Tips for Opening Ceremonies and Sample Script

The Walk for Bladder Cancer is a fun event, but it is an emotional day for many people. It is a time to honor survivors, remember those we’ve lost and come together as a community to end the disease. Beginning with an opening ceremony is an opportunity to remind participants why they are supporting the event. We’ve provided you with an Opening Ceremony speaker timeline for you to follow on event day. Keep in mind that your Opening Ceremony may not include all speakers.

Committee Member: (2 minutes)
- Welcome and thank you
- Bullet Points (2-3): Bullet points provided below
- Introduce Official BCAN Speaker (or progress to next section)

Official BCAN Speaker (or Committee Member): (3 minutes)
- Thank you
- Message to be provided by BCAN
- Introduce Sponsor

Sponsor: (2 minutes)
- Thank you
- Bullet Point(s) (1-2): Should focus on BCAN and AMP UP
- Introduce Doctor

Doctor: (3 minutes)
- Thank you
- Bullet Points (3): Should focus on current and future treatments or updates from medical community and how BCAN helps
- Introduce Patient or Patient Family Member

Patient: (3 minutes)
- Thank you
- Personal story: Should include how BCAN has helped or given guidance
- Return to Committee Member

Committee Member: (2 minutes)
- Thank you to BCAN, Sponsors, Doctor/Medical Community and Patient/Patient Family
- Housekeeping: Bathrooms, walk start, guidelines, social media, group photo, post event info
- Direct everyone to start

1. **Keep it short, but powerful.** Your ceremony should last 15 minutes or less. It is hard to keep people’s attention so brevity will help you keep the participants interested.

2. **Say thank you.** It is important to acknowledge the generosity of your committee (by name), volunteers, donors, and sponsors. If you have sponsors or in-kind donations of over $500, it is best to mention the company by name. For example “thank you to Wegman’s for providing the water for the walk.”

3. **What if I forget a sponsor or committee member’s name?** Don’t worry – it happens to the best of us. Post-walk, call BCAN and we can help by sending the person a
special note or adding a acknowledgement to your website.

4. **Awareness is key.** Share a few statements about bladder cancer. We’ve listed plenty to choose from, but pick two or three that are most compelling to you. You can also refer people to the BCAN literature.
   - Bladder cancer is the fifth most commonly diagnosed cancer in the U.S.
   - Nearly 77,000 new cases of bladder cancer are expected to be diagnosed this year.
   - Approximately 16,000 people will die from the disease this year alone.
   - One in 42 people will be diagnosed with bladder cancer during their lifetime.
   - Bladder cancer is three times more common in men than in women.
   - Though it is more prevalent in men, studies have shown that women are more likely to present advanced tumors and have a worse prognosis than men at almost every stage of the disease.
   - The 5-year survival rate for women is equal to the 10-year survival rate for men.
   - Bladder cancer has a recurrence rate of 50-80 percent and because it requires lifelong surveillance, it is the most expensive cancer to treat on a per patient basis.
   - It is estimated that more than $3.98 billion is spent to treat bladder cancer each year in the U.S.
   - Smoking is the number one risk factor for bladder cancer and people who smoke have a risk four times greater than someone who does not smoke. Smoking is estimated to cause approximately half of all bladder cancer cases in both men and women.
   - Bladder cancer is one of the most diagnosed types of cancer in the U.S., ranking in the top 10 in terms of incidence, but is only 22nd on the list of cancers for which the government funds research.
   - A lack of funding exists for bladder cancer research, with approximately $24 million invested in the past year.

**Recognize survivors.** Depending on the size of your event, you can do this in many different ways. You can simply say “Let’s take a moment to recognize the bladder cancer survivors who are here with us today – we honor their journey and walk today for a cure.” It will mean a lot to their surviving family members who are attending the walk.

**End the Opening Ceremony with a powerful statement.** Following the personal story when everyone is getting amped up, lead the event with a great call to action. For example: “Together we walk (or run or move)! Together we save lives! Let’s walk.”

**Another great ending (get louder as you read each statement):**
   - Raise and keep your hand up if you are a survivor. (Some people will raise their hands.)
   - Raise and keep your hand up if you or a loved one have been impacted by bladder cancer. (More people will raise their hands.)
   - Raise and keep your hand up if you want to end this disease (Everyone should have their hand up.)
   - Let’s do it now!