



Tips for Peer Support Volunteers:
Sharing your acoustic neuroma experience

As an Acoustic Neuroma Association of Canada peer support volunteer, you will be asked to speak with newly diagnosed patients. The following is tip sheet for sharing your experience.

As you may remember, dealing with a newly diagnosed acoustic neuroma can be a life changing experience. Speaking with others (along with research and talking to medical professionals), most likely helped shape your treatment plan.

With this in mind, please take a moment to read through the following tips before speaking to newly diagnosed patients, as your brief connection with new patients may play a key role in helping others make their treatment decisions.

- Remind the new patient that this is a **confidential conversation**.
- State that you are **sharing your own experience**. You are encouraged to share your insights, successes, life changes, and hopes.
- **Avoid giving medical advice**. Instead encourage patients to gather information from a variety of medical professionals with demonstrated expertise and recent experience.
- **Remember everyone's experience is as unique as each tumour**. What happened to you might not happen to them. So, be mindful of your own emotional situations and remain in a supportive role.
- **Listen**. You are encouraged to share your experience, but take the time to listen to theirs. Listening provides just as much support as sharing.
- **Learn**. Each time you speak with a new person you might learn something new too. The opportunity to share in a supportive manner will help you both.

Finally, if you meet with a challenging or uncomfortable situation, you are encouraged to inform the National Office. Thank you again for your time!