CANCER UNITED Member Impact Report 2026:

Supporting Recovery, Wellbeing and Life Beyond Cancer

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Executive Summary

Background

Following the successful baseline Member Impact Survey conducted in 2024/25, CANCER UNITED undertook a second survey in 2026 to evaluate members' experiences, measure the charity's ongoing impact and identify opportunities for future service development.

About the Survey

The survey gathered responses from 53 members which represents 10% of the active CANCER UNITED membership (23% in 2024/25); only 10 of the 53 respondents had also completed the previous survey. It explored members' experiences across the cancer pathway, from the day of diagnosis, through treatment, rehabilitation and longer-term recovery.

Areas covered are:

- Members' experiences before joining CANCER UNITED
- Physical, emotional and social outcomes
- Experiences of CANCER UNITED's services
- Overall satisfaction
- Suggestions for future development

The survey combined quantitative measures with open-ended questions, allowing members to describe in their own words how CANCER UNITED has influenced their lives.

Key Findings

The survey provides evidence that CANCER UNITED delivers meaningful improvements across various aspects of recovery and wellbeing.

Physical Recovery

CANCER UNITED's specialist exercise programmes continue to be one of the charity's greatest strengths, with the survey having found:

- 86% of members reported improved physical health and fitness
- 72% increased their physical activity
- 83% felt more motivated to remain active

Many members described regaining strength, confidence and independence following treatment.

Rather than simply encouraging exercise, CANCER UNITED supports members to rebuild physical function during and after cancer treatment within a safe, supportive and specialist environment.

Emotional Wellbeing

Members described improvements in emotional wellbeing and confidence; the survey found:

- 85% experienced improved emotional wellbeing
- 72% reported increased confidence
- 67% felt more hopeful about the future
- 66% felt better able to cope with cancer

Many members explained that CANCER UNITED helped them move beyond surviving cancer and towards rebuilding their lives.

Social Recovery

One of the strongest themes throughout the survey was the importance of friendship, belonging and peer support with the survey having found:

- 75% made new friendships
- 51% felt less isolated
- 74% experienced a stronger sense of belonging
- 70% reported improved social interactions

Members repeatedly described CANCER UNITED as a very welcoming community where they felt safe and understood by others who had experienced cancer.

These findings demonstrate that social recovery is an integral part of CANCER UNITED's model of care and support.

Trust in CANCER UNITED

Members expressed exceptionally high levels of trust in CANCER UNITED's services; the survey found:

- 100% agreed that CANCER UNITED treats people with kindness and empathy
- 98% felt welcomed when attending activities
- 96% felt safe and comfortable
- 98% rated the quality of services highly
- 96% believed activities were delivered by appropriately trained staff

These extremely positive ratings reflect the charity's commitment to providing high-quality, person-centred support.

Overall Satisfaction

Overall satisfaction with CANCER UNITED was exceptionally high:

- 89% rated the charity as *Excellent*
- 11% rated it as *Good*
- 100% would recommend CANCER UNITED to healthcare professionals for patient referral

Every respondent scored CANCER UNITED 8 out of 10 or higher when asked how likely they were to recommend the charity to someone affected by cancer.

Overall Interpretation

The findings demonstrate that CANCER UNITED provides considerably more than exercise classes or support groups. In fact, the charity delivers a holistic model of prehabilitation and rehabilitation that combines specialist exercise, peer support, wellbeing activities and compassionate community support to address the physical, emotional and social consequences of cancer.

The consistency of positive findings across both quantitative and qualitative measures suggests that CANCER UNITED has become an important part of many members' recovery journey and the local community. Improvements were evident across different aspects of wellbeing, indicating that the charity supports people not only to recover physically but also to rebuild confidence, build and strengthen social connections and regain hope for the future and a positive mind set.

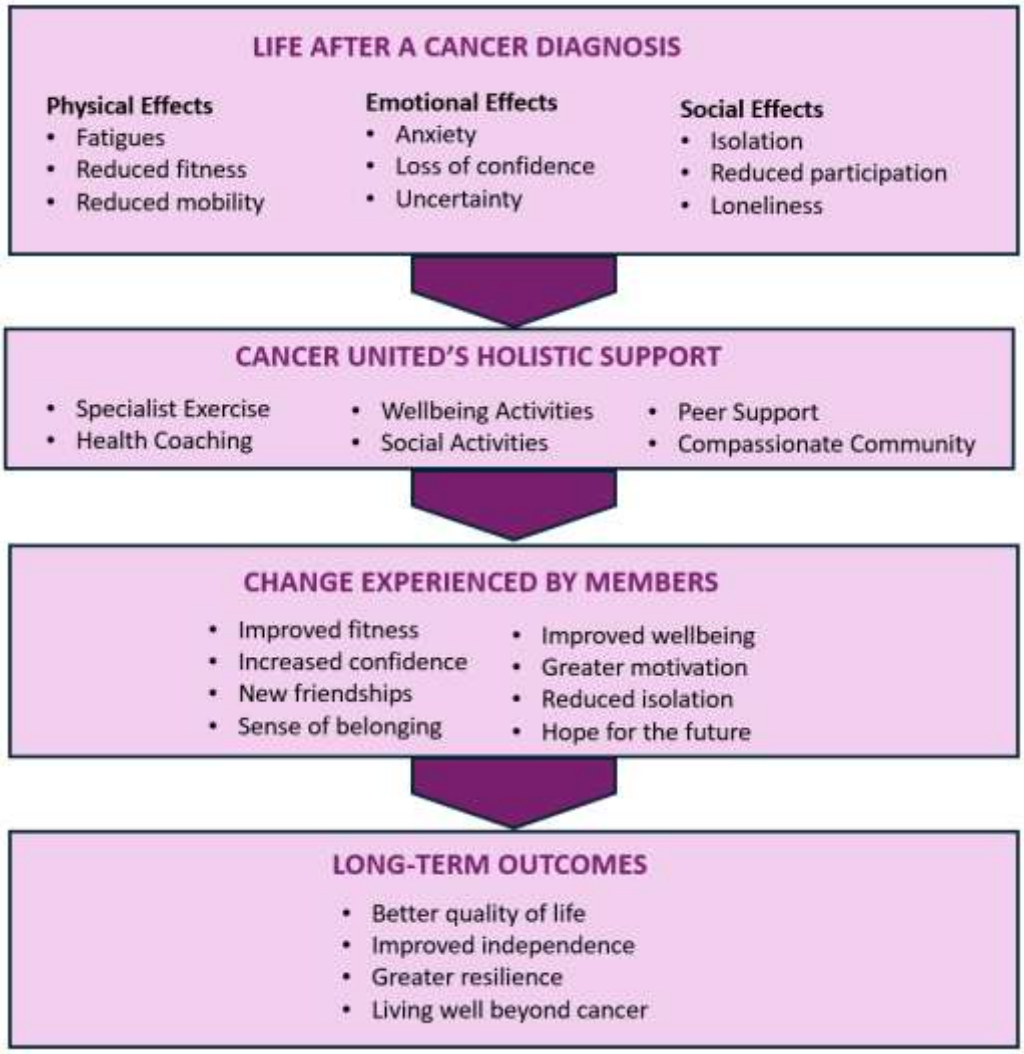
Members' suggestions for improvement focused primarily on expanding existing services rather than addressing deficiencies. This is reflected through the high level of satisfaction and the growing demand for CANCER UNITED's specialist support.

Looking Ahead

The survey provides a strong evidence base for CANCER UNITED's future development. The findings support the need for continued investment in specialist cancer prehabilitation and rehabilitation programmes, expansion of services through the planned CANCER UNITED Centre of Excellence, stronger partnerships with NHS organisations and healthcare professionals, research partners and continued evaluation to measure long-term impact.

As increasing numbers of people live with and beyond cancer (one in two people are facing cancer at some point in their life), community-based rehabilitation services such as CANCER UNITED take an increasingly important role in complementing clinical care, supporting research and enabling people not only to survive cancer but to live with the illness and well beyond it.

CANCER UNITED Impact Pathway



Key Findings at a Glance

Outcome	Result
Members reporting improved physical health	86%
Improved emotional wellbeing	85%
More motivated to stay active	83%
Made new friendships	75%
Improved sense of belonging	74%
Less isolated	51%
Rated CANCER UNITED 'Excellent'	89%
Would recommend CANCER UNITED	100%

1 Introduction

In 2024/25, CANCER UNITED conducted its first Member Impact Survey to gain a better understanding of the lived experiences of people affected by cancer, from diagnosis and treatment through to recovery and living beyond cancer. The survey provided valuable baseline evidence of the challenges faced by members and demonstrated the positive impact of CANCER UNITED's activities and services.

The 2026 Member Impact Survey was designed as a follow-up to the 2024/25 survey. It built on the original questionnaire to explore members' experiences and the ongoing impact of CANCER UNITED. While the two surveys are not identical, the 2026 survey retained a number of comparable themes and measures, allowing patterns and areas of continuity to be identified. It also introduced additional questions to provide a more detailed understanding of members' physical, emotional and social wellbeing and to identify areas for future development.

The survey was conducted between April and July 2026 and collected information on:

- Member demographics
- Members' cancer journey
- Involvement in CANCER UNITED's activities
- Changes in physical, emotional and social wellbeing since joining the charity
- Experiences of CANCER UNITED's services
- Feedback and opportunities for future service improvement

This report summarises the findings of the 2026 survey, compares them with the results of the 2024/25 baseline survey, and highlights key patterns, outcomes and areas for future development. The findings will help to further develop CANCER UNITED's services and provide in-depth evidence of the charity's impact for members, healthcare professionals, funders and stakeholders.[1]

2 Survey Format

The Member Impact Survey consisted of a 9-page questionnaire developed by CANCER UNITED staff and was based on the successful 2024/25 survey. The document opened with an introductory page explaining the purpose of the survey, how the information would be used, and the confidentiality arrangements before progressing through seven themed sections covering:

1. About the respondent
2. Experience of cancer
3. Involvement with CANCER UNITED
4. Impact of CANCER UNITED
5. Experience of CANCER UNITED services
6. Overall rating
7. Feedback and personal reflections

The questionnaire was based on a mixed-method approach. It combined quantitative and qualitative research methods to provide measurable outcomes and collect personal insights. It explored members' wellbeing before joining CANCER UNITED, the challenges experienced throughout their cancer journey, the impact of the charity in areas such as emotional wellbeing, physical health, confidence, social connections, hope for the future, and members' overall satisfaction with the organisation. The final section invited respondents to describe in their own words how CANCER

[1] The survey was conducted and analysed by Dr Gesine Hermann, a trustee of CANCER UNITED and correspondence author of this report.

UNITED had influenced their lives, identify the benefits they valued most, and collect suggestions for improvements. With the combination of structured questions and personal narratives, statistical findings could be complemented by qualitative data.

All active members registered on the CANCER UNITED membership database were invited to participate in the survey. These included members attending the CUFITTER gym, the OUTSINGCANCER Choir, support groups and other CANCER UNITED activities. Members received an electronic copy of the questionnaire via email and were invited to return the completed survey electronically by a specified deadline. Printed copies were also made available for members who preferred to complete the survey on paper.

The questionnaire used a variety of response formats appropriate to the information being collected. These included 5-point Likert scales, multiple-choice questions, multiple-response checkbox questions, binary / three-option questions, a 0–10 Net Promoter Score (NPS) question, and open-ended free-text questions.

All respondents were assured that the information they provided would be treated confidentially and managed in accordance with CANCER UNITED's data protection policy. Each participant was allocated a unique Member Identification Number (Member ID) to ensure that names were excluded from the dataset before analysis. Completed questionnaires were securely registered and all responses were entered into a purpose-built electronic workbook specifically designed to facilitate efficient data management and statistical analysis.

3 Profile of Survey Respondents

The purpose of this section is to provide an overview of the people who took part in the survey. Understanding the characteristics of respondents (age group, cancer diagnosis, treatment experience, referral pathways and awareness of prehabilitation and rehabilitation service) helps ensure that the survey findings are interpreted appropriately and can be compared with the previous survey. Percentages throughout this report are rounded to the nearest whole number and may therefore not sum to exactly 100%.

3.1 Gender Ratio and Response Rate

The survey was completed by 53 CANCER UNITED members of whom 31 were female and 22 male. This represents a female-to-male ratio of 58% to 42% as shown in Figure 1. The 2024/25 survey showed a similar gender profile suggesting that the gender balance among respondents remained relatively stable.

The respondents who completed the survey represent 10% of the active membership; the previous survey showed a response rate of 23%. The reasons for the lower response rate are not fully understood. The membership base has increased since the previous survey, and most respondents had not participated in the earlier survey; only 10 of the 53 respondents had also completed the previous survey. It is therefore not possible to determine whether the lower response rate reflects differences in engagement, the changing membership profile, or other factors.

The survey was offered electronically, with printed copies available on request. Of the respondents, 64% chose to complete the printed version, demonstrating that paper-based participation remained important to members.

The lower response rate should be taken into consideration when interpreting the findings, as the respondents may not fully represent the wider CANCER UNITED membership. Nevertheless, the responses provide valuable insight into the experiences of participating members and identify themes across the quantitative and qualitative findings. Comparisons with the previous survey should therefore be regarded as indicative patterns rather than direct statistical comparisons.

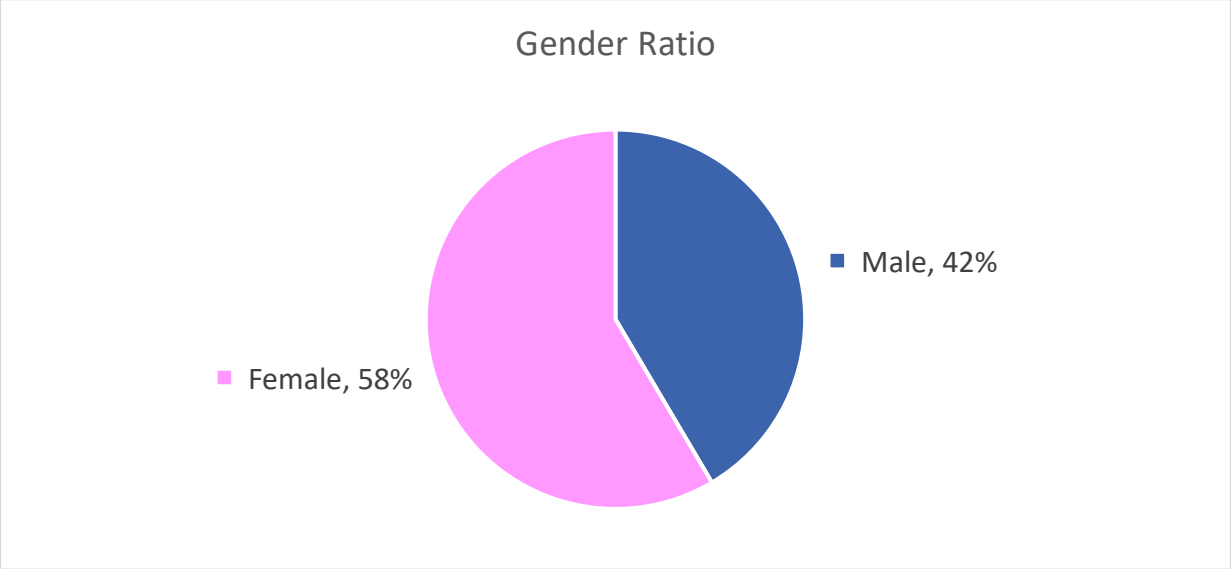


Figure 1 – Gender distribution within the group of survey respondents.

3.2 Age Groups

Different age groups are represented in the survey as shown in Figure 2. Most respondents (49%) belong to the 75+ group, 36% to 65-74, 9% to 55-64, 6% to 45-54, the groups of 35-44 and 20-34 years of age were not represented in this survey.

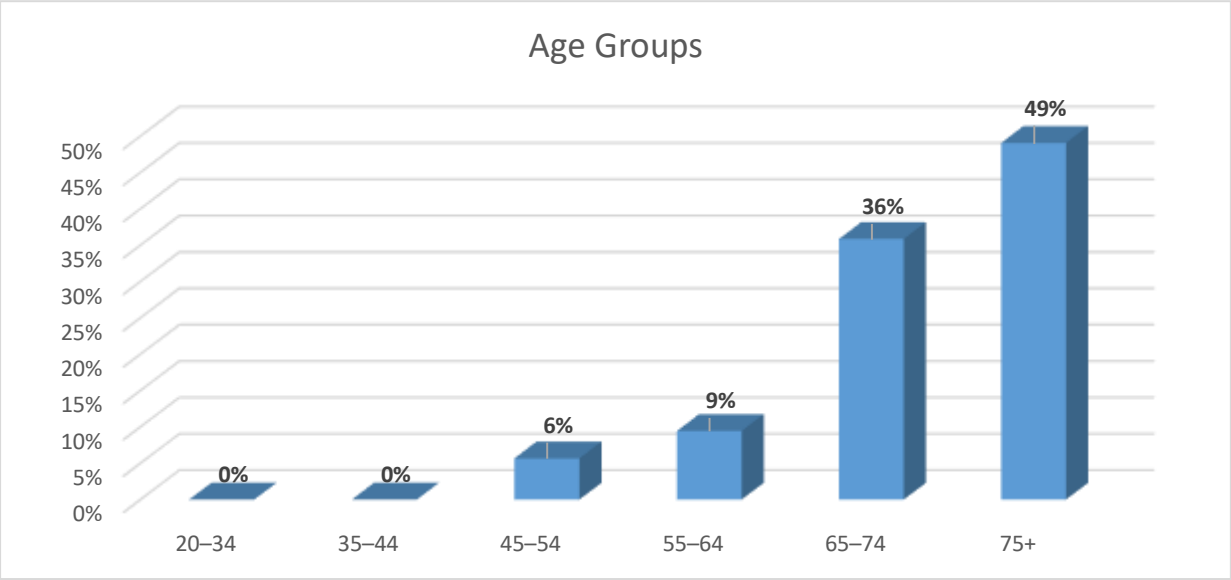


Figure 2 – Age groups represented in the survey.

3.3 Treatment Status

Figure 3 shows the treatment status of respondents. 19% were living with ongoing cancer or received palliative treatment at the point of survey, 62% of respondents had their treatment completed, 11% were receiving treatment, nobody was awaiting treatment and 8% did not require immediate treatment or were family members of people who had a cancer diagnosis.

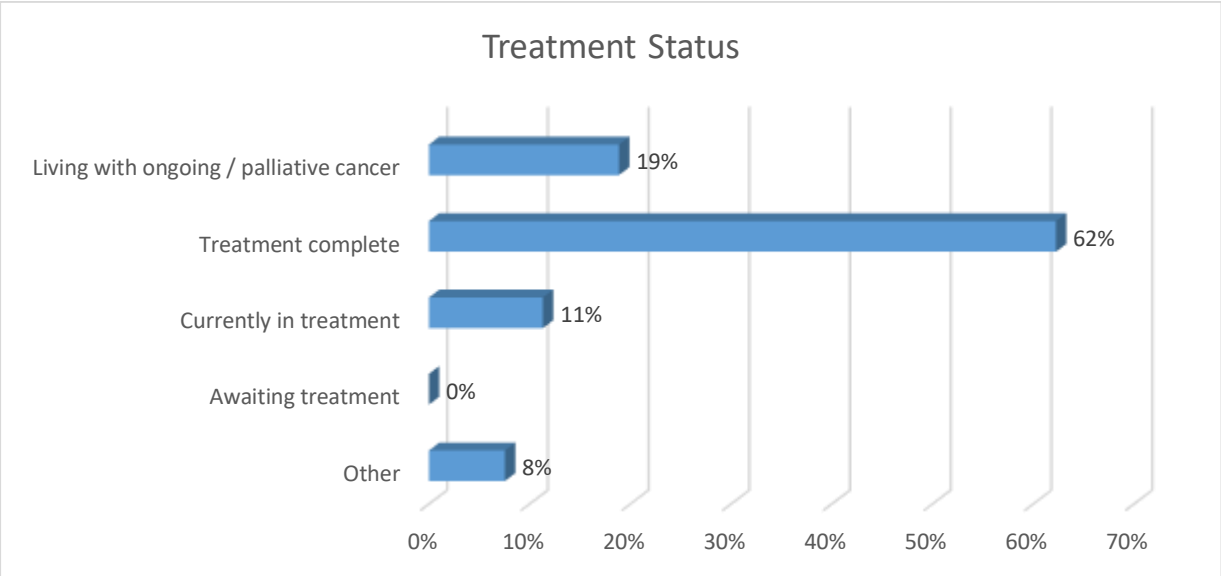


Figure 3 – Treatment status of survey respondents.

3.4 Occupational Status

Looking at the occupational status of the respondents, 85% were retired when completing the survey, 9% working, 2% not working due to health issues, 2% were carers and 2% did not specify (Figure 4). For comparison, in the previous survey 75% of respondents were retired and 25% were working, the other categories were not represented.

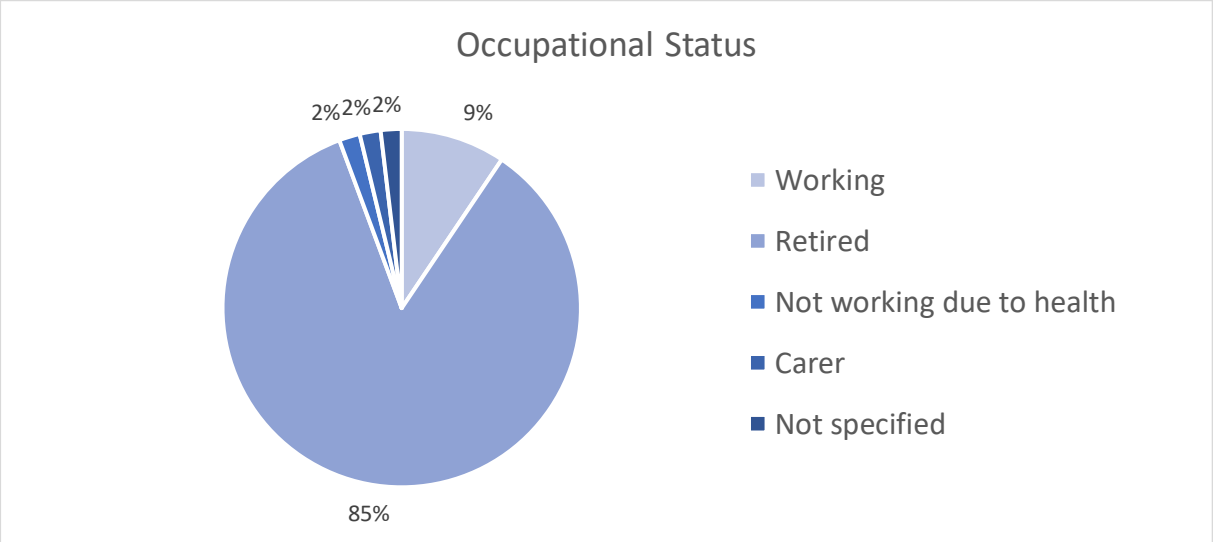


Figure 4 – Occupational status of survey respondents.

3.5 Types of Cancer

The survey respondents suffered from a wide range of diverse cancer types, with some individuals having been diagnosed with multiple cancers. Figure 5 illustrates the different types of primary cancer survey respondents had been diagnosed with. It also includes CANCER UNITED members who had no cancer but were living with someone with cancer (7%, dark green segment). The largest group were women with breast cancer (34%, yellow segment) followed by prostate cancer (17%, dark grey segment) and bowel/colon cancer (13%, light grey segment). Blood related cancers accounted for 13%, which included Non-Hodgkin lymphoma patients (orange and light green segment). All other types of cancers shown in Figure 5 are present with frequencies of 2-4%.

This survey's distribution of different types of cancer is very similar to the one found in the previous 2024/25 survey. Breast cancer is most prominent followed by prostate and bowel cancer. These three cancers are also among the top 4 listed cancers in the NHS Cancer Registration Statistics – England, 2022.[2]

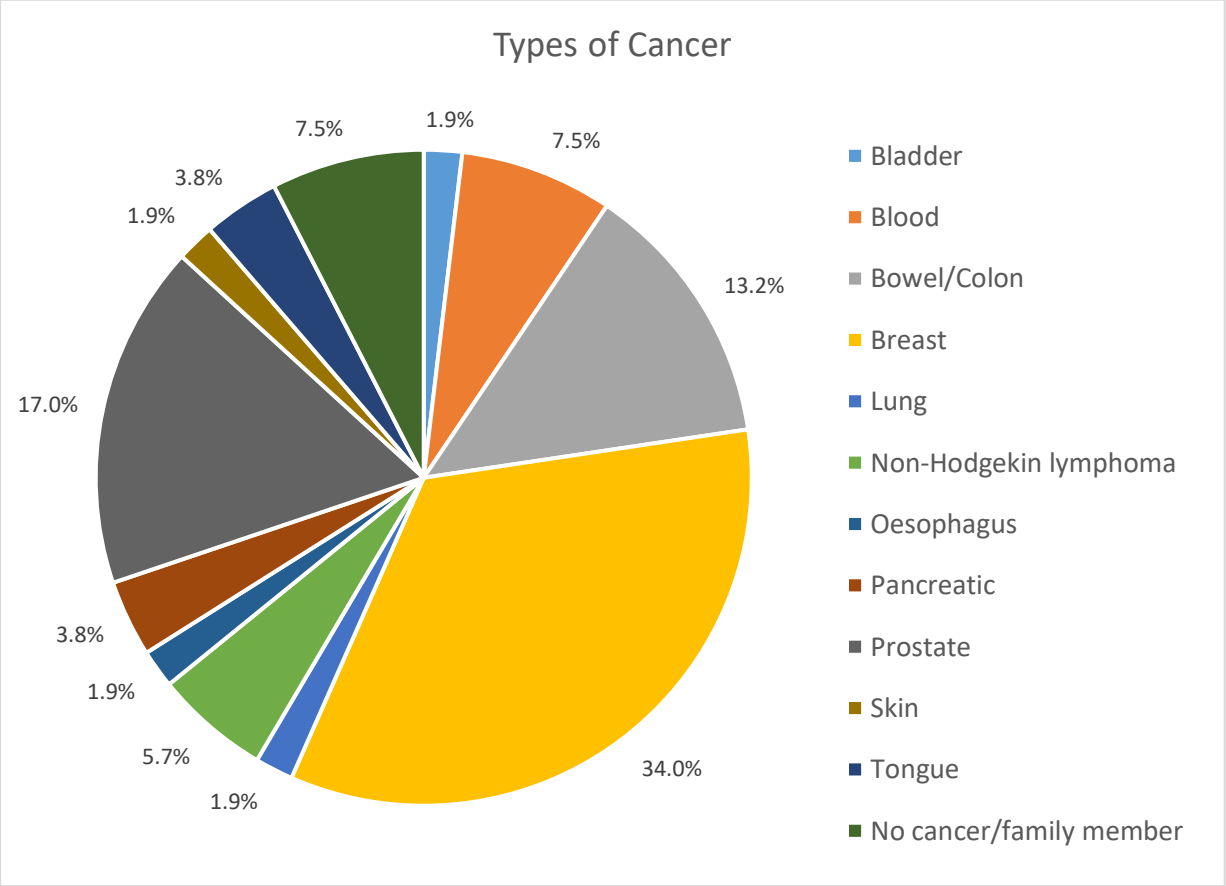


Figure 5 – Frequency of primary cancer types within the group of survey respondents.

3.6 Time since Diagnosis of Primary Cancer

Figure 6 shows the time that had lapsed since survey respondents had their primary cancer diagnosis; 2% were diagnosed less than one year prior to completing the survey, 25% between 1 and 2 years,

[2] Data available from: https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/cancer-registration-statistics/england-2022/incidence-by-main-cancer-group.

17% between 3 and 4 years, 37% between 5 and 10 years, and 19% were diagnosed more than 10 years ago.

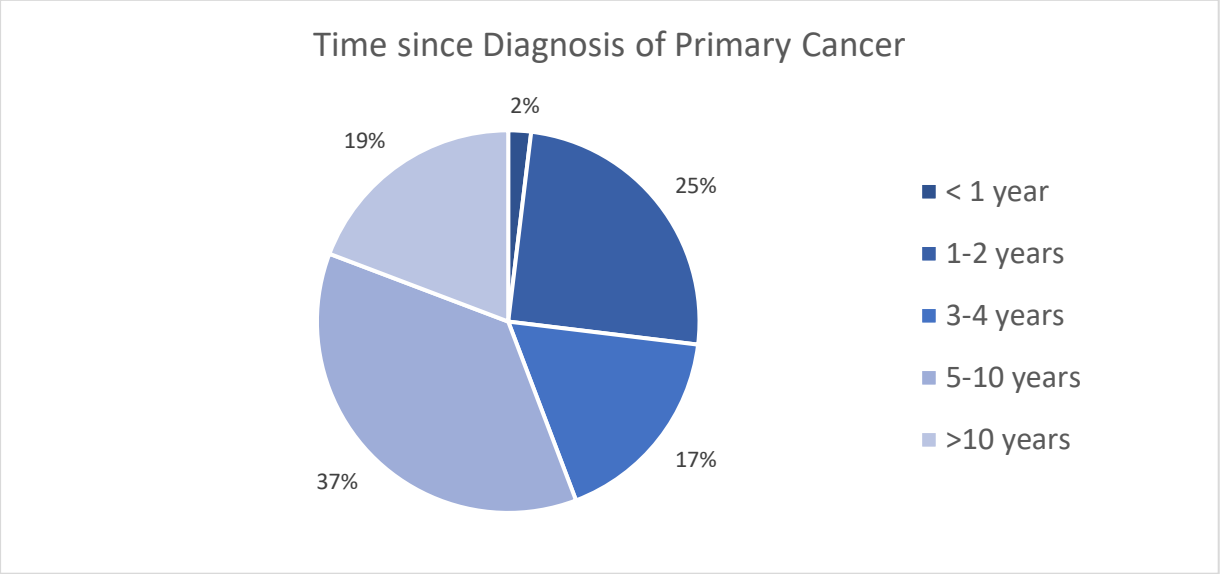


Figure 6 – Time elapsed since diagnosis of primary cancer.

3.7 Finding out about CANCER UNITED

When members were asked how they found out about CANCER UNITED, the following options were given as possible answers:

A. Friend, family member, or colleague
B. Healthcare professional (GP, nurse, hospital staff)
C. Leaflets at GP surgery or hospital
D. Online search (e.g. Google)
E. Social media (e.g. Facebook, LinkedIn)
F. Charity event (e.g. walk, run, fundraiser, awareness day, street market)
G. I don't remember
H. Other

As summarised in Figure 7, 25% were made aware of CANCER UNITED through friends, family members, or a colleague (A), 31% through a health care professional (B), 8% through leaflets at a GP surgery or hospital (C), 8% through online searches (D), 2% through social media (E), 2% through a charity event (F), 4% could not remember (G), 8% through other pathways (e.g. charities, local advertising) (H). 2% found CANCER UNITED both through a friend, family member or colleague and also through a health care professional (A+B), 2% through a friend, family member or colleague and also by seeing a leaflet at a GP surgery or hospital (A+C), 2% through a friend, family member or colleague and also social media (A+E), 4% through a healthcare professional and also leaflets at GP surgery or hospital (B+C), 2% through online searches and also another charity (D+H). Overall, answer options A and B were the most prominent ways of becoming aware of CANCER UNITED.

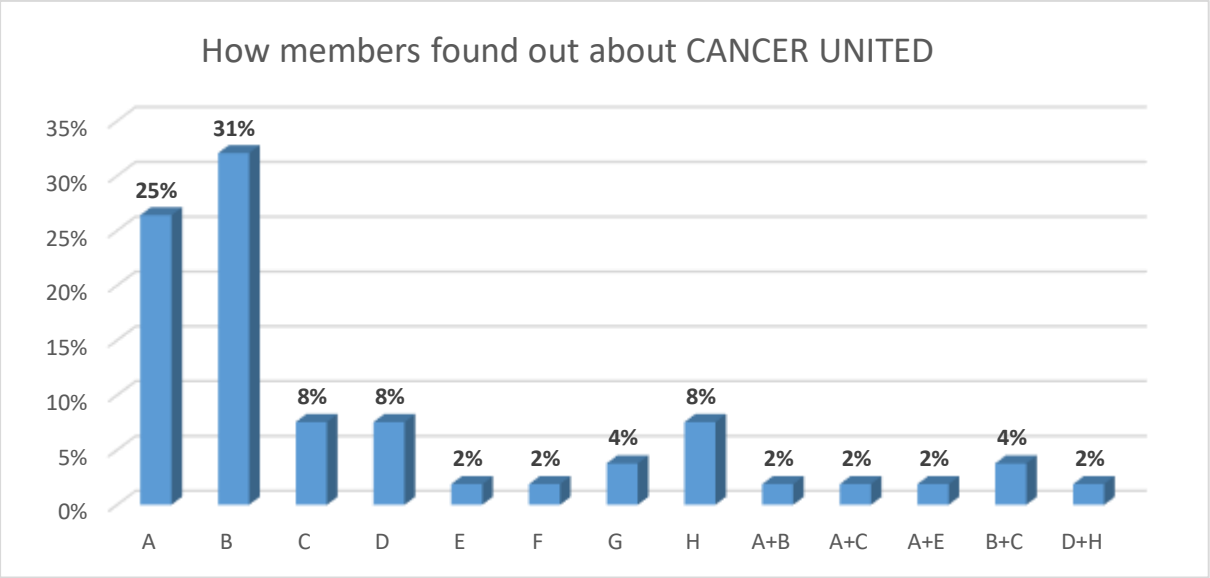


Figure 7 - How members found out about CANCER UNITED.

Overall, the respondent profile of this section demonstrates that:

- CANCER UNITED supports a diverse membership (wide range of ages, different types of cancers and stages of recovery)
- Members join CANCER UNITED at different stages of their treatment and recovery
- Friends, family member, or colleague and healthcare professionals are the primary routes through which members hear about CANCER UNITED
- Awareness promotion of CANCER UNITED's specialist prehabilitation and rehabilitation services remains low with social media, internet, charity events and leaflets at surgeries and hospitals
- The demographic profile of respondents remained broadly comparable to the previous survey.

4 Respondents' Experience with Cancer Diagnosis

When assessing the impact of CANCER UNITED, it is important to first understand the challenges members experienced following their cancer diagnosis, especially since cancer affects much more than physical health. It can influence emotional wellbeing, confidence, employment, finances, family life and also social relationships. This section explores the extent to which respondents were affected across these areas and provides a baseline against which the contribution of CANCER UNITED can be evaluated.

Respondents' overall state of wellbeing before joining CANCER UNITED is described in Figure 8. 4% of respondents rate their overall wellbeing as very poor (light blue segment), 21% as poor (orange segment), 44% as fair (grey segment), 23% as good (yellow segment), and 8% as excellent (dark blue segment).

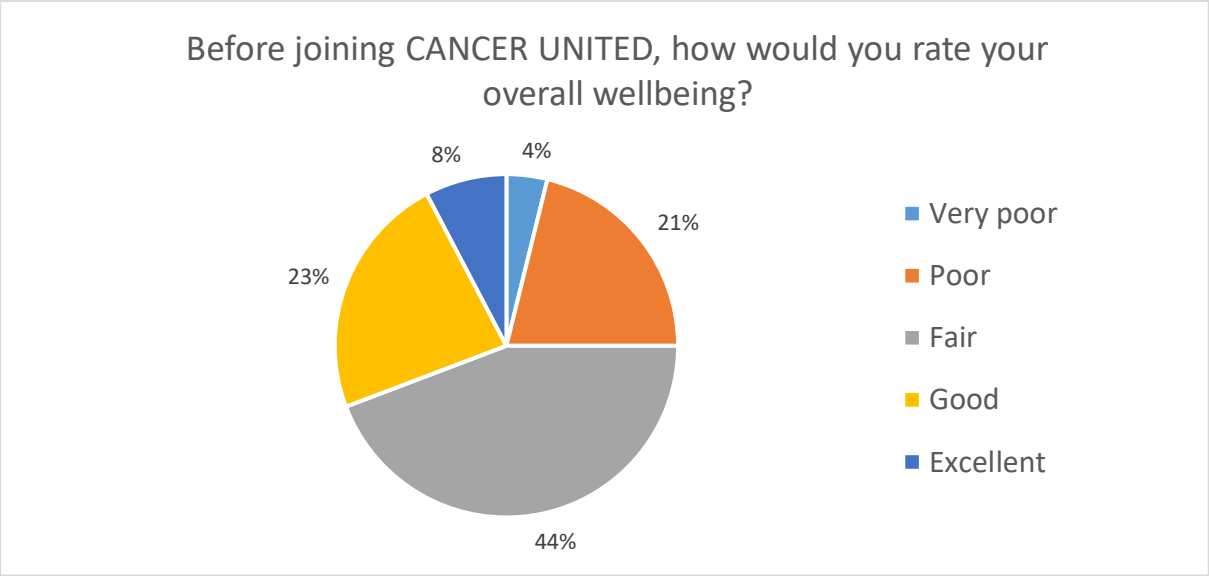


Figure 8 –Overall wellbeing before joining CANCER UNITED.

4.1 Emotional Wellbeing

The emotional wellbeing of members was affected as a result of a cancer diagnosis. As highlighted in Figure 9 the majority of respondents (56%) were moderately affected; however, 20% experienced a severe effect and 8% a very severe effect, whereas 4% were not at all affected and 8% only mildly, for 4% the question was not applicable.

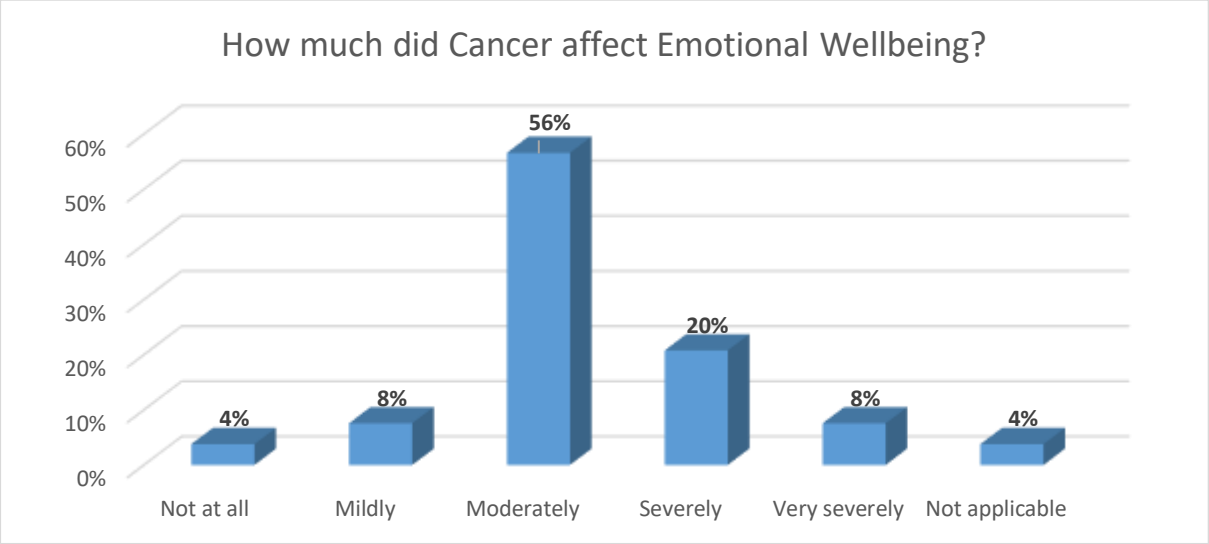


Figure 9 – Effect of a cancer diagnosis on emotional wellbeing.

4.2 Physical Health

The physical health was significantly affected by being diagnosed with cancer. Figure 10 shows that only 4% of respondents' physical health was not at all affected by the cancer diagnosis, 6% experienced a mild effect, 45% were moderately affected, 28% experienced a severe effect and 11% a very severe effect. 6% said this was not applicable to them, presumably as they did not have cancer themselves, but were living with or caring for someone who had cancer.

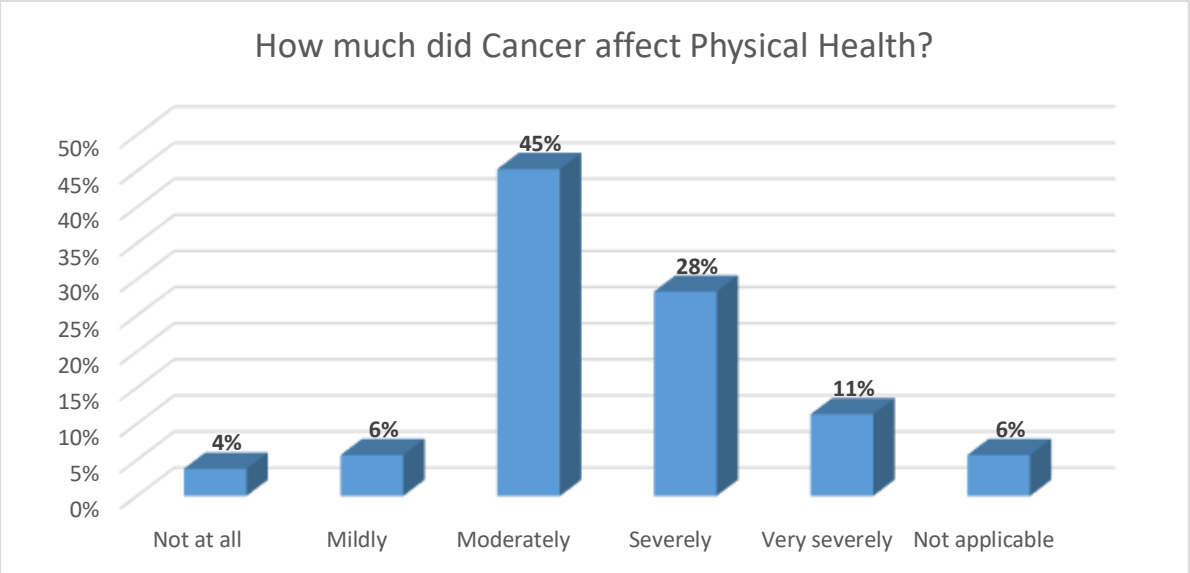


Figure 10 – Effect of a cancer diagnosis on physical health.

4.3 Family Life

Members' family lives were similarly affected by their cancer diagnosis as their emotional wellbeing (Section 4.1) and physical health (Section 4.2). Figure 11 demonstrates that 8% of respondents felt that cancer did not affect their family life, for 23% it had a mild effect, 30% were moderately affected, 28% severely, and 2% very severely. 9% said it was not applicable, presumably because they did not have cancer themselves or had no close family.

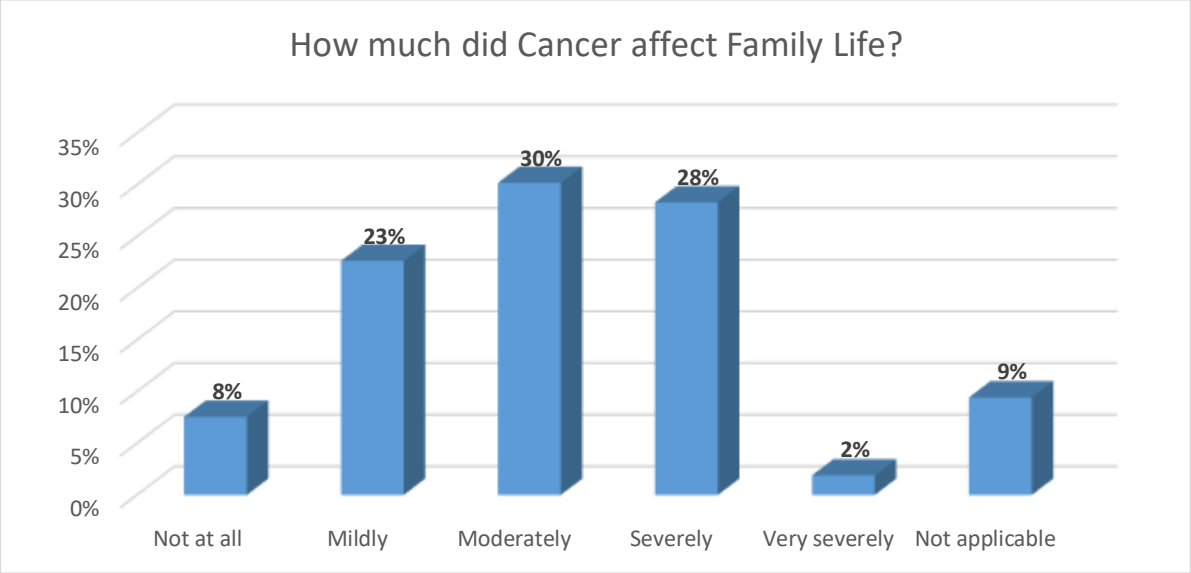


Figure 11 – Effect of a cancer diagnosis on family life.

4.4 Finances

The impact of a cancer diagnosis on finances was for the majority of respondents of little significance as shown in Figure 12. For 51% of respondents the cancer diagnosis had no financial impact, 13% were mildly financially affected, 13% moderately, 6% severely, and 2% very severely. 15% said the financial aspect was not applicable to them.

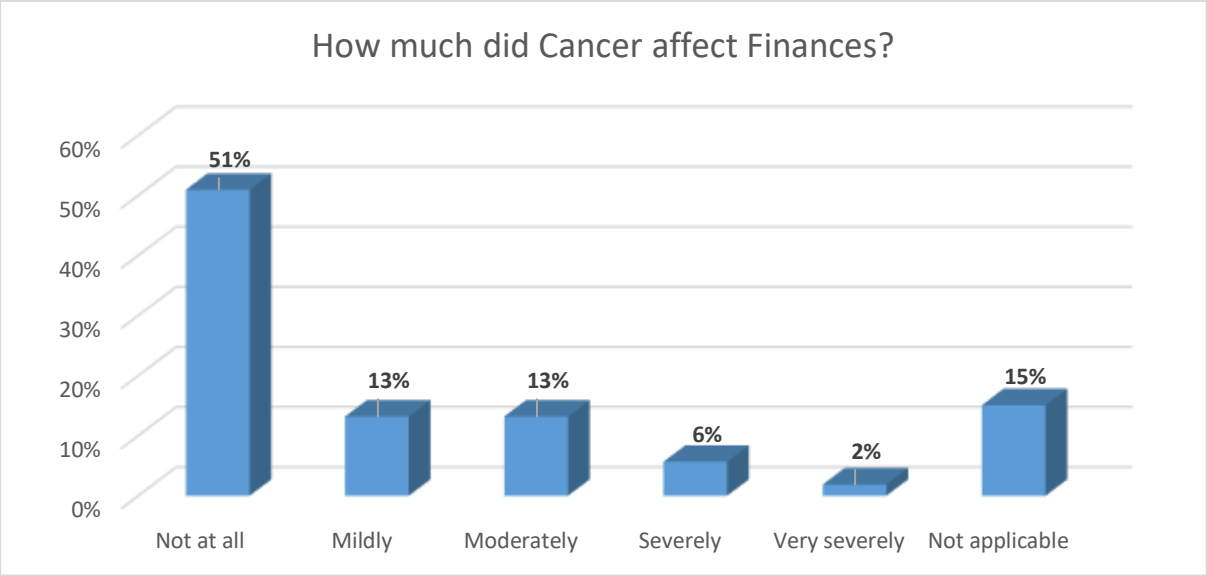


Figure 12 – Effect of a cancer diagnosis on financial situation.

4.5 Social Life

The social life of members was even more affected by their cancer diagnosis than emotional wellbeing (Section 4.1), physical health (Section 4.2), and family life (Section 4.3). Figure 13 shows 11% of respondents felt their diagnosis had no effect on their social life, 17% were mildly affected, 32% moderately, 30% severely, 8% very severely and for 2% this was not applicable.

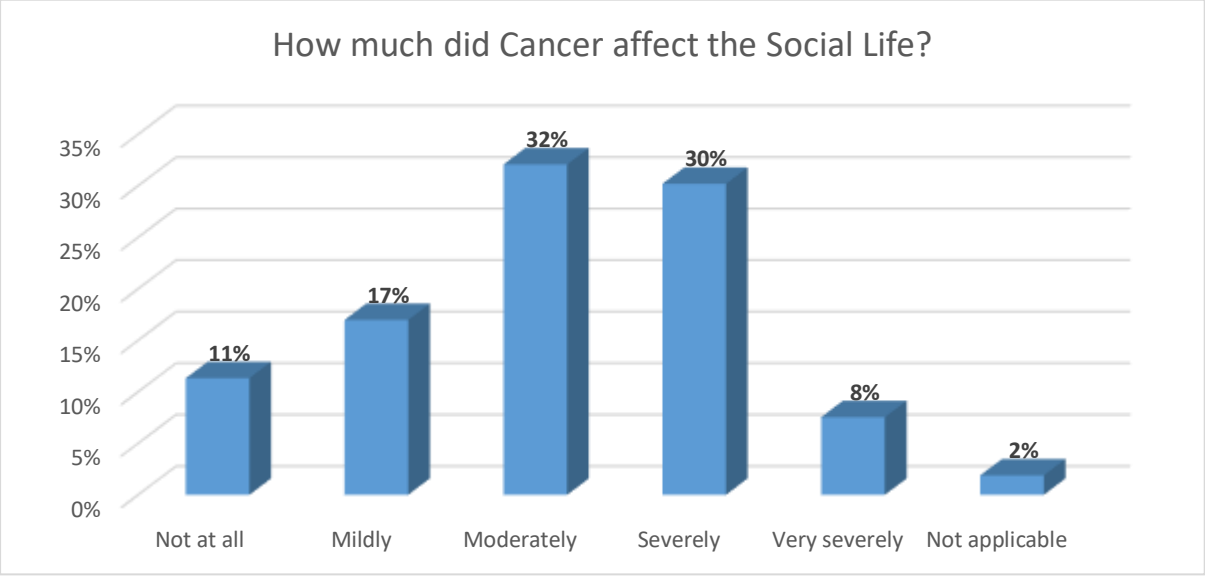


Figure 13 – Effect of a cancer diagnosis on social life.

Overall, respondents described cancer as having an impact on many aspects of their lives. While the severity varied between individuals, most experienced moderate or severe effects in more than one area. This illustrates the complex and long-lasting consequences of a cancer diagnosis. Furthermore, it shows that the impact of cancer goes far beyond medical treatment, and a holistic approach is required to address recovery successfully and offer long-term support after treatment.

In summary, this section highlights that:

- Cancer has a wide-ranging impact, affecting physical, emotional, social and practical aspects of everyday life
- The majority of respondents reported moderate to severe effects in several areas, indicating the long-term consequences of cancer beyond clinical treatment
- Emotional wellbeing, physical health and social life are among the areas most affected
- Recovery involves much more than medical care and long-term support after treatment has ended

These baseline results are essential and lead to the next section that gives an insight into how and why CANCER UNITED's prehabilitation and rehabilitation programmes induce positive changes in members' lives and recovery processes.

Area affected	Main finding
Physical health	One of the most severely affected areas
Emotional wellbeing	Most respondents reported moderate or severe impact
Family life	Many experienced reduced independence
Financial wellbeing	Varied, but several experienced financial challenges
Social life	Isolation and reduced participation were common

5 Impact of CANCER UNITED

Having explored the challenges members experienced following a cancer diagnosis (Section 4), this section looks at the difference CANCER UNITED has made to their recovery and wellbeing. Members were asked to reflect on their membership and the changes they had experienced since joining the charity and having benefitted from a range of activities and support programmes. These findings provide valuable evidence of the contribution CANCER UNITED makes in supporting people to live well with and beyond cancer.

5.1 Membership, Activities and Attendance

The length of CANCER UNITED membership varied across the group of respondents. Figure 14 shows that 11% have benefitted from their membership for less than 6 months, 23% for 6-12 months, 28% for 1-3 years, 13% for 4-5 years and 25% for over 5 years.

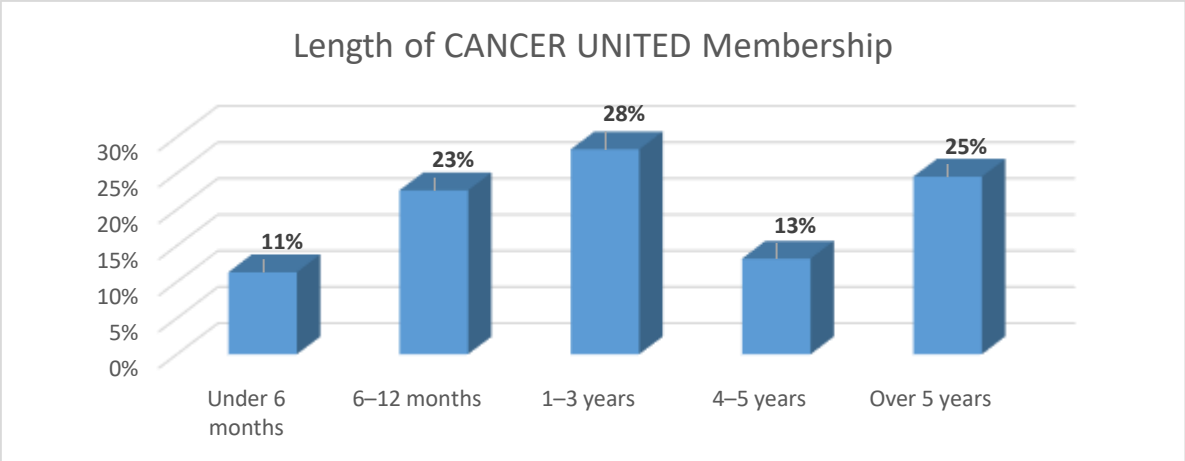


Figure 14 – Length of CANCER UNITED membership.

By being a CANCER UNITED member, a wide range of different activities and programmes are accessible, such as:

A. CUFITTER
B. Walking Football
C. Cycling
D. OUTSINGCANCER Choir
E. Support Group
F. CU Life Balance
G. OUT PLANT CANCER
H. Writing a New Chapter
I. Social Events
J. Volunteering

Looking at which activities members participate in most it becomes apparent that the CUFITTER gym is most frequented. 38% of members use the CUFITTER gym only (Figure 15, A), 17% attend gym classes and social events (A+I), 8% use the gym, attend support group and also enjoy social events (A+E+I), 6% use the gym and participate in walking football (A+B), 6% attend gym classes and sing in the OUTSINGCANCER choir (A+D), 6% attend gym classes, sing in the choir and enjoy social events (A+D+I), 6% attend support group meetings and enjoy social events (E+I), and 13% are summarised under 'other' who benefit from more than three of the above listed activities of different combinations.

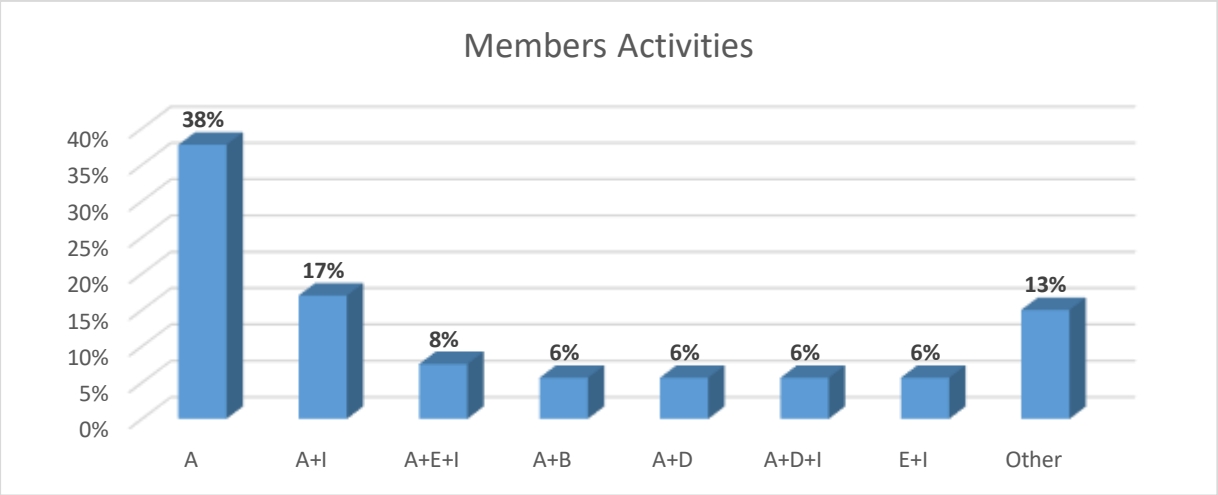


Figure 15 - Attendance of CANCER UNITED activities by members.

As shown in Figure 16 a vast majority of 84% of CANCER UNITED members benefit from the offered activities and programmes on a weekly basis. 6% use the services fortnightly or monthly, 4% occasionally and 0% rarely.

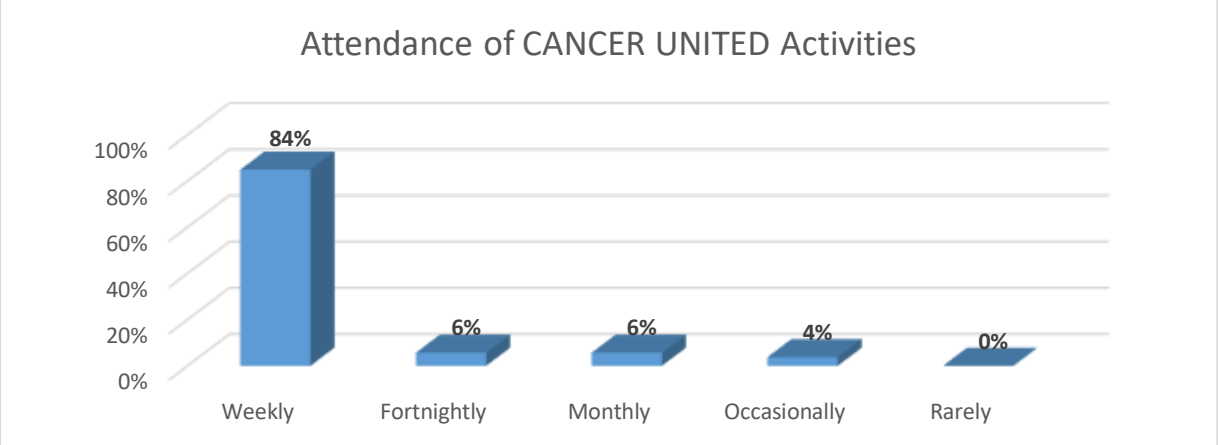


Figure 16 - Frequency of attending CANCER UNITED activities.

5.2 Impact Areas

This section evaluates the three main impact areas of CANCER UNITED:

- Physical recovery
- Emotional recovery
- Social recovery

PHYSICAL RECOVERY

CANCER UNITED's impact on the physical recovery after a cancer diagnosis is remarkable. According to Figure 17 the physical health and fitness improved significantly for respondents since joining CANCER UNITED. 58% of members felt physically much healthier and fitter, 28% reported to feel slightly better, 4% said there was no change, 4% felt slightly worse, 2% felt much worse and 4% did not answer the question.

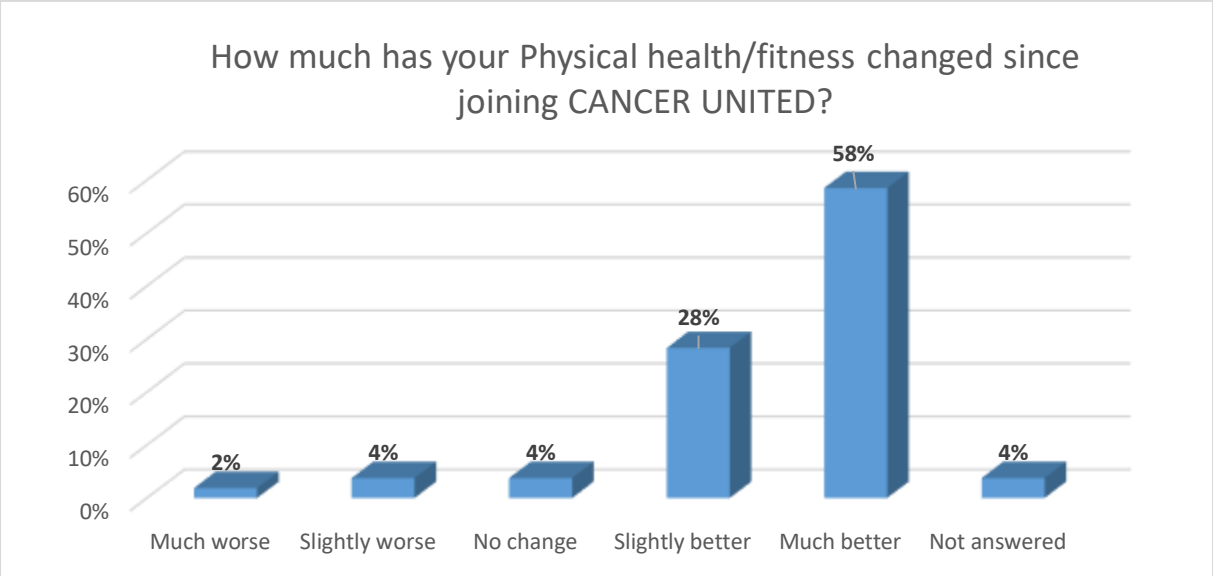


Figure 17 - Change of physical health and fitness since joining CANCER UNITED.

Also, the ability to carry out everyday activities was much improved for members since joining CANCER UNITED. 40% of respondents felt this had much improved (Figure 18). 24% said it was slightly better, 26% did not experience any change, 0% felt it was slightly worse, 2% found it much worse, and 8% did not answer the question.

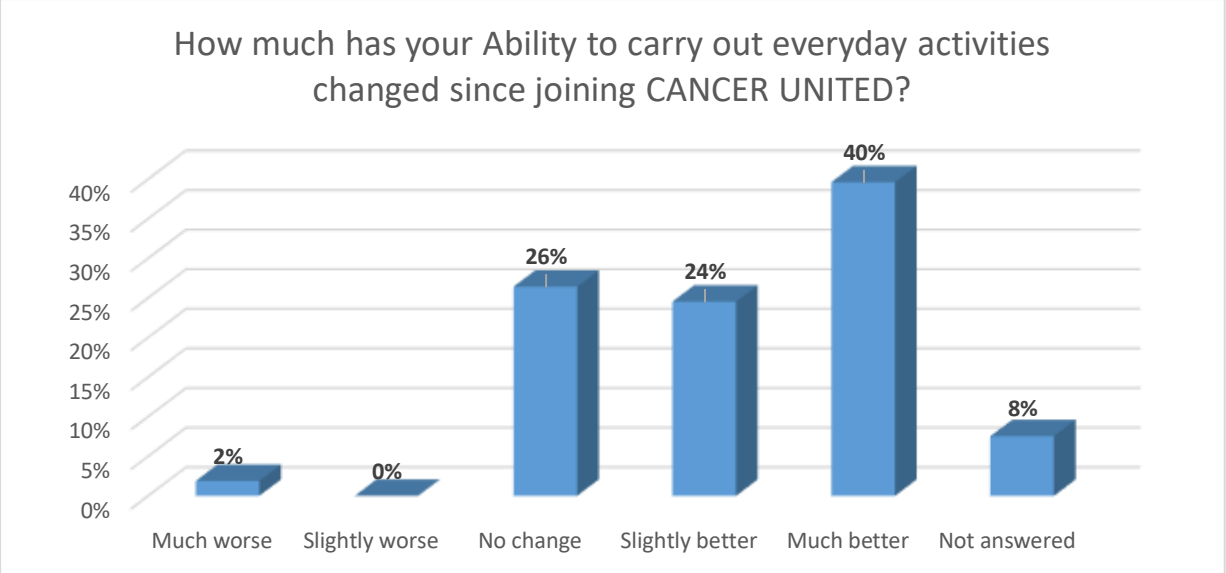


Figure 18 - Change in carrying out everyday activities since joining CANCER UNITED.

A remarkable effect was observed with regards to members' motivation to stay active since joining CANCER UNITED. 66% of respondents reported they felt much more motivated to stay active since joining CANCER UNITED (Figure 19), 17% found it slightly better, 11% observed no change, nobody felt it was slightly or much worse, and 6% did not answer the question.

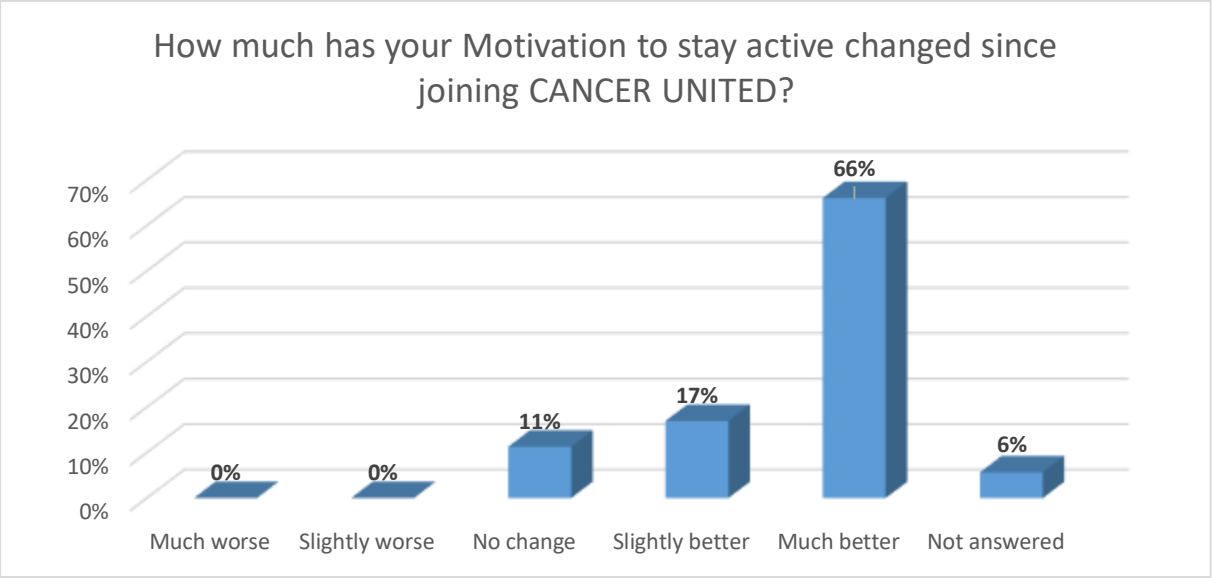


Figure 19 - Change of motivation since joining CANCER UNITED.

EMOTIONAL RECOVERY

A very positive effect was noticed by members regarding the change in emotional wellbeing since joining CANCER UNITED. A majority of 60% of respondents felt emotionally much better, 25% felt slightly better, 13% observed no change, nobody felt worse, and 2% felt much worse (Figure 20).

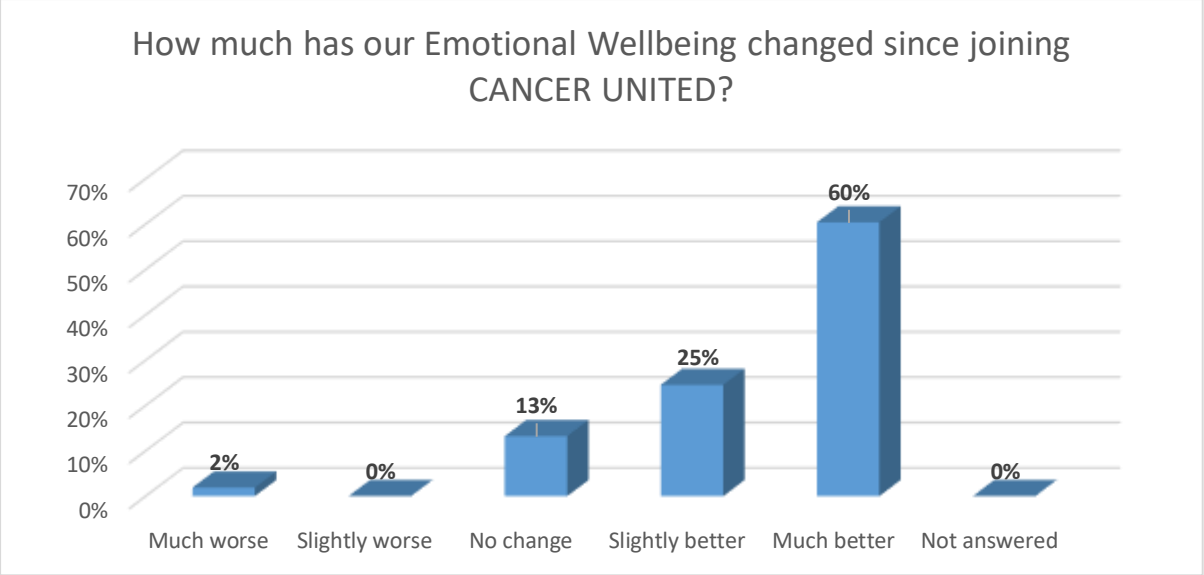


Figure 20 - Change of emotional wellbeing since joining CANCER UNITED.

CANCER UNITED's impact on improving member's confidence is also significant. 38% of respondents reported to feel more confident since joining CANCER UNITED (Figure 21). 34% said they felt slightly better, 24% observed no change, nobody felt slightly worse or much worse, 4% did not answer the question.

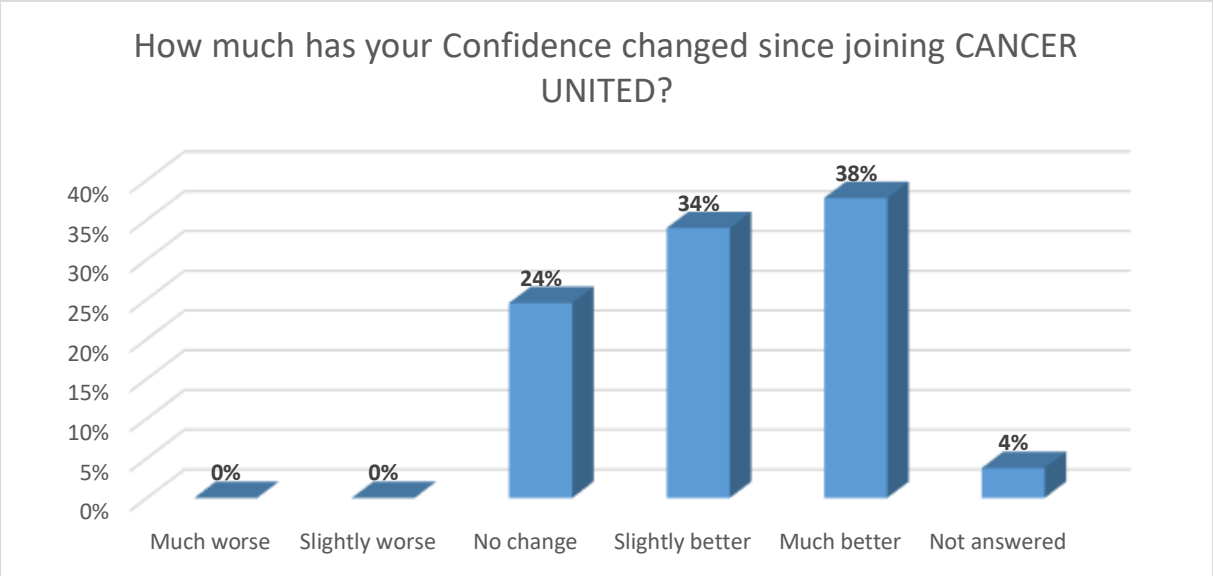


Figure 21 - Change of confidence since joining CANCER UNITED.

Another area where CANCER UNITED helped members significantly is adopting the ability to cope with cancer. Figure 22 demonstrates that 36% of respondents reported a much better ability to cope with the illness since joining the charity. 30% felt slightly better, 23% observed no change, nobody felt slightly worse or much worse, and 11% did not answer the question.

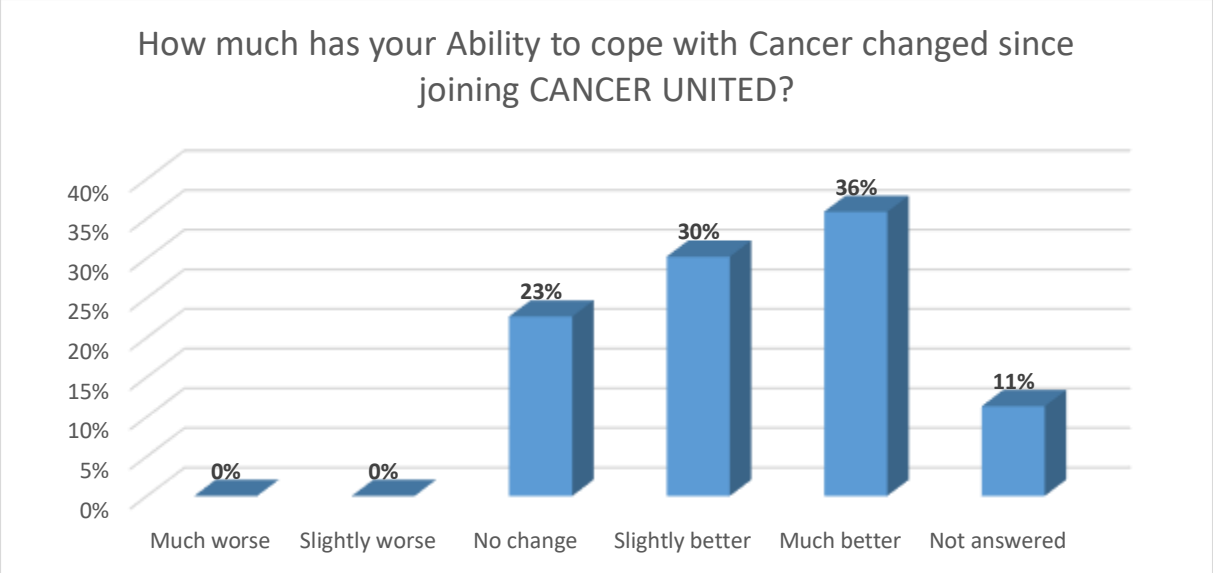


Figure 22 - Change of ability to cope with cancer since joining CANCER UNITED.

Also looking at future perspectives of members, it has become visible that CANCER UNITED helps people to raise levels of hope. Figure 23 highlights that 43% of members are much more hopeful about the future since joining the charity, 24% saw slightly better levels of hope, 21% observed no change, 6% felt slightly less hopeful, nobody felt much worse, and 6% did not answer the question.

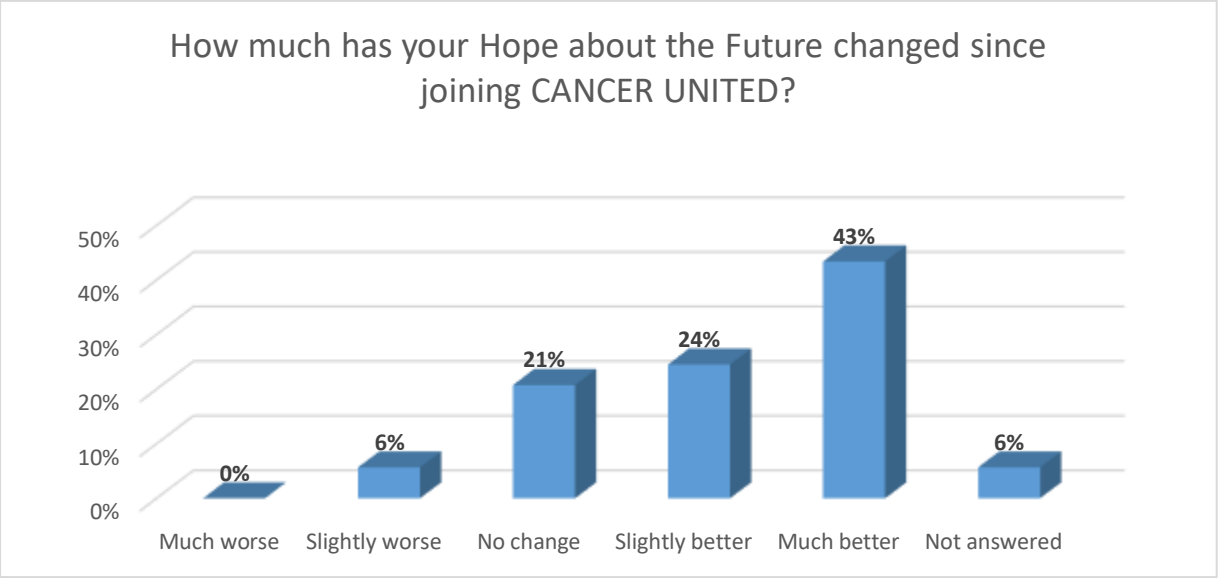


Figure 23 - Change about hope for the future since joining CANCER UNITED.

SOCIAL RECOVERY

Regarding social recovery, it must be noted that members' sense of belonging improved substantially since joining CANCER UNITED. The majority of 52% of respondents reported having developed a much better sense of belonging, 22% found a slightly better sense of belonging, 22% observed no change, 2% felt it was slightly worse, nobody felt much worse, and 2% did not answer the question (Figure 24).

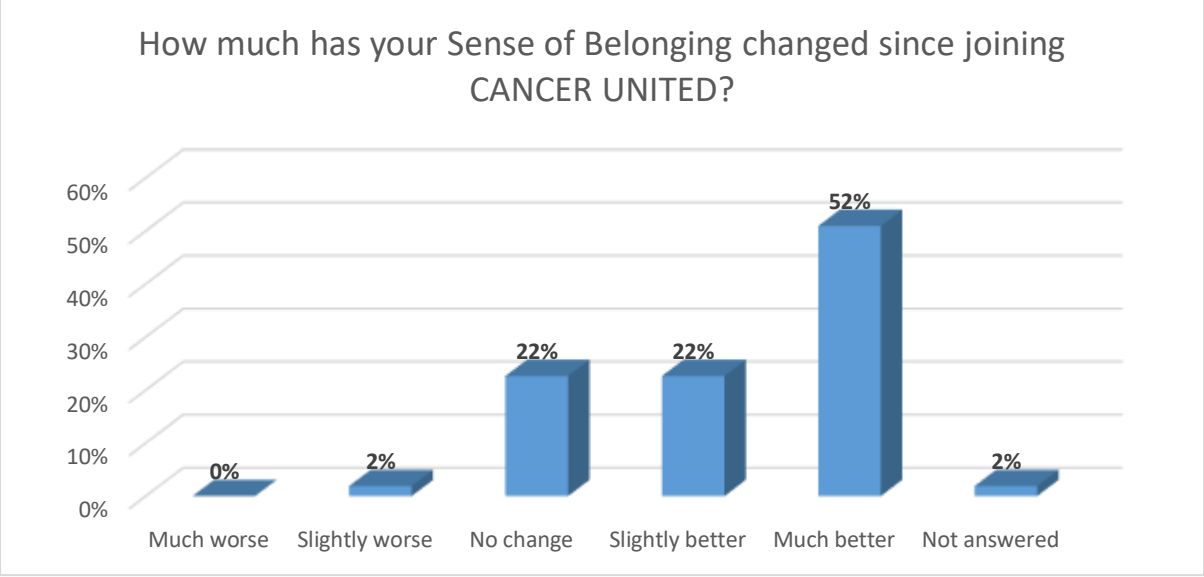


Figure 24 - Change of sense of belonging since joining CANCER UNITED.

Looking at how much social interactions had changed since joining CANCER UNITED, 42% of respondents reported to have much better social interactions. 28% said it was slightly better, 24% felt there was no change, 0% said it was lightly worse, 2% found it much worse and 4% did not answer the question (Figure 25).

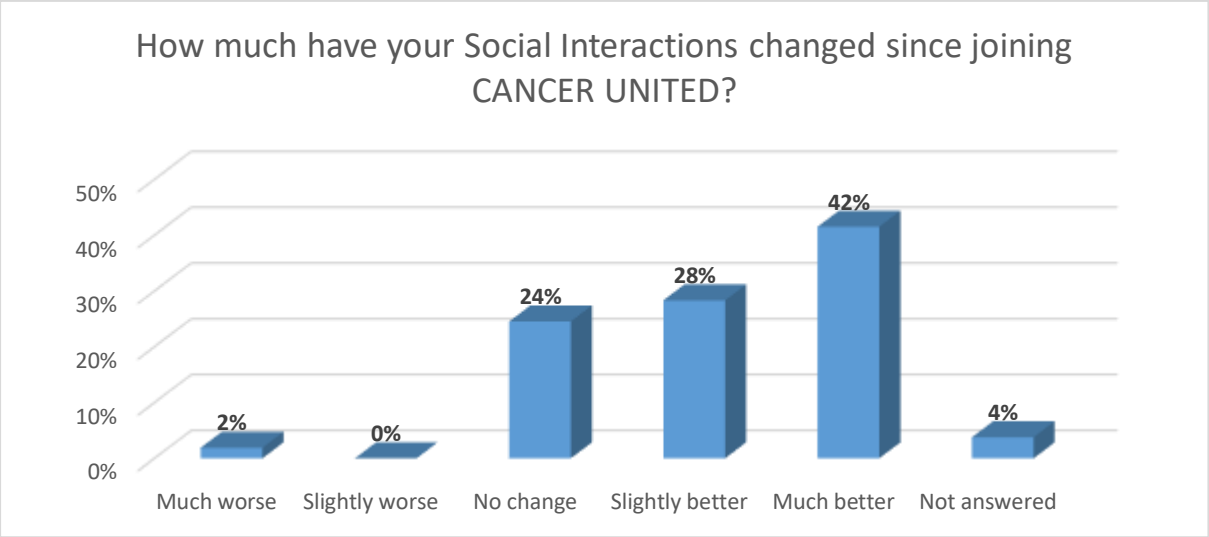


Figure 25 - Change of social interaction since joining CANCER UNITED.

These findings demonstrate that CANCER UNITED has a very positive and meaningful impact across different areas of recovery. Members reported improvements not only with their physical health and fitness but also with their emotional wellbeing, their level of confidence and motivation, their social connections and consequently their quality of life. These outcomes are interconnected; improved physical strength can enable greater confidence, also new and strengthened friendships and peer support help reduce isolation and encouraged continued participation in health-improving activities.

The findings are further underlined by the consistent answers respondents gave when asked which changes they had observed in themselves since joining CANCER UNITED. A list of 12 possible answers was offered and respondents were allowed to give multiple answers. Table 1 shows for each answer the percentage of respondents had chosen the answer.

In line with the findings described above answers 1 and 2 were picked by 72% and 75% of respondents, showing that CANCER UNITED plays an important role in helping members to improve their physical fitness and social recovery by making new friends. 51% felt less isolated and established a more positive routine (answer 3 and 7) which evidences emotional recovery. All other answer options had a score of less than 50% but still highlighting that CANCER UNITED significantly assists with physical, emotional and social recovery. It is important to note that nobody picked the answer 10 - 'Experienced no noticeable changes' – suggesting that CANCER UNITED had throughout a positive effect on people.

Table 1 - Changes since joining CANCER UNITED.

Answer		Percentage
1	Increased your physical activity	72%
2	Made new friendships	75%
3	Felt less isolated	51%
4	Felt more confident socially	38%
5	Developed new skills or interests	21%
6	Returned to work or volunteering	21%
7	Established a more positive routine	51%
8	Felt more confident managing your health	43%
9	Better understood how to support your recovery	42%
10	Experienced no noticeable changes	0%
11	Experienced some negative impact	4%
12	None of the above	4%

Looking at how many answers from Table 1 each respondent picked, it is visible that most people chose more than one answer, and different combinations of answers. To list each observed combination of answers would have been complex. Therefore, Figure 26 shows just the correlation of given answers *vs* percentage of respondents. The majority of respondents (25%) gave 3 answers; 2, 4, and 5 answers were chosen by 13% of respondents; 7 answers by 9%, 1 and 8 answers by 6% and 0 and 9 answers by 2% each.

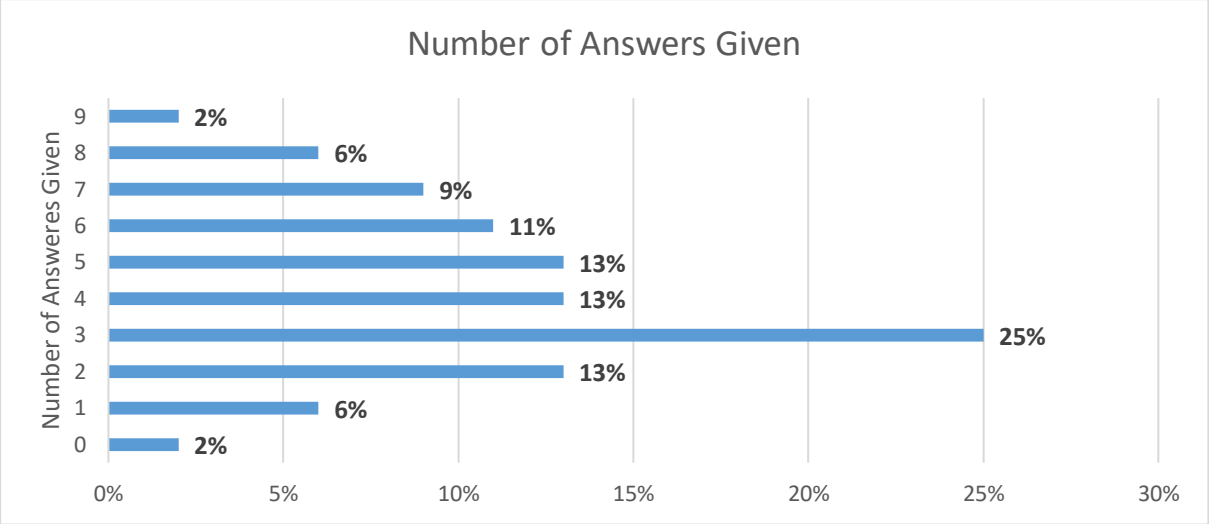


Figure 26 - Number of answers given by respondents.

The consistency of responses across multiple measures in this section suggests that the benefits experienced by members are not isolated outcomes but reflect the wider impact of CANCER UNITED's integrated model of support.

The holistic approach CANCER UNITED takes with helping members is further evidenced by the data shown in Figure 27. A majority of respondents feel that CANCER UNITED has made a noticeable change to their lives. 22% reported that a great deal was related to the charity, 47% felt CANCER UNITED had quite a lot to do with it, 19% found it there was some correlation, for 6% felt there was little, 0% said there was not at all a connection, and 6% did not answer the question.

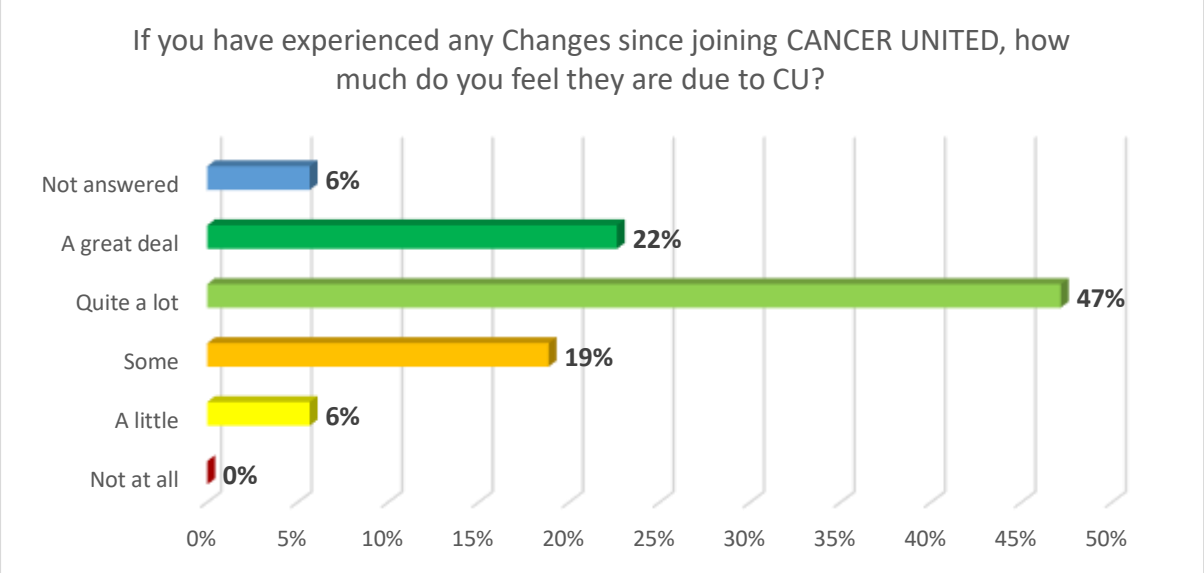


Figure 27 - Changes due to having joined CANCER UNITED.

In summary, this section shows that:

- CANCER UNITED delivers benefits across physical, emotional and social wellbeing, demonstrating a holistic approach to cancer rehabilitation.
- Members consistently reported improvements in physical health, confidence and emotional wellbeing, supporting the value of specialist exercise and rehabilitation programmes.
- Social connection showed as one of the charity's significant strengths, with many members reporting new friendships, reduced isolation and a stronger sense of belonging.
- The findings suggest that CANCER UNITED complements NHS cancer care by supporting recovery during and after treatment, when many people face significant physical and emotional challenges.
- The consistency of the reported outcomes provides evidence of the charity's positive impact on the lives of people living with and beyond cancer.

The evidence highlighted in this section demonstrates the positive outcomes members associate with their involvement in CANCER UNITED. This leads to the following section that explores members' experiences of the charity's services in more detail. It provides further insight into various areas of support that contribute significantly to these positive outcomes.

Dimension of recovery	Evidence of impact
Physical recovery	Improved fitness, increased physical activity, greater motivation
Emotional recovery	Improved wellbeing, increased confidence, greater resilience and hope
Social recovery	New friendships, reduced isolation, stronger sense of belonging
Overall wellbeing	Better quality of life and greater independence

6 Experience of CANCER UNITED services

Whilst the previous section explored the outcomes members experienced after joining CANCER UNITED, this section is focussed on the experience respondents made with the charity's services and also the factors that lead to those positive outcomes. Members were asked to evaluate the quality, accessibility and delivery of CANCER UNITED's activities and benefits, as well as the support provided by staff, instructors and volunteers. Their responses give a valuable insight into the areas of support of the organisation that members value most and why they have a positive impact on recovery and wellbeing.

QUALITY OF SUPPORT

When asking members if CANCER UNITED treated people with empathy and kindness a majority of 81% of respondents strongly agreed with this, 19% agreed, and nobody had a neutral view, disagreed, strongly disagreed or did not answer the question as shown in Figure 28.

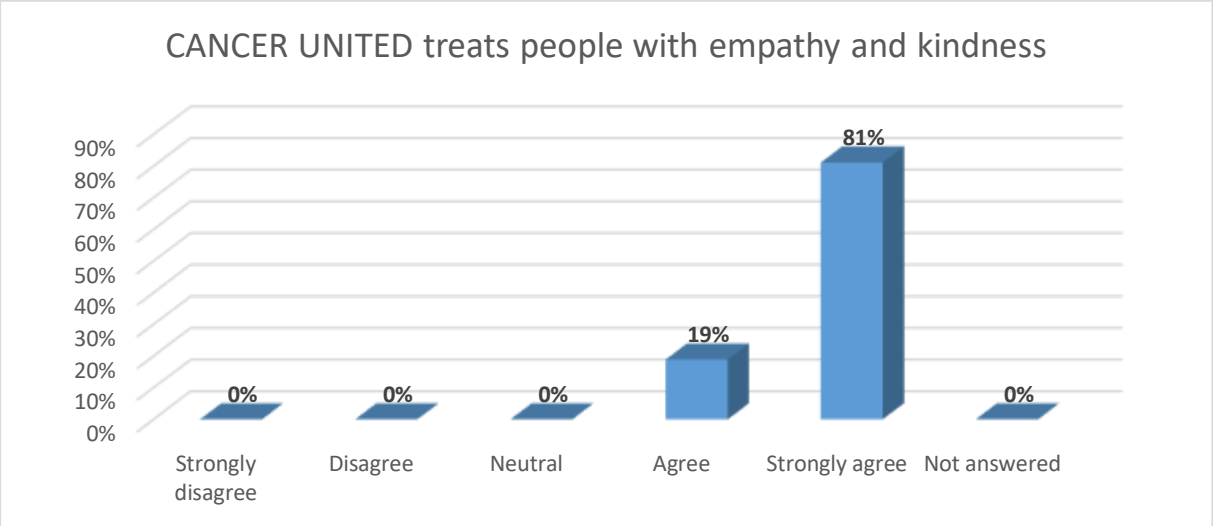


Figure 28 - Being treated with empathy and kindness at CANCER UNITED.

Looking at how welcomed people feel at CANCER UNITED, a majority of 79% said they strongly agree with the statement of feeling welcomed, 19% agreed, 2% did not answer the question, and nobody took a neutral stance, disagreed or strongly disagreed (Figure 29).

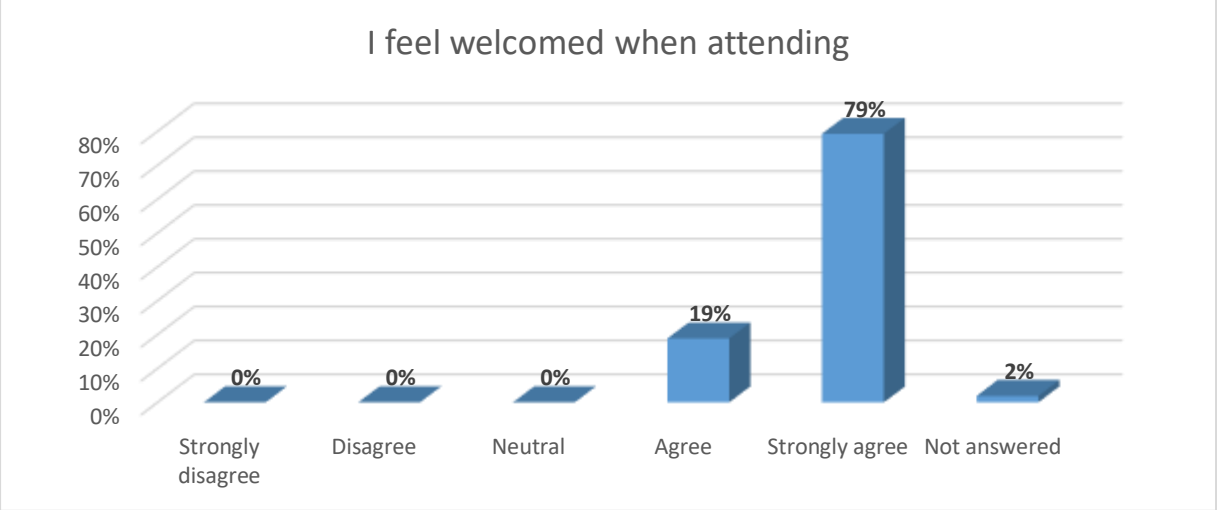


Figure 29 -Being welcomed at CANCER UNITED.

Regarding feeling safe and comfortable, 77% of respondents strongly agree that they feel safe and comfortable when attending activities at CANCER UNITED. 19% agreed, 2% took a neutral stance, 2% did not answer the question, and nobody disagreed or strongly disagreed (Figure 30).

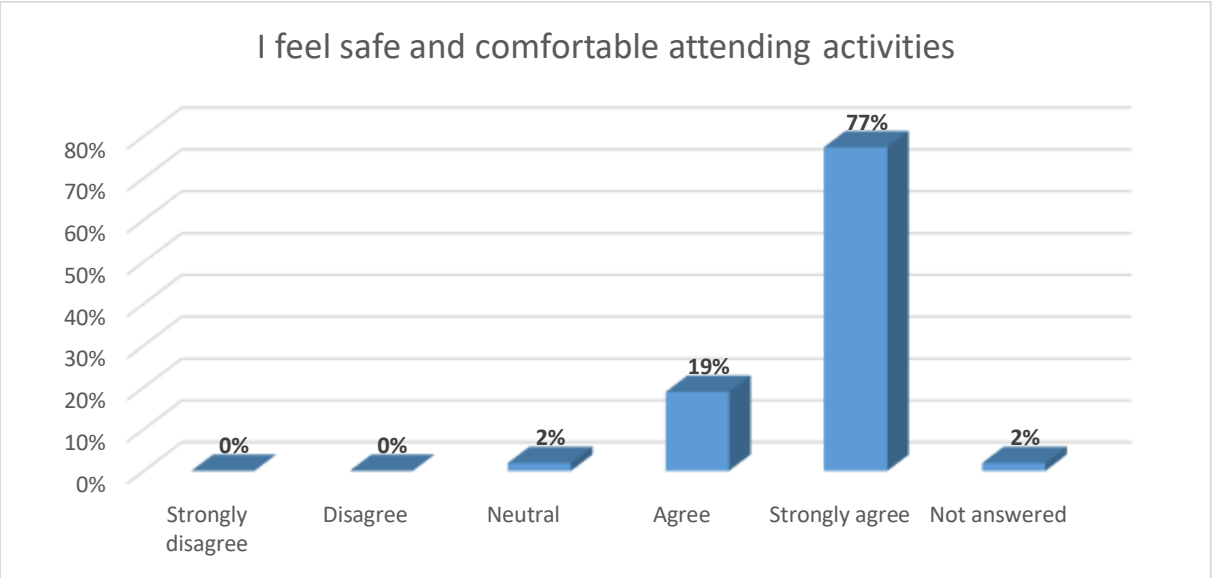


Figure 30 - Feeling safe and comfortable at CANCER UNITED.

As highlighted in Figure 31, a majority of 75% of respondents strongly agree that information is shared clearly and in plain language at CANCER UNITED, 21% agree, nobody took a neutral stance, disagreed or strongly disagreed, and 4% did not answer the question.

PROFESSIONALISM

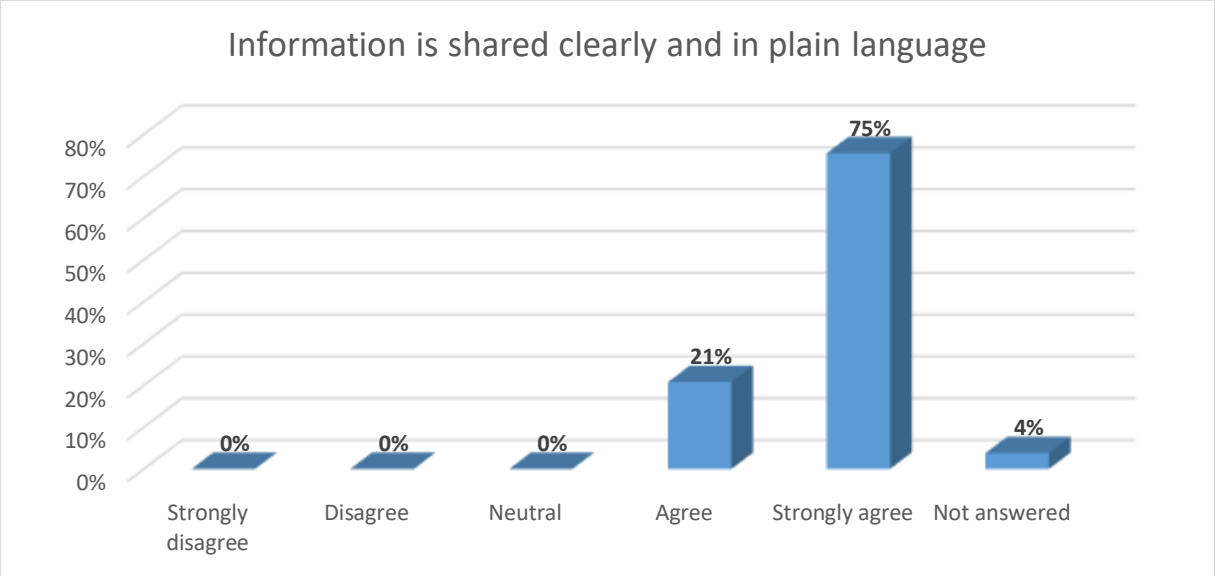


Figure 31 - Receiving clear and understandable information at CANCER UNITED.

Looking at the quality of services provided, 74% of respondents strongly agree that services are of high quality, 24% agree, nobody had a neutral view, disagreed or strongly disagreed, and 2% did not answer the question (Figure 32).

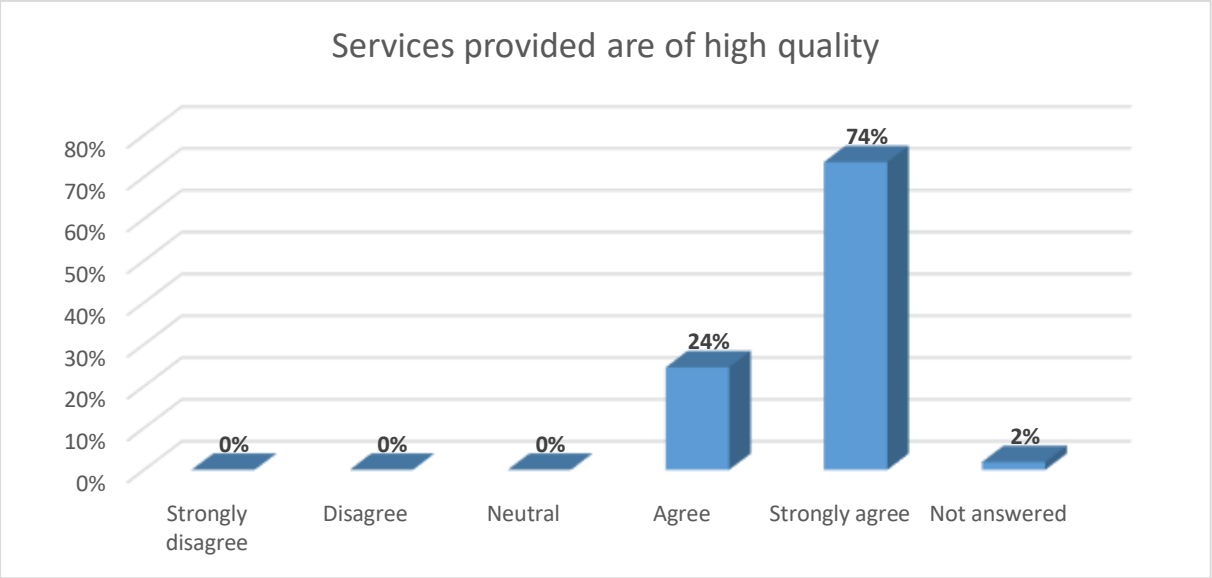


Figure 32 - Quality of service provided by CANCER UNITED.

As shown in Figure 33, a majority of 77% of respondents strongly agree that CANCER UNITED delivers consistently and reliably, 17% agree, 2% were neutral, nobody disagreed or strongly disagreed, and 4% did not answer the question.

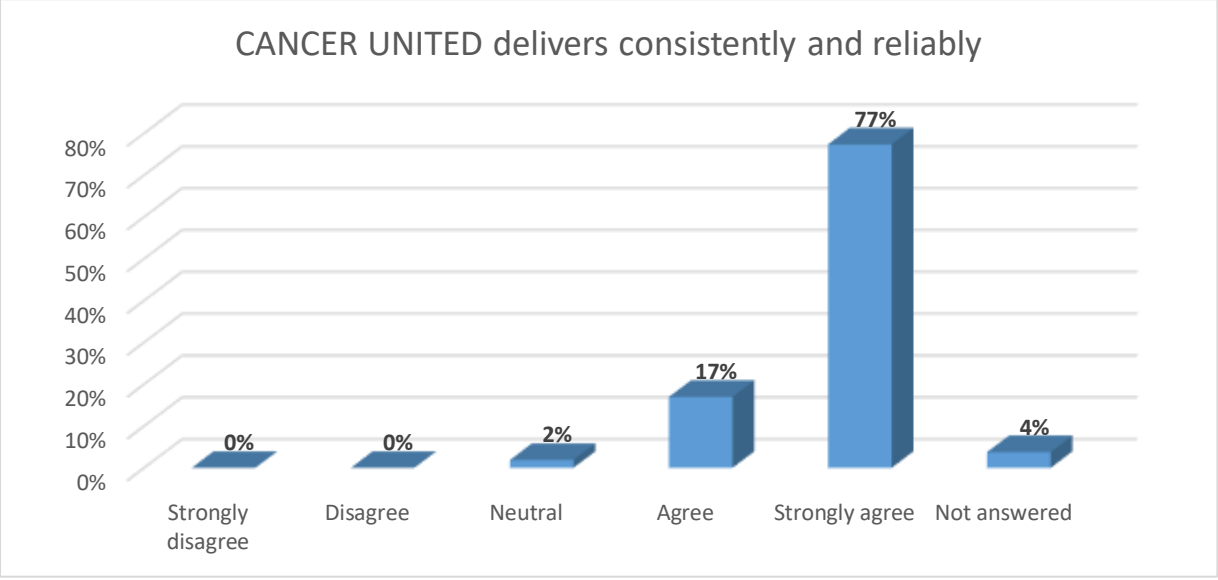


Figure 33 - Consistency and reliability of services provided by CANCER UNITED.

Regarding the delivery of activities by CANCER UNITED, 81% of respondents strongly agreed that activities are delivered by appropriately trained staff, 15% agreed, nobody took a neutral position, disagreed or strongly disagreed, 4% did not answer the question (Figure 34).

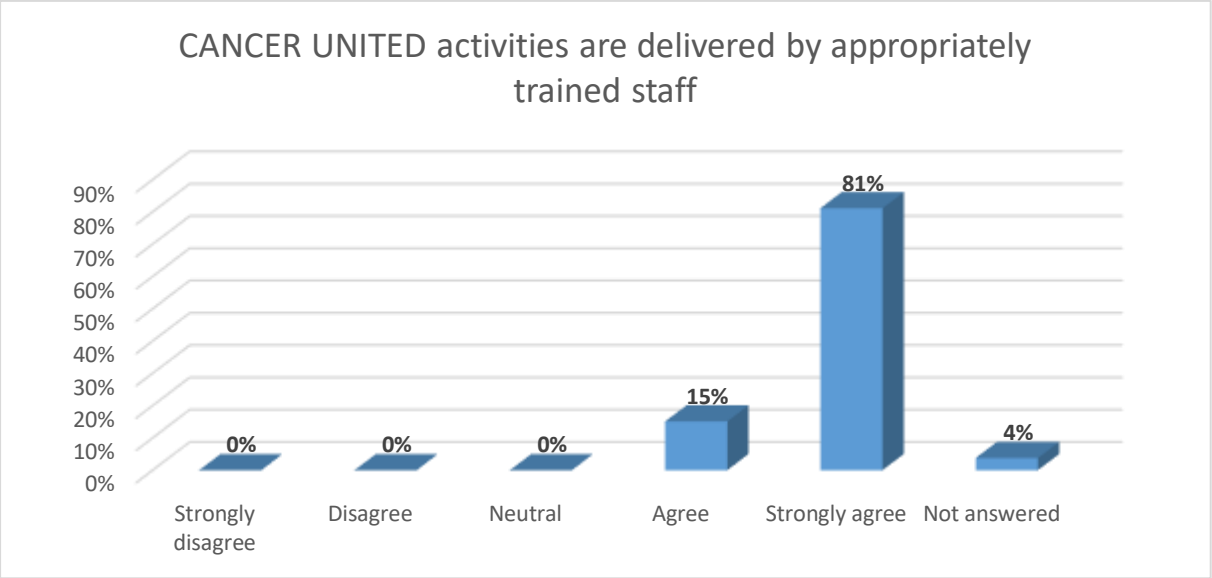


Figure 34 - Competence of CANCER UNITED staff.

VALUE OF CANCER UNITED

As shown in Figure 35, 38% of respondents strongly agree with the statement that CANCER UNITED influenced recovery after treatment, 34% agreed, 6% had a neutral view, nobody disagreed or strongly disagreed, and 22% did not answer the question.

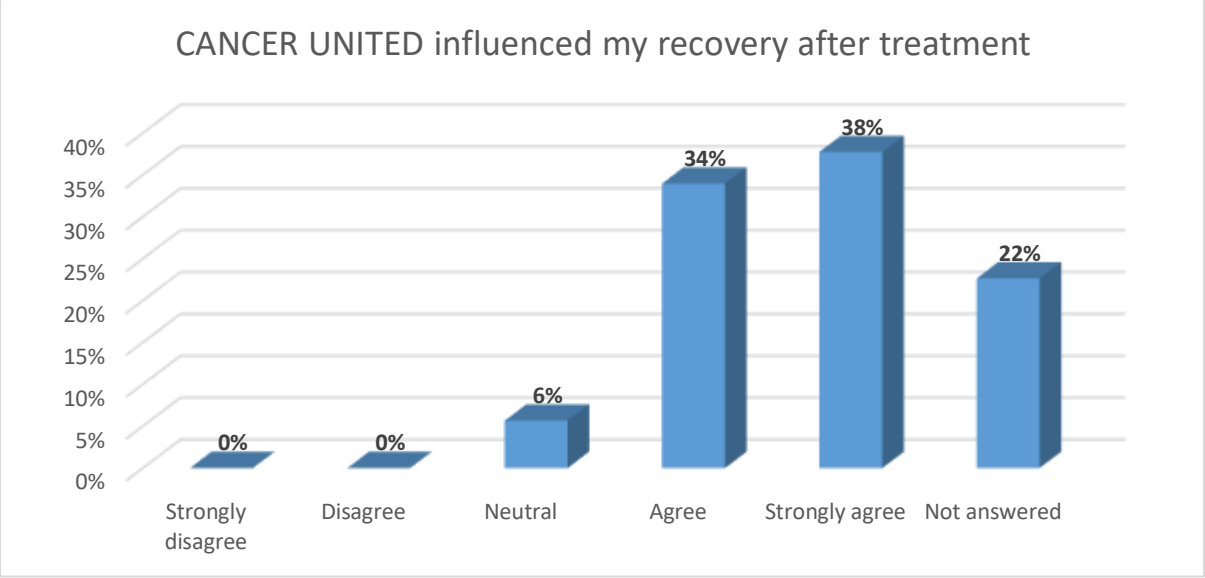


Figure 35 - Effect of CANCER UNITED services on recovery after treatment.

When asking the question if CANCER UNITED was important to members, a majority of 77% of respondents strongly agreed that this was the case, 13% agreed, 4% were neutral, 0% disagreed, 2% strongly disagreed, and 4% did not answer the question (Figure 36).

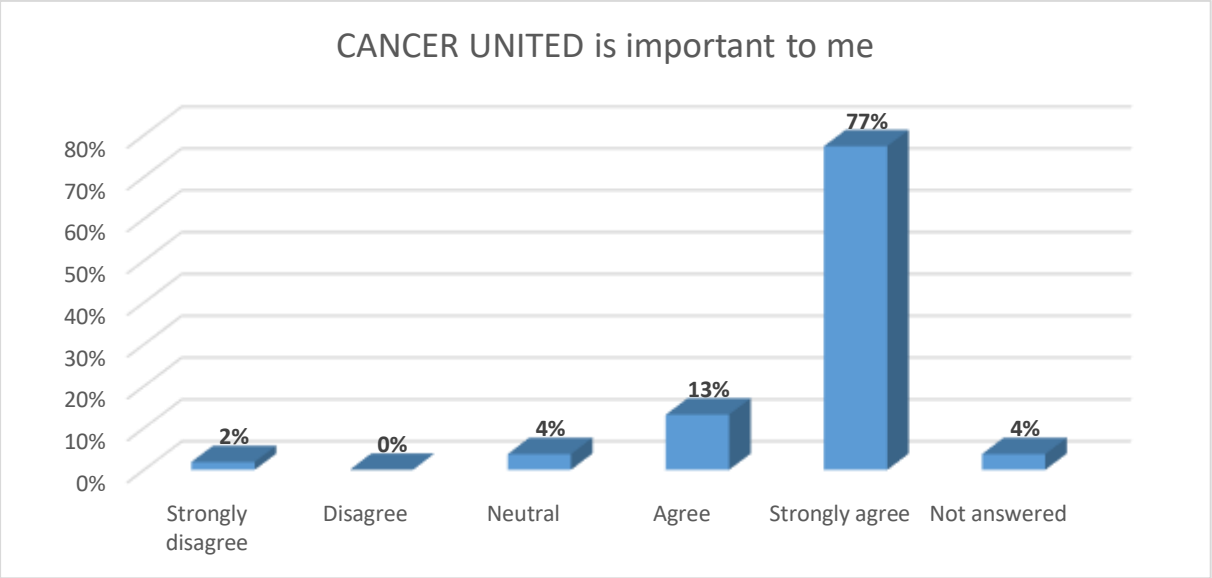


Figure 36 - Relevance of CANCER UNITED in members' lives.

This section highlights that members experience a high quality of CANCER UNITED services, which extends well beyond the activities themselves. Respondents valued the welcoming atmosphere, the professionalism and compassion of staff, the opportunity to participate in a safe environment alongside others and share experiences. These factors create a strong level of trust, belonging and confidence, encouraging members to remain engaged and be supported during recovery.

Importantly, members did not simply value individual services. The findings suggest that it is the combination of different services, specialist exercise, wellbeing activities, peer support and social connection that distinguishes CANCER UNITED from other organisations and providers. This integrated approach enables the charity to meet a wide range of physical, emotional and social needs, reinforcing the holistic model of care that is evident throughout the survey.

In summary, this section shows that:

- Members expressed exceptionally high levels of satisfaction with the quality and delivery of CANCER UNITED's services.
- The welcoming, inclusive and supportive environment was identified as one of the charity's greatest strengths.
- Highly qualified staff play a vital role in creating a safe, compassionate and encouraging atmosphere that enables members to engage confidently in rehabilitation.
- The combination of exercise, wellbeing activities and peer support provides a holistic package that supports recovery.
- The consistently positive feedback demonstrates that members value not only what CANCER UNITED offers, but also how those services are delivered.

7 Overall Experience

As demonstrated in the previous sections, members gained enormous value form the wide range of programmes and activities offered by CANCER UNITED. The CUFITTER gym, the OUTSINGCANCER Choir, Support Group meetings and social events actively help CANCER UNITED members in rebuilding and maintaining their physical fitness, their mental health and overall well-being after a lifechanging diagnosis. It gives members support, hope and a perspective. Therefore, it is not surprising that the overall rating of CANCER UNITED is outstandingly positive with 89% of members rating CANCER UNITED as '*excellent*', 11% as '*good*', and nobody gave a '*fair*' or '*poor*' rating (Figure 37).

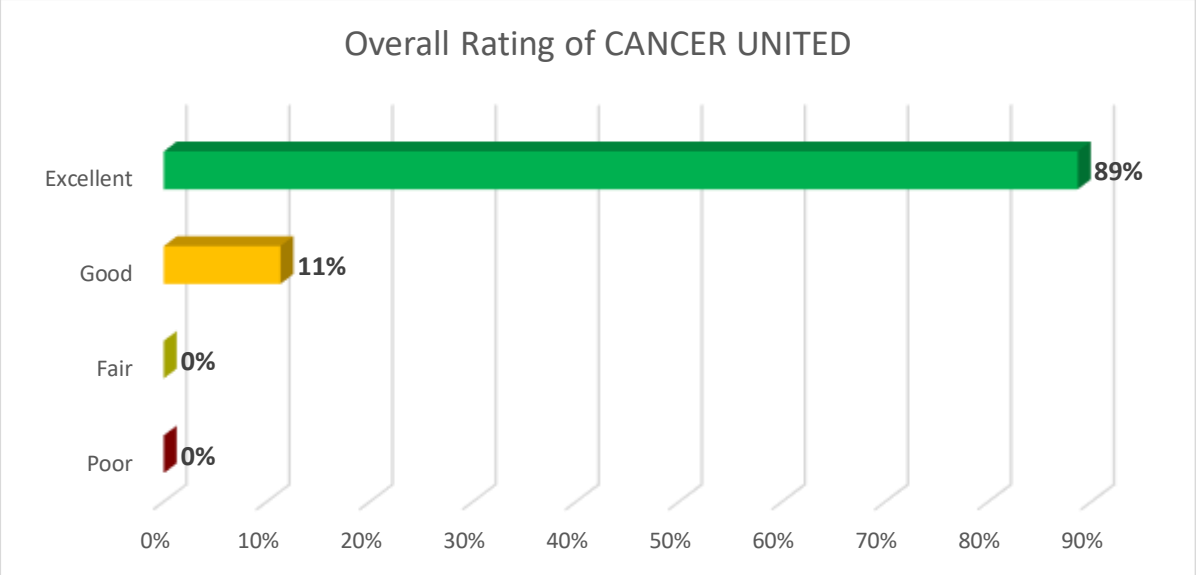


Figure 37 - Overall rating of CANCER UNITED.

When members were asked how likely on a scale of 0 to 10 it would be to recommend CANCER UNITED to someone affected by cancer the vast majority of 89% of members gave a score of 10, which means it is extremely likely that they would recommend CANCER UNITED, 9% gave a score of 9 and 2% of 8. Nobody opted for a score any lower than 8.

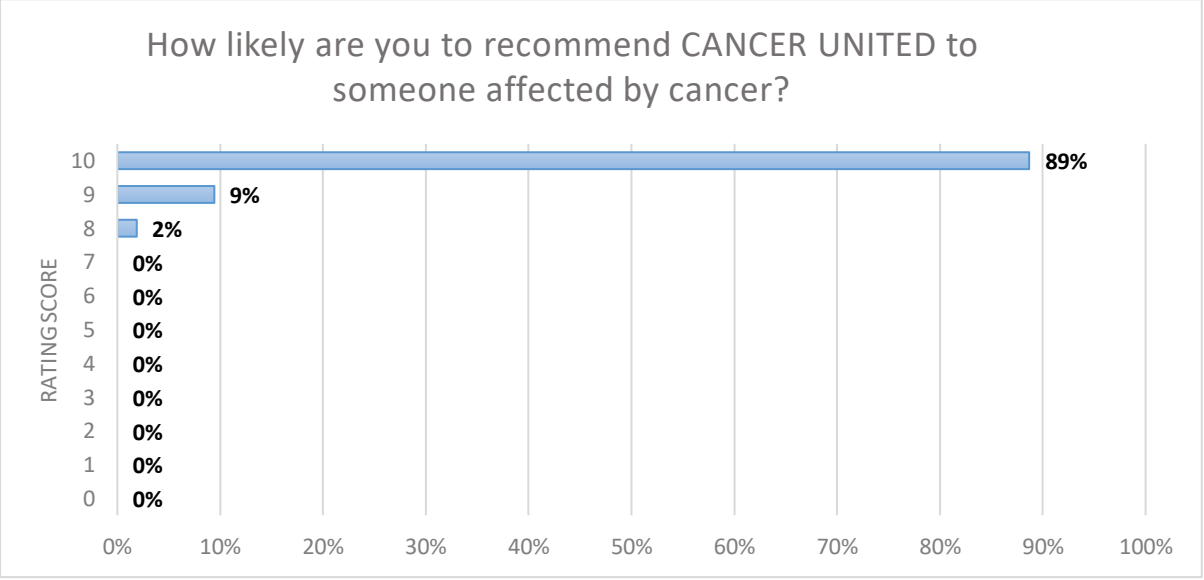


Figure 38 - Likeliness of recommending CANCER UNITED to someone affected by cancer (0 = Not at all likely, 10 = Extremely likely).

Members were also asked if they would recommend CANCER UNITED to healthcare professionals to refer patients. All respondents voted '*yes*', which equates to 100%.

In connection with the overall ratings of CANCER UNITED, members were invited to share their reasons in their own words why they would recommend the charity to others. The answers were grouped by themes that were emerging from the reasons of why respondents voted in a positive way. These are summarised in Table 2 together with quotes made in this context:

Table 2 - Themes and quotes why members rated CANCER UNITED positively and would recommend the charity to others:

Theme	Most Powerful Member Quotes
Life-changing impact	*"CANCER UNITED has made an enormous difference in my life, not only through becoming fitter but also making some very good friends."*
	"It's changed my life."
	"Brilliant organisation that has helped me be where I am today."
Safe, specialist support	*"CU provided me with somewhere to exercise safely within my abilities as they changed, and it didn't matter that I have no hair!"*
	"It is vital to have exercise and social support on a cancer journey and I know I can trust anyone to be safe and supported with this charity."
	"CUFITTER classes are smaller than a mainstream gym and specific to cancer, giving support and understanding throughout your cancer treatment. You are able to work at your own pace and abilities."
Recovery through fitness	*"The help I have had to recover fitness following cancer and chemotherapy."*
	"My fitness, health and wellbeing has improved since attending CU classes."
	"Joining CU has improved my fitness and outlook, and I would like other people to have the same experience."
Friendship and belonging	*"Because cancer can be isolating... At CU you are with people who are experiencing similar things, so it is far less isolating. It is a friendly, welcoming and inclusive service with support of all kinds for everyone."*
	"An important part of recovery is to be with like-minded people. You do not have to talk about cancer, but advice is there if needed. An amazing social group."
	"I feel supported and surrounded by people who understand. Seeing other people's positivity has helped my confidence."
Compassion and emotional support	*"Deal with my grief by giving me kindness and support from the first meeting. I was immediately welcomed and had a hug which I was desperately needing."*
	"Empathy, understanding, a safe and caring place."
	"CU is very kind and welcoming. They care, listen and help."

Theme	Most Powerful Member Quotes
Positive environment	*"It is a friendly and inviting environment where you can be yourself."*
	"It's an amazing place to come to and meet like-minded people as well as exercising."
	"There is no other organisation that has so much to offer people experiencing cancer. There is something for everyone."
Confidence and hope	*"CUFITTER classes have improved my fitness and confidence – I would recommend them to everyone."*
	"It has personally helped me and I would like it to help others."
Evidence of advocacy	*"Have already introduced three members who have remained in the group."*

This section demonstrates that members value CANCER UNITED not only for the services it provides but also for the way those services are delivered. The combination of specialist expertise, compassionate support and a strong sense of community appears to underpin the positive outcomes reported throughout this survey.

8 Members' Voices

The quantitative findings presented in the previous sections of this report provide clear measurable evidence of CANCER UNITED's impact. Members' own words help provide a more detailed understanding of what those changes mean in everyday life. Also, personal reflections reveal how participation in CANCER UNITED's programmes influences attitudes, confidence, relationships and recovery in ways that are difficult to fully capture by numerical data alone. This section presents members' voices highlighting the value of being part of a supportive community that understands the challenges of living with and beyond cancer.

Firstly, members were asked to complete the following sentence: *'In your own words: CANCER UNITED has helped me to….'*. Table 3 summarises representative comments received from respondents, grouped by themes.

Table 3 – Feedback grouped by themes on how CANCER UNITED helped members during their cancer journey.

Theme	How CANCER UNITED helped members during their cancer journey (representative comments)
Rebuilding physical health and strength	*"Regain physical health after chemotherapy left me weakened." • "Build my physical strength following treatment." • "Recover fitness." • "Improve core strength and balance." • "Rebuild muscles lost as a result of treatment." • "Exercise before and after surgery helped my recovery."*
Restoring confidence and independence	*"Build confidence after treatment." • "Become fitter and more confident exercising." • "Feel good about myself." • "Feel like I am doing something positive." • "Learn to be patient with myself."*
Returning to a normal life	*"Get my life back to normal." • "Return to something like normal." • "Feel normal/human again." • "Move forward with my life." • "Rebalance my life."*
Improving mental wellbeing and positivity	*"Feel positive about the future." • "Forget my troubles and feel supported." • "Come to terms with a frightening diagnosis." • "Have hope that there is life beyond cancer." • "Take better care of my mind and body."*
Reducing isolation through friendship and belonging	*"Realise I am not on my own." • "Find people in a similar situation." • "Belong." • "Make new friends." • "Enjoy the friendship of many CU members." • "Exercise and socialise regularly."*
Peer support and shared understanding	*"Talk openly about health issues without being judged." • "Feel part of a group with common issues." • "Seeing others further along their journey gave me hope." • "Realise life goes on and I'm not alone."*
Hope and resilience	*"Seeing people further along their journey showed me there is life beyond a cancer diagnosis." • "Move forward with my life and feel positive." • "Cancer did not single me out."*
Developing healthier lifestyles	*"Repurpose my life and reprioritise my daily routine." • "Sleep better and lose weight." • "Discipline myself to exercise." • "Stay fit and manage my health."*
Life-changing impact	*"Being with CANCER UNITED saved me from feeling my life was fading." • "CANCER UNITED helped me find purpose, friendship and enjoyment again."*

The comments of Table 3 highlight that CANCER UNITED supports members consistently in key areas that are linked with the path of recovery and long-term outcomes:

- Physical recovery (helping people rebuild strength, fitness and function after treatment)
- Emotional recovery (restoring confidence, hope and a positive outlook)
- Social recovery (reducing loneliness through friendship, belonging and shared experience)
- Personal recovery (helping members regain normality, purpose and control over their lives)
- Long-term wellbeing (encouraging healthier lifestyles that support recovery and life beyond cancer)

It becomes apparent that CANCER UNITED provides more than just exercise classes and programmes. It addresses many areas of the road of recovery for people with a cancer diagnosis.

When asking members what CANCER UNITED services and benefits they find most valuable, the following core areas were repeatedly highlighted:

- Specialist care and specific exercises
- Friendship and belonging
- Understanding and peer support
- Professional and caring delivery of services

Table 4 lists in a themed order the services and benefits members value most with CANCER UNITED, including representative comments.

Table 4 – Services and benefits members value most with CANCER UNITED.

Theme	Most valuable service or benefit (representative comments)
Specialist exercise and physical rehabilitation (CUFITTER)	*"CUFITTER." • "Recover fitness." • "Improving my fitness in a safe environment." • "Building up muscle to enable me to play tennis again." • "Really enjoying exercise again after three years." • "Help me exercise – it's too easy not to do on your own."*
Safe, tailored and professional exercise support	*"The acceptance, friendliness and kindness of each exercise group plus the trainer's varied exercise programmes and attention to ensure I'm doing the exercises correctly." • "The levels of equipment, superb instruction and 100% support." • "Exercising in an environment where I felt well looked after." • "Learning how to exercise correctly."*
Friendship, belonging and community	*"Support, friendship, belonging." • "Exercise and friendship." • "Friendships made via the support group." • "Making new friendships that are invaluable." • "The people in my group feel like a lovely family." • "Camaraderie with like-minded people."*
Peer support and shared understanding	*"Friendliness of people going through the same journey as me." • "Being around others who understand my worries." • "Being able to talk openly and be listened to." • "A meeting place to see others who understand."*
Positive wellbeing and emotional support	*"Improvement in my sense of wellbeing." • "Fitness and focus." • "Regular interaction and support." • "The friendliness of members and staff helped reduce the pressure on my family."*
Routine, motivation and accountability	*"The consistency of the classes because I'm a routine person." • "A consistent, high-quality fitness programme each week." • "Commitment to regular exercise." • "The flexibility of attending when I can."*
The Choir	*"The positivity and laughter in the choir." • "Belonging to the choir and learning to sing." • "The choir and the gym."*
Support beyond exercise	*"The support given when returning to work."*

It should be noted that many respondents describe a combination of different services as very valuable, especially exercising, social connections and reliable and compassionate support. This highlights that it is the holistic package made available by CANCER UNITED that makes the charity particularly valuable to members. The charity's integrated support approach and not just standalone activities make it distinct from other organisations.

When members were asked: *'Has CANCER UNITED changed your outlook on life after cancer? If so, how?'* a range of different answers was obtained. Table 5 summarises in a themed way representative comments showing that CANCER UNITED has a positive effect on members' perspective on life after a cancer diagnosis.

Table 5 - Influence CANCER UNITED has on members perspective on life after a cancer diagnosis.

Theme	How CANCER UNITED changed members' outlook on life (representative comments)
Greater positivity and optimism	*"Made me more positive and active." • "Has kept me positive." • "Helped keep me more positive." • "I feel better and more positive about life and the future."*
Hope that life continues beyond cancer	*"It has helped me and my wife realise that cancer is not a death sentence but a wake-up call for better living." • "It helped me realise there is life after cancer." • "Seeing people further along their journey gave me hope that life beyond cancer is possible."*
Living life to the fullest	*"Live every day with joy." • "Every day is precious." • "Every day is a bonus." • "Do the things you enjoy while you have the chance." • "Cherish life."*
Building resilience and determination	*"It inspired me to keep going, one step at a time." • "Increased determination to get on with it." • "They gave me the strength to stay positive when my cancer spread."*
Reducing isolation and feeling supported	*"I don't feel so alone anymore." • "Meeting people who've been through cancer reduced my sense of isolation." • "I know I have people I can talk to."*
Recovery, confidence and normality	*"I regained my fitness in half the time." • "Helped me get back to normal." • "Supported me after NHS services stopped." • "Provides routine and normality."*
Health and self-care	*"Made me realise I need to look after myself and my body." • "Developed a positive attitude towards health and wellbeing." • "I know I'm doing the best I can to help myself."*
Acceptance and coping with cancer	*"Helped me openly talk about my cancer." • "Helped me deal with ongoing cancer and treatment." • "Writing my cancer story was therapeutic and helped me process my feelings."*
Inspiration from others	*"Seeing so many members improve through exercise, sport, cycling and singing has been amazing." • "Everyone taking part is so positive."*
No major change, but important ongoing support	Some members felt their outlook had not fundamentally changed, but still valued the routine, exercise, guidance, group membership and sense of doing something positive for themselves.

Overall, it becomes apparent that CANCER UNITED influences members lives and their perspectives, in particular in the sense of:

- Restoring hope for the future
- Encouraging a positive approach towards life
- Building resilience through support
- Empowering people to take control over their recovery process

It should be noted that even though some respondents claimed that CANCER UNITED had not changed their outlook, they still described positive outcomes such as maintaining fitness, regaining a routine and escaping isolation, indicating the charity provides a level of stability, continuity and practical support.

When asking the question about what else CANCER UNITED could improve on a range of different suggestions and comments were received. These are listed in Table 6 in a themed order:

Table 6 - Suggestions for improvement.

Theme	Suggestions for improvement (representative comments)
CANCER UNITED Centre of Excellence	Many members expressed enthusiasm for the planned CANCER UNITED Centre of Excellence, hoping it will provide larger exercise spaces, more classes, better accessibility (including ground-floor studios).
Expand exercise and wellbeing activities	Suggestions included introducing yoga, meditation, mindfulness, sound therapy classes as additional exercise programmes.
Increase class availability and flexibility	Members requested more classes, evening sessions for people who work, additional instructors to support growing demand, and opportunities to attend more frequently.
Improve awareness of available services	Several members felt they were unaware of the full range of activities offered. Suggestions included an information guide covering all services, better introductions for new members, improved communication about new activities.
Increase accessibility and reach	Members suggested expanding CANCER UNITED beyond the current area through additional GP surgeries, wider geographical coverage, and making services available to more people across the UK.
Provide more personalised support	Suggestions included one-to-one support or peer ambassadors for newly diagnosed members, and for those uncomfortable speaking in groups or with additional health needs such as infection risk.
Guest speakers and additional activities	Members suggested occasional talks or workshops at support groups covering hobbies, wellbeing or other topics to encourage interaction and provide variety.
Raise awareness of CANCER UNITED	Greater publicity was suggested to ensure more people affected by cancer become aware of the charity and its services.
No improvements identified	A substantial proportion of respondents felt that no improvements were needed, with comments such as *"Nothing I can think of," "Great as you are," "Keep doing it,"* and *"The service is 100% beneficial."*

The responses are overwhelmingly positive, with many members stating that they would not change anything. Where improvements were suggested, they were very constructive ideas for expanding or enhancing services rather than criticisms.

Altogether, these personal reflections demonstrate that CANCER UNITED's impact extends far beyond improving physical fitness or increasing activity levels. Members described regaining confidence, finding hope, developing meaningful friendships and rediscovering a sense of purpose following cancer treatment. Many also reflected on the reassurance of being surrounded by people with shared lived experiences, creating an environment where they felt safe, understood, supported and encouraged.

Importantly, even members who felt that CANCER UNITED had not fundamentally changed their outlook on life still described clear benefits such as maintaining fitness, establishing routine, reducing isolation and accessing ongoing support after NHS treatment had ended. This suggests that CANCER UNITED does not only transform lives for many members but also provides continuity, stability and reassurance during a period that can otherwise feel uncertain and isolating.

The personal reflections therefore reinforce the quantitative findings presented throughout this report, demonstrating that CANCER UNITED's greatest strength lies in its ability to combine specialist rehabilitation with compassion, community and hope, helping people not only recover from cancer but rebuild fulfilling lives beyond it.

Awareness of specialist rehabilitation services remained relatively low compared to the previous survey. This suggests that many people continue to begin their cancer journey without knowledge of the support available.

9 Discussion of Survey Findings

9.1 Cancer recovery extends well beyond medical treatment

This survey demonstrates that the consequences of cancer continue long after diagnosis and treatment have ended. Respondents consistently described challenges affecting physical health, emotional wellbeing, confidence, relationships and everyday life. These findings reinforce the growing recognition that cancer survivorship requires holistic rehabilitation addressing the physical, psychological and social consequences of cancer rather than focusing solely on clinical treatment.

9.2 CANCER UNITED delivers holistic prehabilitation and rehabilitation

One of the most striking findings is the consistency with which members reported improvements across multiple aspects of wellbeing. Rather than experiencing individual benefits, respondents commonly described simultaneous improvements in physical fitness, emotional wellbeing, confidence, motivation and social connection. This suggests that CANCER UNITED’s model of care addresses the interconnected nature of recovery during and after cancer.

9.3 The importance of specialist exercise

Exercise within CANCER UNITED differs from conventional fitness programmes because it is specifically designed for people affected by cancer and tailored to their individual needs. It is delivered by highly qualified instructors in a supportive and safe environment. Members repeatedly described feeling safe to exercise within their own capabilities, enabling them to rebuild strength and confidence without fear of judgement or overexertion.

9.4 Community and peer support are central to recovery

The statistics on friendship, belonging and reduced isolation are reinforced repeatedly by members' comments.

Members consistently identified friendship, belonging and shared experience as being equally valuable to structured exercise. Many explained that meeting others who understood the cancer journey reduced feelings of isolation and provided hope that recovery was possible. These findings suggest that peer support is not an additional benefit but a core component of CANCER UNITED's rehabilitation model.

9.5 Why members value CANCER UNITED

Throughout the survey, members repeatedly highlighted three distinguishing characteristics of CANCER UNITED: specialist expertise, compassionate delivery and community. The findings suggest that it is the combination of these elements, rather than any single activity, that produces the positive outcomes that are observed. Members emphasised feeling welcomed, understood and supported within an environment specifically designed for people living with and beyond cancer.

9.6 Implications for the future

The survey findings have important implications for the future development of CANCER UNITED. Demand for community-based cancer rehabilitation is likely to increase as more people live longer following cancer treatment. The planned CANCER UNITED Centre of Excellence therefore represents more than an expansion of facilities. It offers an opportunity to increase access to evidence-informed rehabilitation, strengthen partnerships with NHS organisations, ensure that more people benefit from the integrated model of support demonstrated throughout this evaluation and function as a training hub for instructors and trainers.

Overall, the survey provides compelling evidence that CANCER UNITED delivers meaningful improvements in the lives of people living with and beyond cancer. The consistency of findings across both quantitative and qualitative data demonstrates that the charity supports recovery across physical, emotional, social and personal dimensions of wellbeing. Members repeatedly described regaining strength, confidence, hope and a sense of belonging, suggesting that CANCER UNITED complements clinical cancer care by addressing aspects of recovery that are often unmet following treatment. As the number of people living with and beyond cancer continues to grow, charities such as CANCER UNITED have an increasingly important role in supporting long-term survivorship and improving quality of life.

9.7 CANCER UNITED Recovery Wheel

The CANCER UNITED Recovery Wheel shown in Figure 39 visualises the findings of the survey. It shows that recovery spans four key areas that are interconnected:

- Physical wellbeing
- Emotional wellbeing
- Social connections
- Personal wellbeing

It underlines the holistic recovery model CANCER UNITED puts into practice offering specialist rehabilitation, peer support, and community help to allow people to live well with and beyond cancer and how community-based cancer rehabilitation contributes to recovery in ways that extend beyond traditional clinical outcomes.

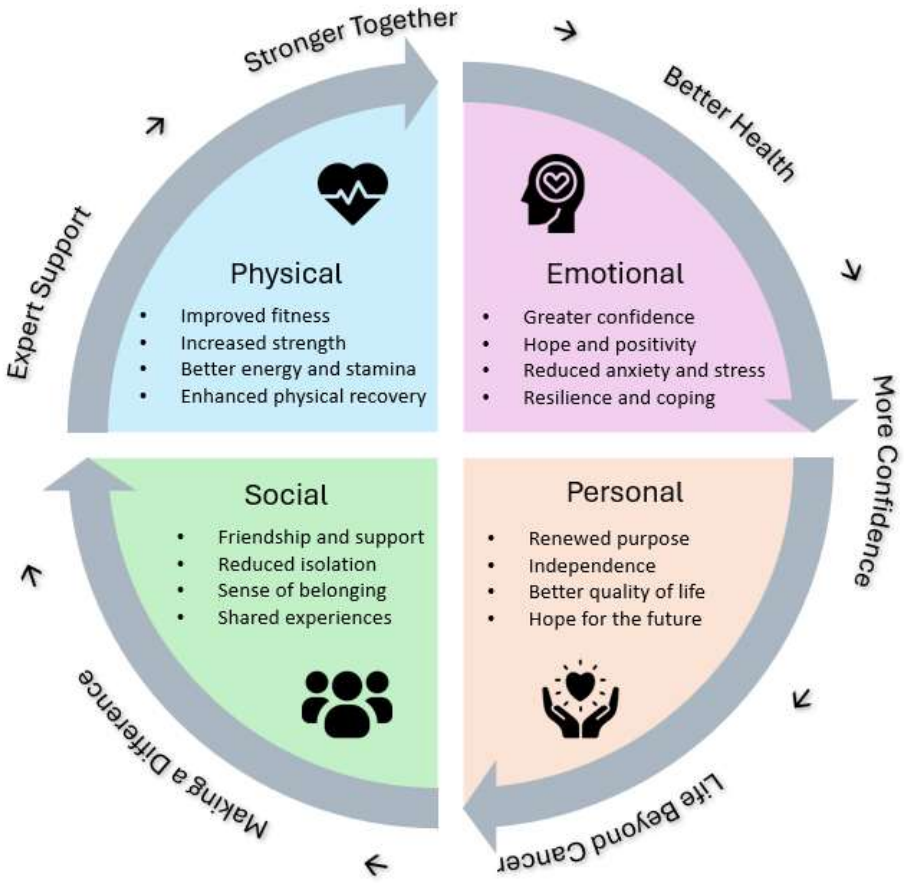


Figure 39 - CANCER UNITED Recovery Wheel

9.8 Limitations

It has to be noted that the findings should be interpreted within the context of several limitations. Participation in the survey was voluntary and the results are based on members' self-reported experiences and perceptions. This reflects their individual views rather than objective clinical measurements.

The response rate was relatively low, with 53 respondents representing approximately 10% of the active CANCER UNITED membership. The respondents may therefore not be fully representative of the wider membership, and the experiences of members who did not participate, particularly those who engage less frequently with CANCER UNITED, may differ from those captured in this survey. The reasons for the low response rate are unknown. In addition, only 10 of the 53 respondents had also completed the 2024/25 survey, and the two questionnaires were not identical, so comparisons between the surveys are indicative rather than statistical.

In addition, the survey demonstrates some associations between participation in CANCER UNITED and reported improvements in wellbeing. However, these associations should not be interpreted as evidence of causation, as the survey did not include a control group or measures before and after participation.

Despite these limitations, the consistency of responses across both quantitative and qualitative data provides useful evidence of members' perceived benefits. The survey offers valuable insight into the charity's impact.

10 Comparison of 2024/25 survey with 2026 survey

The findings of this Member Impact Survey are consistent with the previous one conducted in 2024/25. It provides further evidence that CANCER UNITED continues to deliver meaningful improvements in the physical, emotional and social wellbeing of people living with and beyond cancer. Table 7 highlights the key findings of both surveys by theme side-by-side.

Table 7 – Qualitative comparison of CANCER UNITED's impact by theme.

Theme	2024/25 Survey	2026 Survey	Conclusion
Survey extent	Established the impact of CANCER UNITED	Explains the impact and why it occurs	The evaluation has become more defined
Physical rehabilitation	Shows strong evidence of improved fitness and physical health	Strong evidence maintained	Consistent impact across both surveys
Emotional wellbeing	Positive emotional benefits identified	More detailed evidence on confidence, resilience and hope	Deeper understanding of emotional recovery
Social recovery	Friendship and support recognised	Belonging, peer support and community confirmed as major themes	Social recovery has become one of the central findings and is a key organisational differentiator
Overall model	Exercise-based rehabilitation recognised	Holistic rehabilitation evidenced (exercise, wellbeing, peer support, community)	A more profound understanding of CANCER UNITED's unique contribution

It becomes evident that CANCER UNITED's positive impact is consistent across both surveys. While both surveys identified significant improvements in physical health, emotional wellbeing and overall satisfaction, the current evaluation gives a more detailed understanding of the mechanisms that lead to these outcomes. The members' feedback highlights very strongly the importance of specialist exercise programmes and delivery of these within a safe and supportive environment, where peer relationships, shared lived experience and a strong sense of belonging appear to play a central role in recovery. These findings strengthen the evidence that CANCER UNITED successfully approaches rehabilitation in a holistic way; services are complementing clinical cancer care by addressing the physical, emotional and social challenges of people living with and beyond cancer.

The quantitative findings of both surveys summarised side-by-side in Table 8 provide further evidence of the consistency of the outcomes reported. However, direct comparison needs to be treated with some caution, as not all questions were identical between the two survey questionnaires and also the respondent groups or measures differed.

Table 8 therefore focuses on selected measures where meaningful quantitative comparison is possible. The figures should be viewed as an indicator for patterns and continuity rather than precise measures of change over time. Overall, the results show that high levels of satisfaction and positive reported outcomes across physical, emotional and social wellbeing were evident in both surveys.

The comparison also illustrates how the 2026 survey has developed beyond the original baseline evaluation. In addition to confirming the positive outcomes identified previously, it provides a more detailed understanding of how and why these outcomes occur.

Table 8 – Quantitative comparison of 2024/25 *vs* 2026 survey findings.

	Indicator	2024/25 Survey	2026 Survey	Interpretation
Identical measure	Overall satisfaction ratings	84% - *Excellent*	89% - *Excellent*	Very high satisfaction maintained, with a 5 percentage-point increase in *Excellent* ratings.
Related, not identical measures	Physical wellbeing	96% of CUFITTER users reported improved fitness and general wellbeing	86% reported improved physical health and fitness	Strong positive impact reported in both surveys. However, measures and respondent groups are not identical.
	Emotional wellbeing	71% reported becoming more hopeful and positive; 69% felt better supported and understood	85% reported improved emotional wellbeing; 72% reported increased confidence; 67% felt more hopeful; 66% felt better able to cope with cancer	Evidence of emotional benefit is strong in both surveys, 2026 survey providing a broader and more detailed picture of emotional recovery.
	Social connection / wellbeing	85% valued the friendships and community found at CANCER UNITED	74% reported a stronger sense of belonging; 75% made new friendships	Social connections remain a major benefit. However, measures differed between surveys.

Taken together, the two surveys show a consistent pattern of positive member-reported outcomes. While the surveys should not be regarded as directly comparable statistical datasets, the recurrence of similar themes across different measures provides encouraging evidence that the benefits associated with CANCER UNITED are evident in both surveys. The 2026 survey adds greater detail to this picture, particularly regarding the interconnected roles of physical recovery, emotional wellbeing, confidence, friendship, belonging and peer support as visualised with the CANCER UNITED Recovery Wheel (Figure 39).

11 Outlook

The survey findings are both affirming and motivating for CANCER UNITED's leadership team. They provide compelling evidence that CANCER UNITED delivers a distinctive model of holistic support that addresses gaps in physical, emotional and social recovery.

To meet the rising demand and ensure nobody affected by cancer misses out, CANCER UNITED's strategic priorities have to focus on:

- Establishing a CANCER UNITED Centre of Excellence in Angmering, allowing the charity to extend its geographic reach well beyond the current 15-mile radius.
- Expanding its exercise offerings, including evening classes, to better serve younger patients and those in employment.
- Investing in training more cancer-specialist personal trainers and instructors to deliver high-quality, tailored services to a growing membership.
- Building formal partnerships with NHS bodies, GP surgeries, and cancer research organisations to increase referrals, raise awareness, and integrate CANCER UNITED into the broader cancer care pathway.
- Continuing to evaluate member outcomes and impact, with the form and frequency of future surveys to be determined.

With these steps, CANCER UNITED can scale up its impact, strengthen its role as an indispensable part of the cancer recovery journey, and ensure that every person living with and beyond cancer has access to the wide-ranging support they need.

As an increasing number of people live with and beyond cancer, the need for community-based rehabilitation will continue to grow. The findings of this survey highlight that CANCER UNITED is already making a significant contribution to meeting that need by helping people recover physically, reconnect socially and rebuild their lives beyond cancer. Further investment in this model of care that is complementary to national health care offerings has the potential to improve outcomes for many more people in the future.

Overall, this report reflects the voices of CANCER UNITED's members. Their experiences demonstrate that recovery from cancer is far more than surviving treatment. It is about rebuilding confidence, restoring wellbeing, reconnecting with others and finding hope for the future.

Acknowledgements

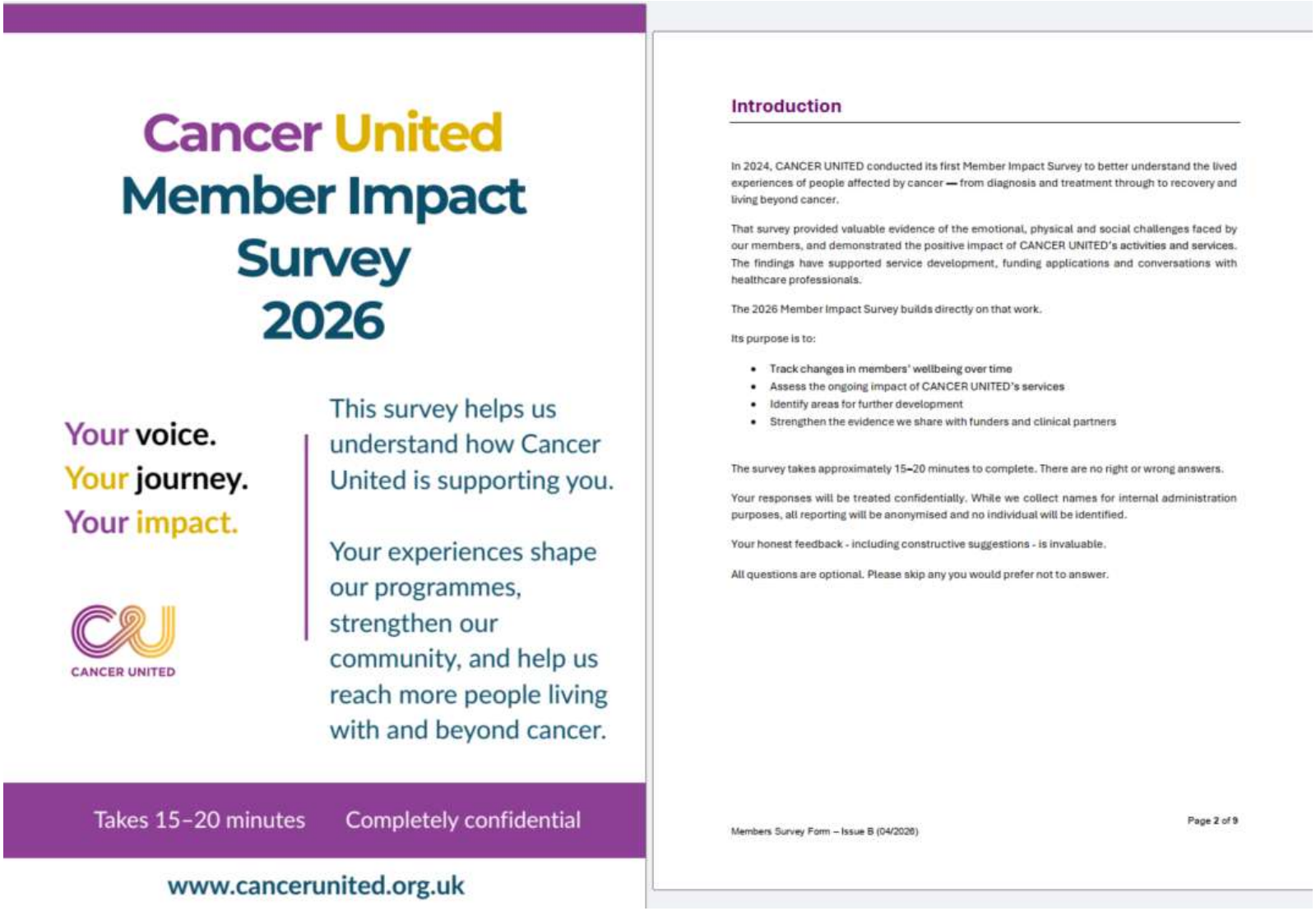
CANCER UNITED would like to extend its sincere thanks to all the members who generously gave their time and completed this survey. Their openness, honesty and feedback have provided invaluable insights into the impact of CANCER UNITED's services and will help shape the future development of the charity for the benefit of people living with and beyond cancer.

Thanks are also extended to the trustees, staff, and volunteers whose continued commitment to supporting members makes this work possible.

This report was researched, analysed and written by Dr Gesine Hermann. Artificial intelligence (AI) tools were used to assist with editing, proofreading, and improving the clarity and readability of the text. All content and final editorial decisions remain the responsibility of the authors.

Appendix

CANCER UNITED Survey Form



Cancer United
Member Impact Survey 2026

Your voice.
Your journey.
Your impact.

CANCER UNITED

This survey helps us understand how Cancer United is supporting you.

Your experiences shape our programmes, strengthen our community, and help us reach more people living with and beyond cancer.

Takes 15–20 minutes Completely confidential

www.cancerunited.org.uk

Introduction

In 2024, CANCER UNITED conducted its first Member Impact Survey to better understand the lived experiences of people affected by cancer — from diagnosis and treatment through to recovery and living beyond cancer.

That survey provided valuable evidence of the emotional, physical and social challenges faced by our members, and demonstrated the positive impact of CANCER UNITED's activities and services. The findings have supported service development, funding applications and conversations with healthcare professionals.

The 2026 Member Impact Survey builds directly on that work.

Its purpose is to:

- Track changes in members' wellbeing over time
- Assess the ongoing impact of CANCER UNITED's services
- Identify areas for further development
- Strengthen the evidence we share with funders and clinical partners

The survey takes approximately 15–20 minutes to complete. There are no right or wrong answers.

Your responses will be treated confidentially. While we collect names for internal administration purposes, all reporting will be anonymised and no individual will be identified.

Your honest feedback - including constructive suggestions - is invaluable.

All questions are optional. Please skip any you would prefer not to answer.

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Section 1: About You

Survey date: _____

Name: _____

Type of cancer: _____

Year of diagnosis: _____

Age group:
☐ 20–34
☐ 35–44
☐ 45–54
☐ 55–64
☐ 65–74
☐ 75+

Current status:
☐ Awaiting treatment
☐ Currently in treatment
☐ Treatment complete
☐ Living with ongoing / palliative cancer
☐ Other (please specify): _____

Are you currently:
☐ Working
☐ Retired
☐ Not working due to health
☐ Carer
☐ Other (please specify): _____

How did you find out about CANCER UNITED?
☐ Friend, family member, or colleague
☐ Healthcare professional (GP, nurse, hospital staff)
☐ Leaflets at GP surgery or hospital
☐ Online search (e.g. Google)
☐ Social media (e.g. Facebook, LinkedIn)
☐ Charity event (e.g. walk, run, fundraiser, awareness day, street market)
☐ I don't remember
☐ Other (please specify): _____

Section 2: Your Experience of Cancer

Before joining CANCER UNITED, how would you rate your overall wellbeing?

☐ Very poor
☐ Poor
☐ Fair
☐ Good
☐ Excellent

Looking back on your cancer journey, how much did it affect the following areas of your life?

Area	Not at all	Mildly	Moderately	Severely	Very severely
Emotional wellbeing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Physical health	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Family life	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Work (if applicable)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Finances	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Social life	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

During your cancer journey, did you experience any of the following? (Tick all that apply)

☐ Felt well supported by medical teams
☐ Felt adequately informed about treatment
☐ Felt emotionally supported
☐ Felt isolated
☐ Felt overwhelmed
☐ Felt anxious or depressed
☐ Other (please specify): _____

Section 3: Your Involvement with CANCER UNITED

How long have you been a member?

- ☐ Under 6 months
- ☐ 6–12 months
- ☐ 1–3 years
- ☐ 4–5 years
- ☐ Over 5 years

Which CANCER UNITED activities have you taken part in? (Tick all that apply)

- ☐ CU FITTER
- ☐ Walking Football
- ☐ Cycling
- ☐ OUT SING CANCER Choir
- ☐ Support Group
- ☐ CU Life Balance
- ☐ OUT PLANT CANCER
- ☐ Writing a New Chapter
- ☐ Social Events
- ☐ Other (please specify): _____

On average, how often do you attend CU activities?

- ☐ Weekly
- ☐ Fortnightly
- ☐ Monthly
- ☐ Occasionally
- ☐ Rarely

Section 4: Impact of CANCER UNITED

Thinking about your life since joining CANCER UNITED, how have the following changed?

Area	Much worse	Slightly worse	No change	Slightly better	Much better
Emotional wellbeing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Physical health/fitness	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Confidence	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Sense of belonging	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ability to cope with cancer	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Social interaction	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Motivation to stay active	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ability to carry out everyday activities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Hope about the future	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Since joining CANCER UNITED, have you: (Tick all that apply)

- ☐ Increased your physical activity
- ☐ Made new friendships
- ☐ Felt less isolated
- ☐ Felt more confident socially
- ☐ Developed new skills or interests
- ☐ Returned to work or volunteering
- ☐ Established a more positive routine
- ☐ Felt more confident managing your health
- ☐ Better understood how to support your recovery
- ☐ Experienced no noticeable changes
- ☐ Experienced some negative impact
- ☐ None of the above

If you have experienced any changes since joining CANCER UNITED, how much do you feel they are due to CU?

☐ Not at all
☐ A little
☐ Some
☐ Quite a lot
☐ A great deal

Section 5: Your Experience of CANCER UNITED Services

Please indicate how much you agree with the following statements:

Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
CU treats people with empathy and kindness	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I feel welcomed when attending	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I feel safe and comfortable attending activities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Information is shared clearly and in plain language	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Services provided are of high quality	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
CU delivers consistently and reliably	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
CU activities are delivered by appropriately trained staff	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
CU influenced my preparation for treatment (if applicable)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
CU influenced my recovery after treatment	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
CU is important to me	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Section 6: Overall Rating

Overall, how would you rate your experience with CANCER UNITED?

☐ Excellent
☐ Good
☐ Fair
☐ Poor

How likely are you to recommend CANCER UNITED to someone affected by cancer?
(0 = Not at all likely, 10 = Extremely likely)

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

What is the main reason for your score?

Would you recommend CANCER UNITED to healthcare professionals to refer patients?

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Not sure

Section 7: Your Voice

In your own words:

CANCER UNITED has helped me to....

What has been most valuable to you?

Has CANCER UNITED changed your outlook on life after cancer? If so, how?

Is there anything we could improve?

Would you be willing to share your story as a testimonial?

☐ Written
☐ Video
☐ No thank you

Any additional comments:

Thank you for taking the time to complete the CANCER UNITED Member Impact Survey 2026. Your feedback helps us improve, grow, and demonstrate our impact to those who support and partner with us.