

Supporting Dying Matters Awareness Week

We want to get as many people as possible thinking, talking and acting during Dying Matters Awareness Week - and to do this we need you.

The theme of our next Awareness Week, which runs from 12-18 May 2014, is 'You only die once', and there are a huge variety of ways you can get involved. From simply sending a tweet to running a high-profile event, by working together we can achieve maximum publicity and, as a result, get closer to making a good death the norm.

Even just having a chat with family, friends or colleagues about the importance of preparing for death can change perceptions. If every one of our current members spoke to just ten people each, we could reach 300,000 people.

Here are some more ideas on how you can support Dying Matters Awareness Week.

Hold your own event

This can be large, small or anywhere in-between. To give you inspiration, here's a small selection of actual events our members ran last year. Remember, you'll need permission from the site owner for any event in a public space.

- A coffee morning at the library in aid of the local hospice, with Dying Matters resources on display.
- A hospital display featuring a tree of life graphic on which patients and their loved ones were encouraged to post notes about improving services relating to death and dying.
- A funeral directors' open day.
- A Death Cafe.
- An afternoon of activities, including the screening of [Dying Matters films](#) and talks from local bereavement associations and funeral directors.

Your event theme

You may have a specific theme in mind relating to your area of work or interest. As long as it fits with Dying Matters' broad agenda - to positively change attitudes and behaviour around talking about and planning for death - we're happy.

Order resources

Our resources will help you create an eye-catching display to attract people. Available resources include posters, leaflets and banners. Dying Matters Awareness Week 2014 resources will also be available closer to the week.

[View/purchase Dying Matters resources](#)

Regional support

If you're seeking local support, advice or help with your event, or you want to publicise it locally, create a post on one of our [regional discussion forums](#).

Write a press release

One of potentially the most effective ways of securing media coverage is to send out a press release. Keep it short and punchy - never more than two sides of A4, and ideally a lot less.

Top tips

- Ensure you cover the 'five W's': Who, What, Where, Why, When.
- Make it clear whether the event is open to the general public.
- Include key contact details.
- If possible, set up an interesting photo opportunity - and make sure you mention it in the press release. However, don't rely on a newspaper sending a photographer to the event - have someone take high quality photos and send them to the papers afterwards.
- It's generally best to contact journalists by email in the first instance. Your press release should be pasted into the body of the email, not sent as an attachment - you don't want to place any barriers in the way of it being read. Make sure your email subject line is strong so that it grabs journalists' attention.
- Do follow-up your press release with a phone call to check receipt and to further sell your story.

Let us know about your event

Once you have decided on the specifics of your event, make sure you share it with us so we can help you promote it. [Submit your event details](#).

Other ways you can get involved

There are many other ways you can promote and support Dying Matters Awareness Week. Here are just a few of them:

- Feature a news story on your organisation's website.
- Promote it in your staff newsletter.
- Tweet about it using the hashtag [#BeReady](#).
- Post a Facebook status.
- Become a Dying Matters member if you're not already – and encourage friends and family to join as well. We have 30,000 members and counting - joining is free: [become a Dying Matters member](#).
- Receive regular updates on what we're up to: [sign up for our newsletter](#).
- Attend an Awareness Week event.