

**10 TOP  
TIPS  
FOR LINE  
MANAGERS**

**WE ARE  
MACMILLAN.  
CANCER SUPPORT**

**When an employee has cancer or is caring for someone with cancer, they will need your support. They may be dealing with medical, emotional and financial issues.**

**These tips will help you support your employee through diagnosis, treatment and living with cancer.**

## 10 top tips

- 1** Communication is key
- 2** Be sensitive to your employee's needs
- 3** Respect your employee's right to privacy
- 4** Be prepared to make adjustments
- 5** Check guidelines and policies
- 6** Find out about financial support
- 7** Respect carers' rights at work
- 8** Discuss a return-to-work plan
- 9** Recognise the impact on your team
- 10** Macmillan is here to help

# 1

## **Communication is key**

Listen to your employee and try to understand their situation. It is fine to ask questions when they are sharing information with you. It is important to keep in contact with them if they are on sick leave. Take time to agree on how and when you will keep in touch. Remember to review these plans, as their situation and how they want to be contacted may change.

# 2

## **Be sensitive to your employee's needs**

Every person has a different cancer experience. Cancer treatments, and the physical and emotional effects of cancer, will be different for each person. What is best for one employee may not suit another. Make time to understand your employee's individual needs.

# 3

## **Respect your employee's right to privacy**

Your employee may not want other people in the organisation to know that they have cancer or are caring for someone with cancer. If they do want colleagues to know, ask them how and when they would prefer people to be told.

# 4

## **Be prepared to make adjustments**

Cancer is legally defined as a disability. In line with equality laws, you may need to make changes to the workplace or working arrangements that allow your employee to work. These changes are called reasonable adjustments. If you have an HR department or occupational health service, they will be able to give you advice.

# 5

## Check guidelines and policies

Check whether your organisation has any guidelines and policies to support your employee and help you manage the situation. These may include guidance about sickness absence, long-term conditions, time off work and occupational health. We have templates you can use to create guidelines. Visit [macmillan.org.uk/employer](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/employer) to find out more.

# 6

## Find out about financial support

Find out whether your organisation has policies for giving financial support to those off work, including sick pay. You may also want to check whether there are any other benefits that could help your employee. You could suggest they call our financial guides and benefits advisers on **0808 808 00 00**, or visit [macmillan.org.uk/moneyworries](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/moneyworries)

# 7

## Respect carers' rights at work

If an employee is caring for a loved one who has cancer, they may need your support. Carers have certain rights at work, including taking unpaid time off to care for a loved one in an emergency. Flexible working could make it easier for carers to keep working. Any employee has the right to request flexible working.

# 8

## Discuss a return-to-work plan

If your employee is off work, keep in touch. When they are ready, talk with them about a return-to-work plan. This will help find out what further support they might need before, during and after treatment. This may mean a phased return to work or gradually handing over work. You could also consider reasonable adjustments to support their wellbeing.

# 9

## Recognise the impact on your team

Be aware of the impact that cancer can have on your colleagues and on you. If you feel you need more support, ask your own line manager, your HR department, or call our support line on **0808 808 00 00**.

# 10

## Macmillan is here to help

Don't forget that we are here to help everyone affected by cancer, including family, friends, carers and employers. If you or your employees have questions about cancer, call our support line free on **0808 808 00 00**. Or visit **[macmillan.org.uk/work](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/work)** for expert training, resources and advice.

**'My employer was aware of any difficulties and supported me. It helped make the transition into work easier.'**

**Hilary, diagnosed with cancer of the gullet**



## Work and cancer support from Macmillan

Macmillan at Work is a scheme that provides:

- expert training
- consultancy
- information and support
- resources, such as **The essential work and cancer toolkit**.

If anyone in your organisation is affected by cancer, the toolkit provides guidance and practical tips for you and your employees. It includes the booklet **Managing cancer in the workplace**, which has more detailed information for managers. This information is also part of the toolkit.

You can order the toolkit by signing up at [macmillan.org.uk/atwork](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/atwork) Once you are registered, you will also receive a free, monthly newsletter.

## Disclaimer

We make every effort to ensure that the information we provide is accurate and up to date, but it should not be relied upon as a substitute for specialist professional advice tailored to your situation. So far as is permitted by law, Macmillan does not accept liability in relation to the use of any information contained in this publication, or third-party information or websites included or referred to in it.

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This leaflet has tips that will help you support your employee through diagnosis, treatment and living with cancer. It also includes tips for supporting carers.

If you have more questions or would like to talk to someone, call the Macmillan Support Line free on **0808 808 00 00**, Monday to Friday, 9am to 8pm, or visit **macmillan.org.uk**

Would you prefer to speak to us in another language? Interpreters are available. Please tell us in English the language you would like to use. Are you deaf or hard of hearing? Call us using NGT (Text Relay) on **18001 0808 808 00 00**, or use the NGT Lite app.

Need information in different languages or formats?  
Visit **macmillan.org.uk/otherformats** or call our support line.



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