



Cancer Networks: St. Maarten Perspectives

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Outline

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- Advantages/ Benefits
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- Recommendations
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About The Positive Foundation

- **Our Mission:** Stimulate, educate and activate the consciousness of our community on aspects of self responsibility towards health improvement.
- Founded by Shelly & Dilys Alphonso in 1998, and have since organized month long, annual breast cancer awareness campaigns every October.
- **In 2009** - Dress in Pink Day was launched
- **In 2010** - Introduced a Grand Pink Parade through our capital, Philipsburg
- **In 2011** - Introduced vouchers for 100 free Mammograms



Positive Foundation Activities

Every October, our activities include:

- Public service announcements via “Women and Breast Health”
- Breast cancer awareness run/walk challenge,
- Free clinical breast examinations screens
- Information demonstration sessions on self-breast examination
- Distribution of educational literature
- The grand finale, a gala movie night for women only



Cancer NGO's on St. Maarten



Purpose: To inform the general Public about prevention, treatment and offer support to patients and relatives in regards to cancer.

Date of incorporation: The Foundation was incorporated on June 16th, 1997 at the then office of Mr. Elco Rosario Notary on Sint Maarten.

Founders: Elizabeth M. Richardson & Shermina Powell Richardson

Objective of foundation: To promote in the widest sense of the word the awareness amongst the general public on St. Maarten with regards to Cancer

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Cancer NGO's on St. Maarten Cont'd

Purpose: To be an unrelenting advocate in the fight against cervical cancer by creating greater awareness nationally about the disease, while promoting ways of prevention and early detection and serving as a reliable center for support and access to counseling for persons and families affected by cervical cancer.

Date of incorporation: March 28, 2012



Objectives:

- ✓ Raise awareness on the signs and symptoms of cervical cancer, the importance of cervical cancer screenings and HPV vaccinations
- ✓ Encourage PAP and HPV testing
- ✓ Provide support group, medical counselling and stimulate community support and participation.

Founder: Keoma Hamer



Roles of NGO's

1. Awareness:

- Distribution of literature
- Information sessions
- Radio/ Television Programs
- Annual Walks
- Memorabilia- posters, ribbons
- Fundraisers

2. Assistance:

e.g. Case by case basis
International Alliances

3. Support Groups:

Counseling, hospital / home visitations, Advise ,Transportation

4. Services:

Mastectomy Bra's, Prosthesis, Wigs, Headscarves



St. Maarten's Coalition/Network for Non Communicable Diseases

Collaboration:

1. Government
2. Businesses
3. NGO'S
4. Caregivers
5. Health Care Providers



Rationale

- Collectively can secure more achievement in comparison to individual NGOs
- Provide a quick overview of all the offered services and information opportunities/activities
- Collectively can better stimulate change in legislation/methodology; ensure accountability conduct research and evaluation of provided services

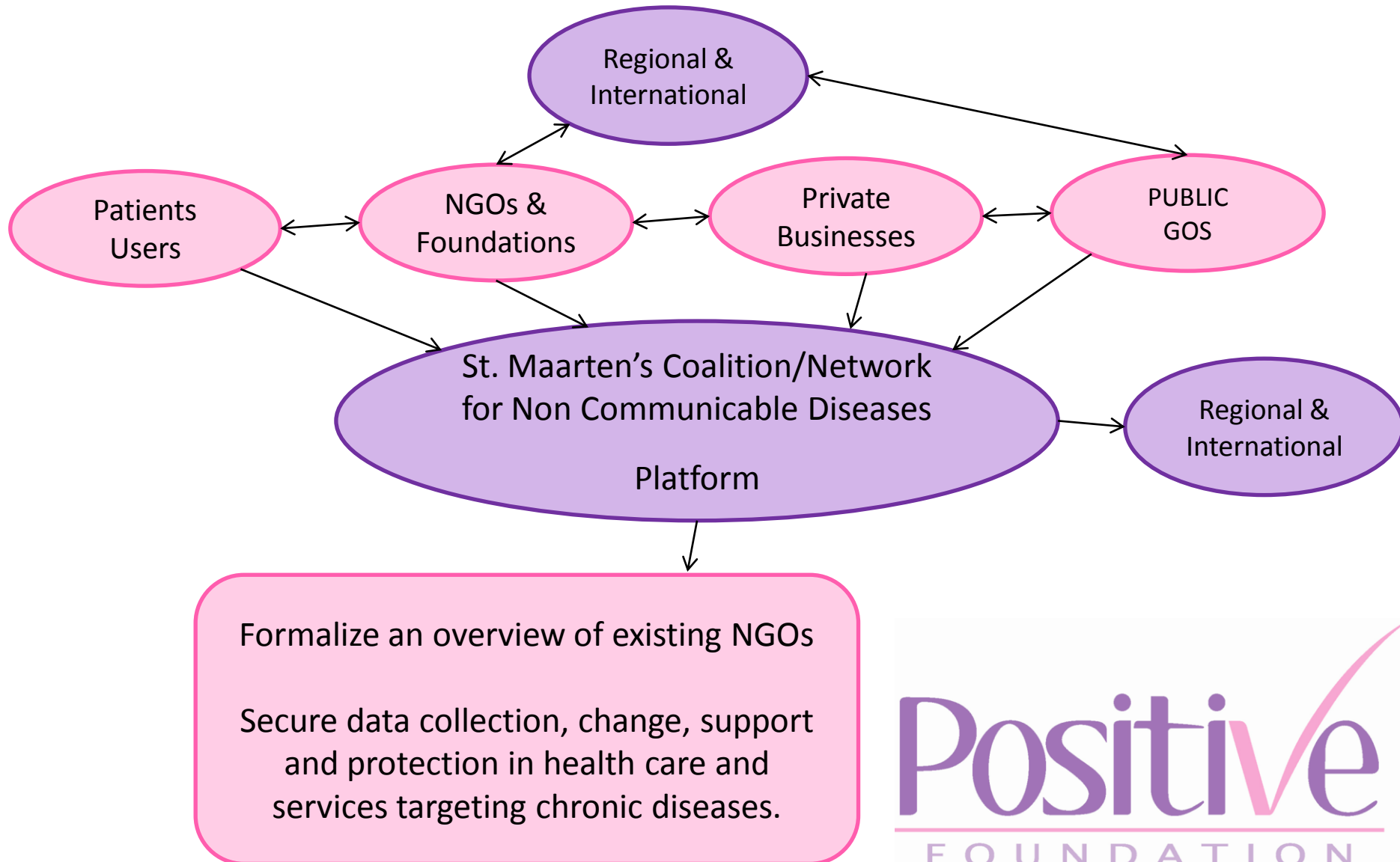


Rationale

- A local uniformed mission of NGOs dealing with chronic illness
- One collective voice with one message to influence the community and stakeholders
- Need for regional and international connection and recognition (support)



How would the Model Look?



Advantages/Benefits

- International and Regional accessibility
 1. Expertise
 2. Financing
 3. Literature
- More efficiency in collective collaboration
 1. Together have more resources or volunteers to assist in providing information and services
 2. More persons to promote the information and also to get the message out in the community



Advantages/Benefits

- Statistical trend because one place to collect information from the various group
- Collectively discuss and review procedures and screening methodology to bring a positive and effective change
- Avoid burn out of the existing volunteers
- Improve communication among and within the existing NGOs



Disadvantages/ Challenges

- Exhaust of financial resources
- Selling the concept of a network
- Bombarding the community with too much information/activities from various sources/angles
- Unable to stimulate legislative change (individually unable to influence entire political system)
- Dual governments with different health agendas



Disadvantages/ Challenges

- Inefficient use of resources
- Splintered concepts; services and awareness
- No data collection source or avenue
- Lack of a structured continuous education and upgrading for Health Care Providers and volunteers
- Formulating/recognizing all health care advocates under one umbrella to deal with chronic illness



Recommendations

- Require an inventory of existing NGOs dealing with Chronic diseases so that we can be better equip for a multi sector approach in advocacy
- Tap into regional expertise to assist in setting up the operations, educate volunteers so that they are more effective
- Need to discuss and identify a suitable local model. St. Maarten may need to consider a National Health Network because of its size and population dynamics
- Solicit community and political support for such a network
- Adapt legislation to facilitate the development of the network and to ensure comprehensive support by all stakeholders



Recommendations

- Acquire, facilitate the specialty of respective health care professionals to ensure comprehensive care
- Structure and develop a national system to gather and archive statistics
- Assist in developing and submitting a plan of approach with phased work plans to achieve the integration



Where are we now?

- St. Maarten is in the discussion phase on how to structure such a network
- The understanding and the need of such a network still needs to be made clear to the NGOs, Decision Makers and the community



Closing Thoughts

When health is absent
Wisdom cannot reveal itself
Art cannot manifest
Strength cannot fight
Wealth becomes useless
And intelligence cannot be applied

WHO World Health Day SMS

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