



HEART FAILURE AWARENESS DAYS 2026

Welcome to the Heart Failure Awareness Days campaign toolkit. This guide will help you plan and execute impactful initiatives from April 27 to May 3rd, 2026.

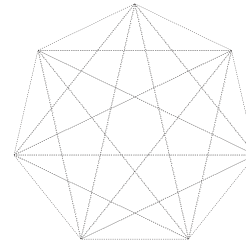
Our theme: **“Awareness today, protection tomorrow”**

Your Action Plan



Create Local Campaigns

Organize events, screenings, and collaborate with patient organization.



Join Social Media

Use hshtags, tag influencers, and share patient testimonials .



Engage Press

Send press releases, contact spokespersons, and use various media channels.



Advocate

Reach out to local politicians and decision-makers for support.



HFAD 2026 Competition



1

Participate

Complete the HFA template report on what has been achieved in your country. Send your report in English by **Friday 5 June 2026** to **hfa@escardio.org**

2

Winners' selection

The HFA will select the 5 “best campaigns” according to the following criteria.

3

Prizes

Each winner will receive 5 free HF Congress 2027 registrations and €500 per grantee for travel and accommodation.



HEART FAILURE AWARENESS DAYS 2026

TOOL KIT

HFA Staff
February 2026



HFA
Heart Failure
Association

Heart Failure Awareness Days Campaign

What

A public awareness campaign to make the realities of heart failure visible to the world in order to be the drivers of change.

HFAD 2026 theme: “Awareness today, protection tomorrow”

When

27 April to 3 May 2026

Where

The awareness campaign is aimed for the general public, healthcare practitioners, policy makers, throughout Europe.



What can you do ?



- Create a local awareness campaign

➔ Encourage to think about differing presentations of heart failure in both the acute and community settings

➔ Organise screening/health check events in your city, hospital, schools

➔ Create an "infographic" poster with information for the public

➔ Collaborate with your national patient organisations

➔ share interesting case studies of detection of HF

- Join the social media campaign
- Engage with the press
- Advocate with your local politicians



HFAD 2026 competition: win a prize!

Participating NHFS are asked to share and report all the initiatives achieved during the week through a report in English to be sent by **Friday 5 June 2026** to hfa@escardio.org.

- How?

➔ Use the HFA PowerPoint template available on the [shared folder](#) and fill-in all you achieved during the week by category. The report needs to be in English.

- The HFA will select the 5 “best campaigns” according to the following criteria:
 - Best campaign overall
 - Best innovative initiative
 - Best newcomer
 - Best animated public event
 - Best admirative effort
 - Patient engagement

The 5 finalist NHFS will receives 5 free registrations for HF 2027 and €500 per participant for travel and accommodation = approx. 5,000€ per winner.



Create a local awareness campaign

➔ Organise an event in your city, hospital, schools



Hospitals/Clinics

- Open door in clinics and hospital
- Offer the measurements of NP or risk factors as blood pressure, glucose, lipids, BMI.
- Organize a debate with heart failure specialists
- HF online consultation (10-20min each)
- Lectures/seminars
- Workshop on relaxation, dietary etc
- Mobile clinics
- Involving HF patient group / round table discussions
- Demonstration of materials and techniques
- Nurse programme



Schools/Universities

- Work in collaboration with the HFA Young Ambassador to reach your Young community and students
- Special lectures and sessions in university
- “no salt” menu created by chefs
- Lectures in schools for children



City and public spaces

- Public walk
- Survey
- Heart shaped balloons photo
- Arranging competitions, questionnaires, quizzes etc

Create a local awareness campaign

Create an "infographic" poster with information for the public

I have Heart Failure, now what?

It is normal to feel **scared** and have feelings such as: **fear, uncertainty** about the future, **denial, guilt, anxiety**...



YOU ARE NOT ALONE!



In Portugal, heart failure affects around 4% of the population, and increases to 12.6% in the population over the age of 70.

You will make your way, with the support of your Doctors and Nurses



- Ask questions and raise your concerns. The team is available to support you.
- You are the most important person in the team.
- Stay active!

- Enjoy life with your friends and family.
- Seek support from the Heart Failure Patient Association.

BE HAPPY!



Our recommendations:

- Write it in your local language to increase your reach
- Make it colorful
- Easy to read
- Clear and easy to understand information
- Use key numbers
- Add HFAD logo and other

Distribute these materials in public spaces, hospital, bus/metro stations, malls and schools.

What is Heart Failure?

Shining a light on Heart Failure to brighten up your life

Heart failure is a chronic, progressive condition in which the heart muscle is unable to pump enough blood to meet the body's needs for blood and oxygen

One in 5 adults above 40 years of age will develop Heart failure during their life.

Heart Failure Signs and Symptoms

- Breathlessness at rest or during exercise
- Ankle or legs edema
- Red and exercise capacity
- Weight increase due to water retention in the body
- Fatigue
- Abnormal Heart Beat or arrhythmias
- Excess urination
- Persistent cough

Conditions which might lead to Heart Failure

- Type 2 Diabetes
- History of Coronary Artery Disease
- High Blood pressure
- Obesity or being overweight
- Cardiac abnormalities

If you suffer from any of the above symptoms, consult your doctor for appropriate diagnosis and management of your condition.

Follow Sehtak_Hayatak facebook page, for more information about Heart Failure

Create a local awareness campaign

Collaborate with your national patient organisations

If applicable in your country, you can contact local patient associations/ support groups to join you in your initiatives.

Why?

- They have direct access to patients and relatives
- They are used to create awareness for general public
- They could reach different populations



Join the social media campaign

 #HeartFailureAwarenessDays #HFA_ESC

How to share on social media?

- Tag [@HFA_President](#) and [@escardio](#)
- Tag other influential accounts in the field of heart failure
- Tag your local newspapers, your city
- Create an event on Facebook for your public event
- Live-stream your event
- Engage local influencers
- Create Reels on Twitter, Instagram and TikTok
- Share patient testimonials
- Promote the patient website heartfailurematters.org



Engage with the press



- How to contact the press?

To reach the press you can send out press release to your local / national news outlets

Identify official spokespersons and try to contact them or their managers

Use social media to inform press - they're on Twitter and LinkedIn

Examples of what you can do:

- Radio
- Open press conference
- Podcasts
- Television (interviews, sections, share the news)
- Newspaper articles/columns
- Promoting Heartfailurematters.org

Advocate with your local politicians

- How to contact politicians and decision-makers?

Approaching politicians and attempting to have your issue **made a priority** is how policy is made. For any activity that you intend to do on Heart Failure Awareness Week, it is perfectly acceptable to reach out to your representatives to see how they can help.

A simple **Google search** can help you find your **policy makers and their contact details**. **Requesting a call** to discuss your activity and **asking them to participate** is part of the day-to-day work of every politician.

- How to engage politicians and decision-makers?

- Local events are an opportunity to engage with policy makers as guest speakers and as participants. Whether it is a city or town mayor, local policy maker or member of Parliament for that constituency, events are an opportunity for politicians to reach voters.
- Use of photo opportunities, ask for interviews.
- Providing material in advance in the form of a briefing on the topic as well as any key messages you want to get across is important. Politicians will want to ensure they are properly briefed on an issue.

Advocate with your local politicians

Key messages example:

- Heart Failure affects over 64 million people worldwide and is one of the leading causes of hospitalization among older adults **(1)**.
 - The global one-year mortality rate for heart failure patients is around 23% **(2)**.
 - 35.7% of heart failure patients are readmitted within one year after hospitalization , and 13,2% within 30 days , highlighting the heavy burden on healthcare systems globally **(3)**.
 - Heart Failure and Cancer go frequently together; HF patients have high rates of cancer.
 - Women are often underdiagnosed and undertreated for heart failure globally, despite having better long-term survival than men. Clinical trials and guideline-based therapies remain disproportionately focused on men **(5)**.
- **Always be able to answer the question “what can I do to help”?**

Be wary of having “**raising awareness**” as the goal of an advocacy campaign.

While raising awareness amongst the public is important, for policy makers this is not enough. Just because a policy maker is aware of a problem does not mean they know exactly what steps to take to solve the problem. At all times you should be able to answer the question “what can I do to help”. Whether it is a call for **increased budget, support** for a healthcare institution or the need to have your views represented in a particular **policy**, having a clear ask is vital.

Advocate with your local politicians

Examples of what you can do:

- Invite policy makers to tour a hospital or clinic, understanding the work that healthcare workers are involved in
- Invite politicians to any public event you might be organizing
- Organize panel debates with influential, decision-making people
- Political engagement (president, minister of health, president NHFS etc..)
- Red flags on special monuments/places
- Engage with famous personalities like actors, high level athlete sensibelize by the HF cause
 - Sport events to increase awareness and promote a healthy lifestyle
 - Engage people in sports activities with them: hiking, bicycles ride, sport tournaments, marathon etc.

Social media and Politicians



Avoid preaching to the converted. Instead of having allies repost each other's material, real value can be generated by instead having **policy makers publish social material on your issue**. A win-win can be created with the following steps:

1. Create material that is relatable to the public and can be published by policy makers;
2. Ensure your social media network is aware that a supportive policy maker will post material;
3. Repost and draw attention to any posts of a policy maker on the issue of heart failure.

In this way you can **both reach a wider audience, avoid preaching to the converted** and also provide a return on investment for the policy maker by providing them with **positive exposure**.



HFAD Support toolkit

- Official logos of [HFA](#) and [HFA Awareness Days](#)
- Template to use for the [post event report](#)

