Thank You Cards
Guidance Document

We hope this document provides you with some useful insight, tips and answers to the questions you might have about how and when to give these cards to patients.

Who were the cards developed by and what’s the purpose?
The cards have been developed by Cancer Research UK, through consultations with patients and Research Nurses and created to thank and recognise participants for their contribution to research. Without them, we wouldn’t be able to drive progress in the diagnosis, prevention and treatment of cancer.

The cards and envelopes cost around 15p (per card) to print and we continually gather feedback on the cards to ensure that they are an effective use of resource as all of Cancer Research UK’s income is generated from the generosity of the public.

What do the cards look like and what information do they contain?
Trial participants were consulted during the design process of the cards. “Thank You” is written on the front of the cards and inside includes a message of thanks from a Cancer Research UK Senior Research Nurse. On the back is a link to the Cancer Research UK clinical trials database which includes lay summaries of over 800 clinical trials and stores information on cancer trials currently open to recruitment. The database also contains studies that are not supported by Cancer Research UK.

Have the cards been tested with patients?
Yes. The cards were piloted with patients, including those on Phase 1 studies, in 3 locations between March and October 2016. The cards were positively received by these patients and we have now relaunched the cards in more locations across the UK.

Do the cards require ethical approval?
A HRA Ethics Advisor has confirmed that no ethical approval is required for the cards because:
- The cards do not contain any specific information about the study a participant has been on
- The cards do not have an impact on their decision to participate in the study

Therefore, there are no ethical issues for participants that are needed to be considered by an ethics committee. However, you may need to seek approval from your hospital patient information governance boards and/or other relevant stakeholders before using the cards.

Who are the cards for and how should I give them out?
We believe Research Nurses and other staff involved in supporting cancer patients throughout a study, are best placed to decide when these cards should be given to patients. It could also vary from patient to patient. We suggest you use your own discretion about whether you feel the card is appropriate for patients on a particular study or for an individual patient.

Research staff who are already using the cards have told us that they are using them at the following points in the patient journey:
- After the consent stage (e.g. with countersigned copy of consent form)
- While the patient is on the study
- When the patient leaves the study (end of treatment)
- At the end of follow up (e.g. after being in follow up for 10 years)

Can I write my own message in the card?
Yes. We have created the card so that there is space inside for you to add the patient’s name and sign the card. We found through our consultation and testing with patients that they most valued the cards when they had a personal message from staff.
Could you create a study-specific version of the card for us?

We are currently unable to make any major edits to the design of the card as any changes to the design will cost the charity money. We have, however, made the card design flexible inside to enable you to add a personal message from your study team if you choose to.

If you’d like to acknowledge other study sponsors, you could send the card with supporting information about your study e.g. informed consent documents or study results, as an accompany or insert.

Some sites are choosing to send the card along with a copy of the countersigned consent form which recognises other study sponsors involved.

Some other points you should consider:

1) The cards have been developed for patients on Cancer Research UK funded trials but have been designed to be relevant to any patient on a cancer study. This is because some Research Nurses have told us that there are other groups of patients that they would like to give them to. Currently, Phase I, II and III studies are using the cards including observational, epidemiology, prevention and randomized controlled trials.

2) If you decide not to give the cards to every trial patient, you’ll need to consider how to do this fairly to avoid people feeling disadvantaged if they don’t receive one.

3) You’ll need to determine how best to deliver the cards – in person or by post? The card is something you could use in face-to-face conversations with patients e.g. during an appointment, or you could post the card along with a copy of their countersigned consent form.

4) Feedback from patients indicates that the best time to receive the card is at the start or end of a study.

How can I order cards?

You’ll need to contact Katie-Jane Plumb at tycards@cancer.org.uk who will send you an order form and further instructions. We’d also love to hear any comments that you receive or have about the cards.

Thank you for your support and interest in our cards.