiencing uncertainty about these symptoms.



Bladder cancer's impact is noteworthy in Malawi, as reported by the World Health Organization (WHO), where it stands as the 30th leading cause of death. In 2020, bladder cancer accounted for the lives of approximately 388 individuals, representing 0.40% of Malawi's population. Recognising the gravity of this issue, DIFY partnered with local community structures and youth in Nkhata Bay District to align with the global bladder cancer awareness campaign.



With support from BCAM Grants (Bladder Cancer Awareness Month) and the active participation of the community within Nkhata Bay, **DIFY achieved a direct reach to 500 individuals**. This was accomplished through diverse means, including **Focus Group Discussions, Health Talks, interviews, and engagement with youth through sports activities**.

DIFY actively promoted bladder cancer awareness through an array of engaging activities, collectively **reaching over 2000 people in rural Malawi**.



1. Sports Engagement: DIFY utilised outdoor sports events to deliver bladder cancer awareness messages to the community.

- 2. Youth Focus Groups:** Feedback was gathered through youth focus group discussions, enabling a deeper understanding of bladder cancer concepts. Participants learned about global trends, local impact, symptoms, risk factors, and appropriate responses to uncertainties.
- 3. Health Talks and Interviews:** DIFY conducted informative health talks and interviews to educate communities about bladder cancer, emphasising prevention strategies and symptoms.
- 4. Faith and Community Involvement:** Collaborations with faith-based and community organisations, such as EN MARRIAM FOUNDATION, helped disseminate key bladder cancer messages.
- 5. Youth through Sports:** Sporting activities like football and netball were employed to engage youths and convey awareness messages. Football, in particular, attracted significant rural audiences, reaching over 2000 people.

By engaging local communities and youth through a range of initiatives, DIFY successfully increased awareness about bladder cancer symptoms and the importance of seeking timely medical attention.

The collaboration with global efforts and the active involvement of BCAM Grants further amplified the campaign's reach. With over **2000 individuals reached through diverse activities**, DIFY's campaign serves as a notable example of effective community-driven health awareness.

BCAM GRANT AWARDEE SPOTLIGHT



INDIA – WOMEN’S EDUCATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SOCIETY (WEEDS)

In May 2023, WEEDS partnered with the World Bladder Cancer Patient Coalition to raise awareness in Kancheepuram district’s Mangadu, Anagaputhur, and Kundrathur areas during Bladder Cancer Awareness Month. The initiative, featuring Dr. Vikram and Dr. Vinodhi from RMD Hospital, engaged over 725 women, providing valuable insights.



Dr. Republica, RMD Hospital’s Managing Director, and Dr. Indira Kumar conducted **online sessions for 180+** self-help group leaders and members via Google Meet, addressing bladder cancer concerns.



The program aimed to **raise awareness, particularly among suburban and rural women** who often prioritised family health over their own. Many were unaware of bladder cancer symptoms, leading to neglect. Following the initiative, women understood symptoms, breaking barriers to medical advice.



Five sessions were held: three through community outreach and two online, **engaging 180+ Self-Help Group members.** Pamphlets, videos, and presentations were distributed.

Interest arose in 24 women for pre-consultation at RMD Hospital, advancing early detection and medical attention.

Overall, around 930+ women participated. The initiative achieved its goal of heightening bladder cancer awareness by emphasising symptoms and medical guidance.



Notably, 24 women expressed eagerness for pre-consultation/checkups. During community outreach, numerous women sought clarifications about symptoms and related medical concerns.

The collaborative efforts of WEEDS and the World Bladder Cancer Patient Coalition during Bladder Cancer Awareness Month in May 2023 have had a significant impact. Through engaging community outreach and online sessions, the initiative **successfully heightened awareness among women in Kancheepuram district.** By addressing symptoms and overcoming barriers to seeking medical guidance, the program empowered women with knowledge and encouraged early detection. The **participation of over 930 women**, along with the interest shown in pre-consultations, **highlights the effectiveness of the campaign** in promoting bladder cancer awareness and fostering proactive healthcare.

CAN WE COUNT ON YOU NEXT YEAR?

We can do great things if we work together and support each other.

There are a number of ways you can support the Bladder Cancer Awareness Month campaign next year. We stand ready to work together and help our community in raising awareness about bladder cancer. Whether you represent a national organisation, a smaller group, or are an individual, we need all hands on deck! You can expect us to build on this year's success and develop more resources for the community. These will include:

- New ready-made, engaging social media messages and visuals in more languages.
- A new campaign activation toolkit full of new ideas.
- And much more!

To ensure you don't miss out on next year's campaign, follow WBCPC on social media, subscribe to our newsletter, and keep a close eye on our website for updates.

If you are an individual

- Subscribe to our newsletter
- Follow us on social media
- Keep a close eye on our updates
- Would you like next year's resources in your language? Message us directly on social media or via email.

If you are a community or organisation

- Continue the conversation on social media
- Subscribe to our newsletter
- Schedule a call with us
- Get in touch with us directly today, to discuss your needs and ideas – so we can help you make the greatest impact in your community.

If you are an industry organisation

- Follow us on social media
- Explore our existing partnerships and sponsors on our website
- Get in touch with us to explore sponsorship opportunities
- Our industry partner's support helps us realise the campaign and bring our community together -raising bladder cancer awareness around the world. Get in touch and show your support.



We all have a role to play in raising awareness about bladder cancer, and every contribution counts - whether made in-person or online. It's a collective effort. So, join us in 2024!

CONCLUSION



From all of us at WBCPC, we wish to extend our sincerest gratitude to everyone who has participated and lent a hand in raising awareness about bladder cancer. The unwavering support our community continues to receive is both humbling and incredibly inspiring, particularly as we see the impact of our Bladder Cancer Awareness Month activities continue to grow year after year.

We owe a special thank you to our member organisations. Their dedication in hosting successful awareness month activities in their own countries has been instrumental to our global reach. Each of these initiatives underscores our united commitment and substantially amplifies our collective voice in the fight against bladder cancer.



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