

**This Run's for Jack –**  
**from a Physicians perspective (Dr. Sigrun Hallmeyer)**

The meaning of community outreach and engagement of family and friends from a  
physician's perspective

I have been treating patients with melanoma for over 10 years now, and was able to witness the amazing advancements of treatment options in this recent decade. More often we have been able to transform a previously universally fatal illness into a chronic disease that one can live with for sometimes several years, and I have been amazed by many patients who have been cured and moved on to a normal and productive life. However, the fight remains challenging and by far not all patients present success stories. The treatment is difficult and toxic, and often life changing. And the support that we as physicians, nurses and other medical support staff can provide is significant, but by far not all-encompassing. And this is where the power of community outreach comes in – where there is a platform that provides for an active interaction of the medical community and the patient care and support community – the many family members and friends that stand shoulder to shoulder with our melanoma patients. These people carry our patients through this challenging fight and represent the shoulder to be cried on, the hands thrown up in the air with a huge hurray for every tiny success, the legs that walk the extra mile for every possible need... The true cheerleaders.

This run's for Jack represents the “cheerleaders headquarter” for me. It is the breeding ground for spirit and hope. Not just for the patients, but for the cheerleaders. It's an event that ignites amazing efforts to unite in the fight against melanoma – it provides hope and inspiration, and the heart-warming feeling of belonging and community. I have participated in several This run's for Jack events and it has become a regular commitment on our family's fall calendar. I appreciate this opportunity to connect with my patients and their cheerleaders, and am taken away by the teams that are created around each of our melanoma patients. I always arrive happy and with a mind full of expectations, and leave with a body covered with “goose bumps” (quoting my 6 year old daughter) and a heart filled with hope and passion.