

MANAGING CANCER IN THE WORKPLACE

An employer's guide to supporting staff affected by cancer



**WE ARE
MACMILLAN.**
CANCER SUPPORT



Contents

Introduction	3
How cancer affects people	13
How to talk about cancer	31
Workplace support strategies	43
Financial support for your employee	71
Legislation	77
Further information	91
Appendix	105



INTRODUCTION

Small steps – big difference: the benefits of best practice	5
Other things you can do	8
How to use this guide	9
Further support	11

More than 100,000 people of working age are diagnosed with cancer in the UK each year. There are currently more than 700,000 people of working age living with a cancer diagnosis. Many will continue to work after or even through their treatment.

Many people living with cancer tell Macmillan that work is important to them. A job can restore normality, routine, stability, social contact and income. Not only that, but for people with ill health or disability, remaining in or returning to work can actually help to promote recovery and lead to better health outcomes. Being able to work is also important to carers for similar reasons.



There are an estimated 500,000 carers of people with cancer in the UK working full- or part-time.

At Macmillan, we know that employers play an important role in supporting people with cancer and their carers. But as an employer or line manager, you may not always feel confident about how best to support them. There are challenges at the time of diagnosis, during treatment, at the time of returning to work and afterwards. We also recognise you need to meet the needs of other individuals in the workplace and your organisation as a whole. In these difficult situations, you yourself may be affected in both a practical and personal way.

This guide gives information and practical advice about how you can support employees affected by cancer, including examples of best practice. It also covers your responsibilities as an employer and your employees' rights. For more information, visit [macmillan.org.uk/work](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/work)

Throughout this guide, we've included quotes from people affected by cancer in the workplace. These were sourced during research carried out by Macmillan. Names have been changed.

You can order more information from us about cancer types, treatments and living with cancer by calling **0808 808 00 00** or visiting **[be.macmillan.org.uk](https://www.be.macmillan.org.uk)**



320 people of working age are diagnosed every day.

Small steps – big difference: the benefits of best practice

Supporting employees diagnosed with cancer makes business sense for employers. By making reasonable adjustments, you can retain your employees and allow them to perform to their potential. And by being confident about disability issues, you can avoid legal risk as well as enhance the performance of the organisation and the individuals within it.

Taking some simple actions such as these can make a big difference to your staff and your organisation:

- allowing time off for medical appointments
- making reasonable adjustments such as offering flexible working arrangements
- organising a phased return to work.

These changes are not normally difficult to implement. Many adjustments have no cost at all. Where there is some cost,

it's usually small, and grants from the Access to Work or Access to Work (NI) scheme can cover some or all of it (see pages 60–61).



More than 70% of organisations that make workplace adjustments consider them to be easy.

Benefits of supporting employees with cancer

There is a clear business case for supporting people affected by cancer to return to work. Here are some of the many benefits:

- **Efficiency** – Employers can retain valuable skills, knowledge and experience, and maintain productivity.
- **Saving time and money** – You avoid the cost of replacing and training employees. (The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) estimates the average cost of recruitment to be £4,333 per employee, with an average recruitment time of 6–16 weeks depending on the position.)
- **Being more inclusive** – Supporting someone with cancer gives an employer more understanding of the needs of diverse groups.
- **Employee engagement** – By supporting an employee with an illness such as cancer, you'll foster a greater sense of loyalty from them and their colleagues. This will naturally have a positive impact on employee engagement.
- **Morale** – Retaining experienced employees can reduce pressure on those around them who might otherwise have to take on more work or train new recruits.
- **Positive image** – A company or organisation that's seen to support employees with cancer is more likely to become attractive to job applicants and customers.

- **Fulfilling your legal obligations** – Meeting the obligations of the Equality Act 2010 in England, Scotland and Wales, or the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 in Northern Ireland, will help avoid potential discrimination compensation and all the associated costs of management time, legal fees and potential damage to reputation. The median average award for a breach of disability discrimination law in 2011–12 was almost £9,000, but there have been awards of more than £2million.



Almost four in ten people (37%) who return to work after cancer treatment say they experience some kind of discrimination from their employer or colleagues.

Helping your employee

Being supportive of your employee affected by cancer will make a huge difference to them as they go through this difficult time. You can help reduce their anxiety and give them the confidence to deal with cancer at work.



Macmillan research has shown that two of the most important factors in a successful adjustment back to work are a good relationship with the employer and a phased return to work.

Other things you can do

Raise awareness of cancer

Whether you have an employee with cancer or not, you may want to raise awareness of the condition in your organisation. You could highlight the support you can offer if an employee is affected by cancer in the future.

This may simply involve putting up a poster, observing cancer awareness months (see [be.macmillan.org.uk/cancerawareness](https://www.be.macmillan.org.uk/cancerawareness)) or encouraging people to take part in fundraising.



Over two million people are currently living with cancer in the UK. This is estimated to double by 2030.

Educate employees

Order *The essential work and cancer toolkit* to share with other employees at your organisation. It includes a range of resources designed to help employers support people affected by cancer. Order one at [macmillan.org.uk/worktoolkit](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/worktoolkit)

Remember, everyone is different

It's essential to work with the employee. Everyone has individual needs and aspirations, and employers need to treat each case independently. For example, flexible working can be as simple as allowing the employee to come in late occasionally if they're feeling unwell. Maintaining good communication between the employee and the line manager is crucial.

How to use this guide

This guide aims to help you understand what your employee is experiencing and points out ways you can support them. It provides practical tips to minimise the impact on your organisation and all the individuals concerned. The guide is divided into six main sections:

- **How cancer affects people** (both physically and emotionally) – pages 13–29
- **How to talk about cancer** – pages 31–40
- **Workplace support strategies** (for employees affected by cancer and their colleagues) – pages 43–69
- **Financial support for your employee** – pages 71–75
- **Legislation** (including the Equality Act 2010, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and the rights of carers) – pages 77–89
- **Further information** (details of how Macmillan can help you and other useful organisations and resources) – pages 91–103.

You'll find information about additional resources within each section, in case you need more details or advice. The appendix (page 105) contains 10 top tips for line managers.

Training for managers

You may want to consider integrating some of the messages found in this guide into training for managers. This could be helpful for dealing with other long-term conditions as well as cancer. See pages 92–96 for useful Macmillan resources and training tools, including e-learning for line managers.



Are your policies up-to-date?

If you have a health and well-being policy, or a policy for long-term conditions, you may want to revisit it in light of this guide. You may also wish to introduce a cancer-specific policy. Alternatively, your organisation may have broader policies that can be applied to people with cancer and/or carers. You can also access Macmillan's Cancer Policy Template at [macmillan.org.uk/employer](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/employer)

Further support

Our cancer support specialists can provide emotional support to employees and line managers, as well as put them in touch with other sources of information and support. Call us free on **0808 808 00 00** (Monday–Friday, 9am–8pm).

We also have a series of videos on work and cancer, which give real-life examples and advice on how to minimise the impact of cancer at work or on small businesses. They include experiences relevant to organisations in all sectors. You can watch them at [macmillan.org.uk/workvideos](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/workvideos) or on our *Cancer in the workplace* DVD. You can order this from [be.macmillan.org.uk/work](https://www.be.macmillan.org.uk/work)

'I've returned to work since I was diagnosed with cancer and I can't thank my employers enough. Throughout my treatment, surgery and recovery, they offered me help and showed true understanding and friendship. Without them, I don't know what position I'd be in today.'

Gary



HOW CANCER AFFECTS PEOPLE

What is cancer?	15
Cancer treatments	16
Side effects of treatment	19
After treatment is over	24
Emotional effects of cancer	25
If your employee is a carer	27

The number of people living with and beyond cancer is growing and people are now living with cancer in different ways.

The effect a cancer diagnosis and treatment will have on a person and their ability to work can vary widely. It depends on:

- the type of cancer
- its stage (the size of the tumour and whether it has spread)
- any symptoms the cancer might be causing
- the cancer treatment and its side effects
- how the person copes when faced with a traumatic situation.

Some people welcome work as a way of helping them to feel normal and in control. Carrying on with or returning to work can help people to cope while they're waiting for a diagnosis, having treatment, or caring for someone with cancer. For others, working is a financial necessity and they can't afford to be away for long.

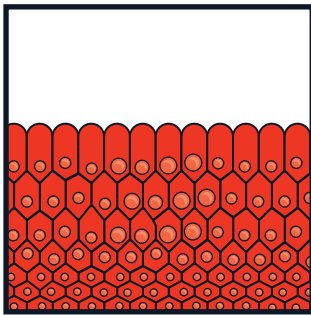
Some people give up their jobs because their cancer is advanced or the symptoms make it impossible to work. The side effects of treatment leave some people unable to work. Others may resign because of low self-esteem or confidence issues. Carers may need to reduce their hours or give up work to care for someone.

As a manager, you may be one of your employee's most important sources of support. You don't need to be a medical expert, but a basic understanding of cancer and its treatment can help. This knowledge will also help you to plan for and recognise issues that may emerge at work.

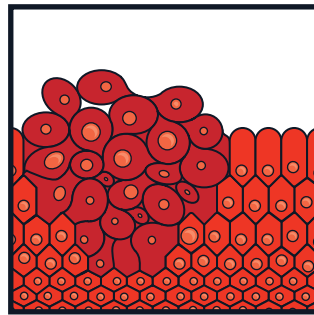
What is cancer?

The organs and tissues of the body are made up of tiny building blocks called cells. Cancer is a disease of these cells. Cancer isn't a single disease with a single cause and a single type of treatment. There are more than 200 different types of cancer, each with its own name and treatment.

Although cells in different parts of the body may look different and work in different ways, most repair and reproduce themselves in the same way. Normally, cells divide in an orderly and controlled way. But if for some reason the process gets out of control, the cells carry on dividing, and develop into a lump called a tumour. Tumours can be either **benign** (non-cancerous) or **malignant** (cancerous). Doctors can tell whether a tumour is benign or malignant by removing a piece of tissue (**biopsy**) and examining a small sample of cells under a microscope.



Normal cells



Cells forming a tumour

In a benign tumour, the cells do not spread to other parts of the body and so are not cancerous. However, they may carry on growing at the original site, and may cause a problem by pressing on surrounding organs.

In a malignant tumour, the cancer cells have the ability to spread beyond the original area of the body. If the tumour is left untreated, it may spread into surrounding tissue. Sometimes cells break away from the original (primary) cancer. They may spread to other organs in the body through the bloodstream or lymphatic system.

When cancer cells reach a new area, they may go on dividing and form a new tumour. This is known as a **secondary cancer** or **metastasis**.

Depending on the cancer and where it is in the body, it may cause symptoms such as tiredness, weight loss, breathlessness or pain.

Cancer treatments

The aim of cancer treatment for many people is to cure the cancer. In some cancers that are very slow-growing or that have spread beyond the original area of the body, the aim may be to control the cancer and delay its progress.

The main treatments for cancer are surgery, radiotherapy and chemotherapy. Other treatments, such as hormonal therapy and targeted therapy, may also be used for certain cancers. Often, a combination of more than one type of treatment is used.



We have booklets about different cancer types, treatments and side effects. You can also read this information at macmillan.org.uk/cancerinformation

Surgery

Surgery may aim to remove all or part of a tumour. Some operations are done as day surgery, so the person only needs to take a short time off work. Others are more complex and may mean spending a few weeks, or even months, away from work. In some cases, surgery may affect someone's ability to use a limb.

Radiotherapy

This treatment uses high-energy x-rays to destroy cancer cells, while doing as little harm as possible to normal cells.

Radiotherapy that aims to cure the cancer will often mean a person needs to go to the hospital each weekday for several weeks. Each treatment only takes a few minutes. But travelling to and from the hospital and waiting for the treatment may take up a large part of the day.

Some people manage to continue working during radiotherapy, but they may need to reduce their hours. Other people stop working completely while having radiotherapy and for a few weeks afterwards.

Chemotherapy

Chemotherapy drugs interfere with the process of cell division. They affect normal cells as well as cancer cells. As a result, they often cause side effects.

The drugs are often given as a liquid through a drip into a vein (intravenously). They circulate in the bloodstream and reach the cancer cells wherever they are in the body. Some chemotherapy drugs are given as tablets or capsules, which can be taken at home.

Intravenous chemotherapy may take minutes, hours or a few days to have. The treatment is followed by a few weeks of rest to allow

the body to recover from any side effects. Together, the treatment and the rest period are known as a cycle of chemotherapy.

Usually 4–6 cycles of treatment are given, which take 4–8 months. Some treatments for particular types of cancer last much longer than this, while others may be shorter.

Sometimes, a drug is given continuously into the vein by a small portable pump over the course of a few months.

After their first cycle, a person will have a better idea of how much they may or may not be able to do during treatment. Some people find they can't work at all. Others are able to keep working or just need to take a few days off after each treatment session. They can then work until the next treatment is due.

'As my chemo continued, what became more and more apparent was that I needed to look after myself psychologically. A stressful job was the last thing I needed at that time.'

Oliver

Hormonal therapies

These are drugs that can stop or slow the growth of cancer cells by either changing the level of particular hormones in the body, or preventing hormones affecting the cancer cells. Most hormonal therapies are given as tablets, but some are given as injections every few weeks or months. Hormonal therapy may be given for a few weeks or for up to a number of years. They will usually have less of an effect on someone's ability to work than other cancer treatments, but they do still have side effects.

Targeted therapies

These are part of a newer group of drug treatments that work by targeting the growth of cancer cells. They generally have little effect on normal cell growth, so they usually have less troublesome side effects than chemotherapy. Targeted therapies may be given as a drip (intravenous infusion) or as tablets.

The length of treatment with targeted therapy can vary. It can last from a few weeks to a number of years. Many people are able to carry on working while taking these drugs, but tiredness and other side effects may sometimes make this difficult.

Side effects of treatment

Side effects – and how long they last – will depend on the treatment being given and will also vary from person to person. Some people will be able to work during their treatment, while others will need to be off for a few weeks or months.

Common side effects of treatments include:

- fatigue (see pages 21–23)
- risk of infection

- nausea (feeling sick) and vomiting (being sick)
- hair loss
- sore mouth
- diarrhoea or constipation
- numbness or tingling in the hands or feet
- body changes (see page 23).

Your employee's medical team should explain to them the possible side effects and how they can best manage them before they start treatment. Some side effects can be managed well with medicines.

Some people find they have few problems with treatment. Others may have significant symptoms due to their cancer or side effects from treatment.

Some people find that side effects build up during their treatment, so they may be able to work at first but then need more time off as treatment progresses.



You may be able to make it easier for the person to cope with side effects at work. For example, by allowing frequent breaks, having access to a fridge to store medicines in, or allowing uniform changes.

Fatigue

Fatigue (extreme tiredness) is a common side effect of cancer treatment. It can also be a symptom of some cancers. It can be worse at different stages of treatment, or at different times of the day. Cancer-related fatigue is not like normal tiredness. It can't be helped by sleep and it can make the simplest tasks feel exhausting.

Fatigue can affect people in different ways and it may persist long after treatment is over.

It may mean your employee:

- finds it harder to perform certain tasks
- has less strength and energy than before
- has difficulty concentrating or remembering things
- becomes exhausted during meetings or after light activity
- struggles to control their emotions
- experiences dizziness or is 'light-headed' from time to time.

Fatigue, together with the other effects of cancer and its treatments, may mean that your employee is unable to work for long periods. Tiredness can also make people irritable and affect how they relate to others.

If your employee is caring for someone with cancer, that person's fatigue can have an impact on them too. It can increase their need for time off so they can attend to caring responsibilities.





You can help your employee to cope with fatigue by offering various adjustments. Flexible working, working from home, reduced hours or lighter duties are a few options outlined later in this guide. Simple things like rest breaks or a short walk outdoors can really help.

You may want to order our booklet *Coping with fatigue*. There's also information, along with a video about fatigue, at [macmillan.org.uk/fatigue](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/fatigue)

Body changes

Cancer and its treatment can cause physical changes. These may be temporary or permanent. You and your colleagues may need to be prepared for this. Body changes will depend on the individual's situation, but changes can include:

- hair loss
- changes in complexion or skin tone
- scarring
- altered appearance after surgery
- weight loss or gain.

Our booklet *Body image and cancer* may be helpful. We also have information about many other side effects. Call **0808 808 00 00** or visit [be.macmillan.org.uk](https://www.be.macmillan.org.uk) to order our resources.

After treatment is over

Many people recover well and can return to their normal working life after treatment has finished. But having cancer and recovering from it can have a big psychological impact. Some people find it difficult getting back to normal.

People may struggle with fatigue (see pages 21–22), their emotions (see pages 25–26), or changes that treatment has made to their body (see page 23).

Some treatments leave people with long-term side effects, such as:

- tiredness for many months or sometimes years
- pain or lack of movement in an arm after breast surgery
- only being able to eat little and often after stomach surgery
- needing to use the toilet more often after bladder or bowel cancer treatment.



At least one in four people living with cancer experiences a wide range of long-term debilitating health conditions caused by their cancer.

People often want to get back to work but have difficulty returning to their old job. They need your understanding and support to do this successfully.

Some people recover well after treatment and they aren't ever affected again by the cancer. But some people may be living with the knowledge that their cancer can't be cured, even though they

feel well at the moment. Their cancer may return at some point and they may need further treatment. Some of these people will then have further periods of remission. For others, the cancer may be more advanced.

Some people live with cancer for many years without ever developing significant symptoms. However, some people may die from their illness within a matter of weeks or months. It can be a shock for people when a colleague dies – especially if it's soon after a diagnosis. You can read more about bereavement on pages 65–69.

Emotional effects of cancer

Being diagnosed with cancer and then going through treatment can understandably have a huge impact on the person concerned, their family and friends, and their work colleagues.

Going for tests and waiting to hear results can be a very anxious time. Many employees may wish to keep their situation confidential at this point. If they tell you what's happening, you can respond appropriately to their need for time off to attend medical appointments. See pages 31–40 for information and advice on talking about cancer.

When someone receives a cancer diagnosis, the shock can make them feel numb at first. Some people can take a while to accept the fact they have cancer and they may try to carry on as if nothing is wrong.

Other feelings people may have include:

- anger or bitterness
- sadness

- fear – of the disease, treatment and dying
- loneliness and isolation.

Someone may also feel relief to have a diagnosis and to be able to find out more about what can be done.

If your employee learns that they or a loved one has cancer, they may need some time off to be with their family and come to terms with it before coming back in to work.

Learning that a cancer has recurred can also be devastating news, particularly if the person needs more treatment or if their medical options are becoming limited.

Uncertainty can be one of the hardest things to deal with when faced with cancer. It can cause various emotional responses. Some people manage this by taking one day at a time and not looking too far into the future. Others want to find out as much as possible to help them regain some sense of control.

How you can help

Sometimes cancer makes it difficult for people to control their emotions and distress can happen suddenly. If this happens to your employee at work, it might help to offer them a private space for a while. You could suggest they go home for the rest of the day. Ask if they would like you to call a relative or friend, or if they want a team colleague to travel with them.

You can read more about the emotions people with cancer go through in our booklets *How are you feeling?* and *Your feelings after cancer treatment*.

Your own emotions

You and your colleagues may also have strong feelings about a colleague being affected by cancer. Don't be afraid to ask for support in dealing with your emotions. Within the limits of confidentiality, it may help to talk to another manager in your workplace. You can also call our cancer support specialists on **0808 808 00 00**. We are here to help anyone who is affected by cancer, including you.

Employees may also be able to access counselling through work, perhaps through an employee assistance programme (EAP).

If your employee is a carer

Becoming a carer is often unexpected and can be one of life's most emotional and physically demanding roles. It can sometimes be very hard to juggle caring and employment at the same time. But working carers have legal rights (see pages 86–88), which aim to help them stay in work. These include the right to request flexible working or to have time off during an emergency.

Caring responsibilities may cause absences. For example, an employee might take sick or annual leave when a crisis occurs, rather than asking for time off to care for someone with cancer. Often this is because people wrongly believe their caring role isn't a legitimate reason to request leave, or the carer may not feel comfortable disclosing that they are caring for someone.

Being a carer can have an impact both physically and emotionally, which can affect the carer's ability to work. They may find it difficult to concentrate or feel tired from lack of sleep. Being a carer can also make existing health problems worse, such as high blood pressure or back problems.



As soon as you're aware of someone's caring responsibilities, talk with them about your organisation's policies, their rights as a carer and their options for leave. Letting them know what you need from them will also help you support them.

Cancer can be a fluctuating illness, with long cycles of treatment, often requiring outpatient appointments. Carers may need time off work at short notice. Side effects and symptoms can also persist after treatment is over, so the need for flexibility may remain for some time.

Your employee's commitment to their job and colleagues may cause them to feel guilty if they're unable to complete their usual work. Caring responsibilities may also affect how an employee views their own career development – they may feel discouraged about seeking promotion or applying for a new job. Being a carer shouldn't have a negative effect on an employee's longer-term job prospects. It will help if you can reassure them about this.


Our *Work it out for carers* tool can help carers find the information they need to manage their caring responsibilities and work. Our booklets *Working while caring for someone with cancer* and *Hello, and how are you? A guide for carers, by carers* may also be helpful. Visit [be.macmillan.org.uk](https://www.be.macmillan.org.uk) to order our resources.

We have a series of videos on work and cancer. Our short film *Supporting carers* features real-life experiences from carers and expert advice on how you can support an employee in a similar situation. You can watch this on our *Cancer in the workplace* DVD or online at macmillan.org.uk/workvideos

Your employee can also contact the Macmillan Support Line on **0808 808 00 00** for information, including details of local support services. Or see pages 91–103 for other useful resources and organisations.

'My partner had a very helpful employer. They allowed him to come and go at times that suited him, such as when I was in hospital.'

Alex



'My line manager was stunned and didn't really know what to do, which is understandable if you haven't come across anybody who has had that diagnosis.'

Carolyn

HOW TO TALK ABOUT CANCER

First conversations	33
Guidelines on sensitive communication	34
The importance of line managers	36
Telling colleagues	39

People can find it difficult to talk to someone who has been diagnosed with cancer. They often want to help but may not be sure what to say.

You may find you have to talk about difficult things with your employee, but it's important to keep communication open. Not talking will make things harder to deal with. In this section, there are tips on having the first conversations, communicating sensitively and talking to other colleagues.

The person who has cancer may struggle to talk too. Everyone is different in how they communicate with others about serious life events. Some people find it easy to talk about their thoughts and feelings, while others are more private.

Cultural differences matter too. Some languages don't even have a word for cancer. In some communities it is taboo – something people don't think they should mention.

Be aware that people may be embarrassed to discuss the physical details of their cancer, especially if a person of a different gender is present.

People with caring responsibilities may not recognise themselves as a carer, or they may not feel comfortable talking about their personal life in the workplace.

Talking about cancer is difficult at first, but it can be helpful for everyone concerned. There are a number of things you can do to make conversations easier.

First conversations

As soon as you become aware that an employee has been diagnosed with cancer, or that they are caring for someone with cancer, encourage them to meet their line manager, HR manager or occupational health provider. Sometimes it can be helpful to involve more than one of these contacts.

Sometimes the person might prefer to meet with someone other than their line manager about their situation. This may be because they find this person more neutral or easier to relate to. Or it may be because they are the same gender or age group.

Some employees prefer to look for help themselves and access existing policies without specifically revealing a cancer diagnosis. Others find an informal conversation better.

Your employee may wish to have a third party present at this meeting, or any future ones. This may be a colleague, family member, friend, or trade union representative. Communication and note-taking should be handled sensitively, and confidentiality should be assured at all times.

If they can, let your employee take the lead by telling you what has happened.

Guidelines on sensitive communication

Communication is a very personal thing. Everyone is different and what's appropriate for one employee won't be helpful for another. Think about the individual situation and person.

Try to:

- choose a private place to talk and make sure you won't be interrupted
- give yourselves plenty of time to meet, and be prepared for the session to overrun – let your employee set the pace
- show you are listening – encourage conversation by nodding or with verbal cues like, 'I see' or 'what happened next?'
- show it's okay to be upset by allowing your employee time to express their emotions, and recover if necessary, while remaining calm yourself
- show empathy with phrases like, 'I've noticed you seem upset at the moment' or 'that must be really hard'
- respond to humour but don't initiate it – humour can be a helpful coping strategy for people going through a difficult time
- end the meeting if your employee becomes too distressed to continue.

Try not to:

- be afraid of silence – it's okay if it goes quiet for a while
- be too quick to offer advice

- use clichés like, ‘things could be worse’ or ‘things will work out’
- discount your employee’s feelings
- share stories about other people you know who have cancer – this takes the focus away from your employee.

If you need to move the conversation on a bit, you could try asking about:

- how they are feeling, emotionally and physically
- whether they wish colleagues to be informed and what information should be shared
- what sort of time off they might need for medical appointments and during treatment (they may not know at this point – it’s often a case of seeing how things go).

It would be helpful if you also offer information about:

- the options for time off
- organisational policies on flexible working, work adjustments and return-to-work after sick leave
- their rights to be protected against discrimination, either because they have cancer or are caring for someone with cancer (see pages 77–89 for more information)
- any services your organisation provides to help them, for example, an employee assistance programme (EAP) that offers counselling.

Make sure you end the meeting with an assurance that your employee's work is valued and that your door is always open if they need your assistance. Agree how you will keep communication open and set a date for the next meeting.



If your organisation has access to a welfare rights officer or occupational health adviser, it may be good to involve them early on if the employee wants their help.

The importance of line managers

Line managers are an important source of support for people affected by cancer for several reasons:

- They are often the first contact point when the employee is unwell and doesn't attend work.
- They are responsible for the day-to-day management of the employee on their return.
- They play a key role in any necessary work adjustments.
- They may be the first person the employee contacts when they need to meet HR or an occupational health professional.
- They influence the employee's workload and therefore the level of pressure or demand. This will be an important factor if the employee is returning to work after some time away.
- By being supportive, especially after a period of sickness absence, they can prevent additional stress for the employee.

Support for line managers

Occupational health and HR

Line managers should have easy access to colleagues in human resources and occupational health. They should be ready to give the information and support that line managers need. This may include guidance about the employee's health condition, advice on the work adjustments needed, or information about the return-to-work process. Managers often value being available to discuss their concerns throughout the process with occupational health or HR teams.

'We keep in regular contact with the line manager to ask about any support they need and we will offer to do home visits to the employee to see if there's anything else we can do.'

Finn, HR worker

Top 10 tips

Macmillan's top tips for line managers can be found on pages 106–107. They're designed to help line managers support an employee from the point of diagnosis onwards. To order copies of these tips for your line managers, visit [be.macmillan.org.uk/work](https://www.be.macmillan.org.uk/work)

E-learning module

Cancer in the workplace: managers is an online module that aims to give line managers the confidence and knowledge needed to deal with cancer at work. It covers key areas such as talking about cancer, confidentiality, rights and responsibilities, and supporting carers. You can complete it in one session, or over time. Visit [macmillan.org.uk/learnzone](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/learnzone)

'I work in a not-for-profit organisation with employees spread around the country. Our office is a small, close group of just 15, and as soon as I got my diagnosis I informed my boss. He was brilliant. He told me to take any time off that I needed and said, "We're here for you". He meant it. Even when the general manager visits, he makes a point of giving me five minutes to ask if there's any more support I need.'

Dave

Telling colleagues

It's important to talk with your employee early on about what they want their colleagues to know. You need to discuss what will and won't be mentioned, who will be told and who will do the telling.

Your employee may not wish to tell others they are affected by cancer. This must be your employee's decision. However, colleagues may be more understanding about absences and any changes in work arrangements if they know what's happening.

If your employee agrees that others should know, ask them:

- if they want to break the news themselves
- if someone else should do it, and whether they want to be present
- how the news should be communicated, for example, one-to-one or in a meeting
- how much information should be shared and what should remain confidential.

When talking to colleagues, concentrate on the impact your employee's illness may have on people and projects at work.

Try to:

- avoid personal details
- use positive language, but be honest about what to expect
- avoid dramatising
- discuss with your team about how best to talk to their colleague.

You can also invite staff to speak to you or another manager if they are having practical problems with the situation or if they are feeling distressed. If you think it's appropriate, you can point them towards the Macmillan Support Line (**0808 808 00 00**), which can provide more support.

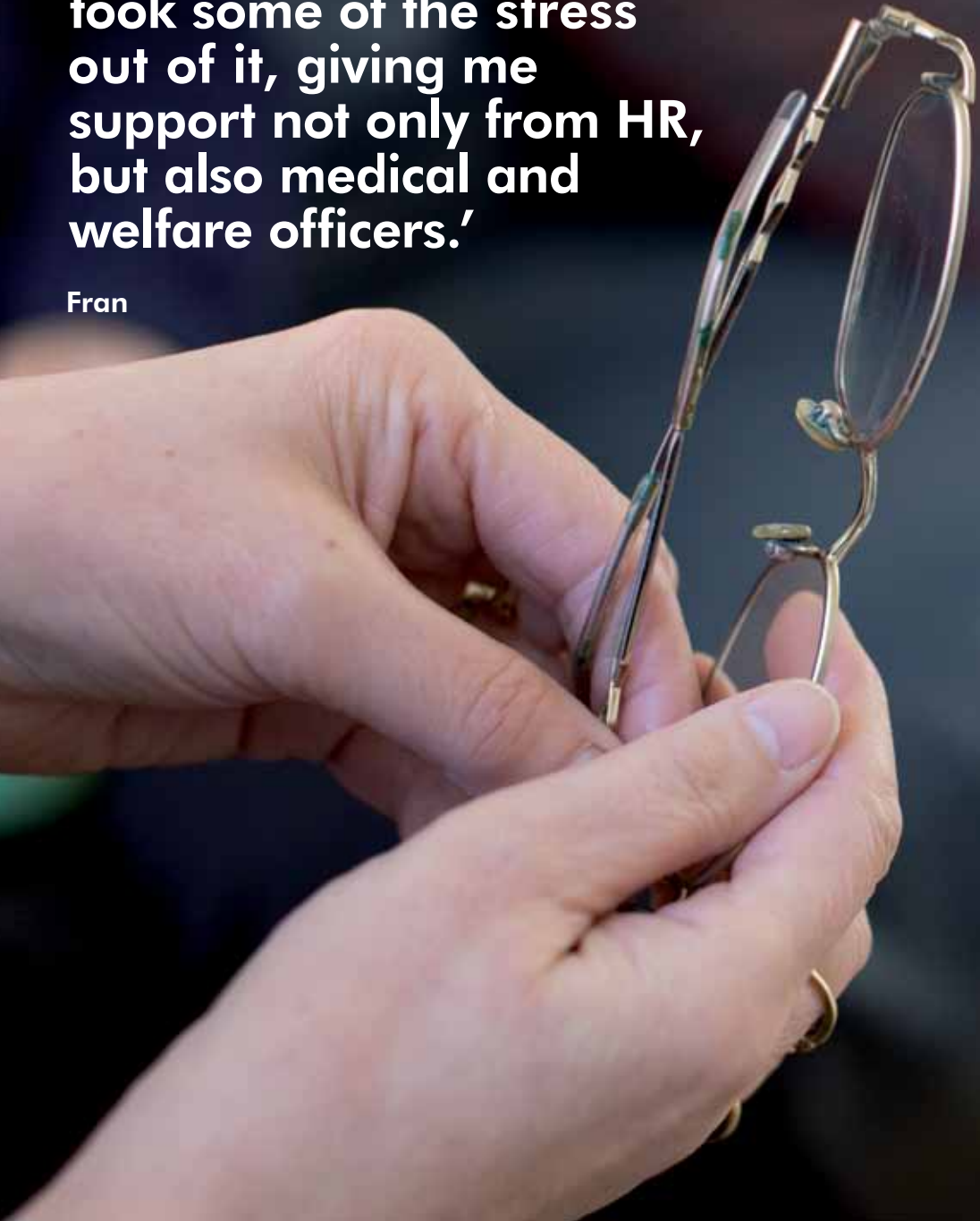
For more information about how to talk about cancer, you can order our free booklet, *Lost for words – how to talk to someone with cancer* at **be.macmillan.org.uk** or by calling us.

We have a series of videos on work and cancer. Our short film *Talking about cancer at work* looks at the importance of good communication when managing someone affected by cancer. It includes experiences relevant to organisations in all sectors. You can watch this on our *Cancer in the workplace* DVD or online at **macmillan.org.uk/workvideos**



'It was a very bad time in my life, but my employer took some of the stress out of it, giving me support not only from HR, but also medical and welfare officers.'

Fran



WORKPLACE SUPPORT STRATEGIES

Options for time off	44
Keeping in touch	48
The role of occupational health	51
Return-to-work options	53
Reasonable adjustments	56
Access to Work	60
Other ways you can help	61
Alternative employment	64
Carers	64
Leaving work	65
Bereavement	65

There are many simple actions you can take to minimise the impact on daily operations and support your employee.

Options for time off

Some people with cancer will be able to continue to work, while others will need time off during treatment. This section looks at both unplanned and planned time off.

Fit note

During the first seven calendar days of sickness, an employee can self-certify that they are unable to work. After this time, a doctor may issue a 'fit note' (this replaces the old 'sick note'). A fit note allows doctors to advise whether someone 'may be fit for work' or is 'not fit for work'. In either case, the GP will include evidence for the advice they have given.

If the note states that someone "may be fit for work", the GP will include information about the functional effects of the person's condition. They will also give advice about what may be done to help the person be able to work. The information is intended to encourage a discussion where the employer and employee consider and agree any changes that would help the person return to work.

If the note states that someone is unable to work, then the organisation's sick leave policy will come into use – see next page.

Time off for appointments

Agreeing some time off work will be one of your employee's most pressing needs. They should try to give you advance notice so you can arrange cover if necessary, but this may not always be possible.

People living with and after cancer will need to attend medical appointments. Some may need to stay in hospital for treatment. They may also benefit from receiving complementary therapies and may need time off for these appointments too.

Sick leave and Statutory Sick Pay

Your organisation should have clear policies about sick leave – this forms an essential part of an employment contract. Your sick leave policy should include information on how time off for medical appointments is dealt with. However, you may need to exercise your discretion occasionally, depending on the number and frequency of appointments your employee needs to attend.



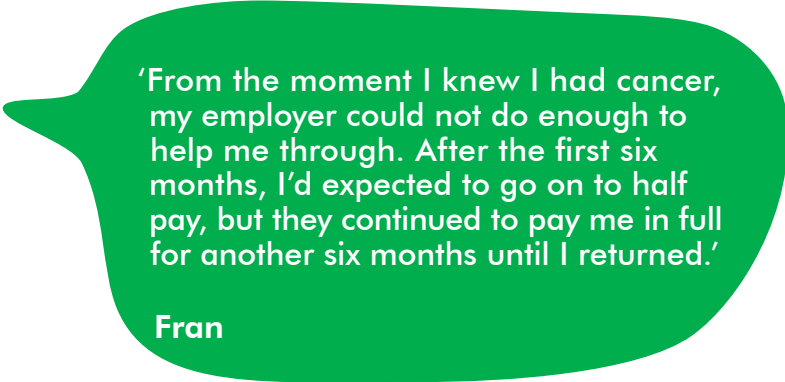
Employers are obliged to pay Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) to qualifying employees who are off sick for four or more days in a row, including weekends and holidays. It is not payable for the first three days in any period of entitlement but after that, it is payable for up to 28 weeks at a weekly rate.

When SSP is due to end, your employee should check their entitlement to Employment and Support Allowance (ESA). This benefit provides financial help to people who are unable to work because of illness or disability. It also provides personalised support to those who are able to work.

For more information about SSP and ESA, call **0800 055 6688** if you live in England, Scotland or Wales (**0800 012 1888** for Welsh language), or **0800 220 674** if you live in Northern Ireland. You can also visit **gov.uk**, or **nidirect.gov.uk** if you live in Northern Ireland.

Occupational or company sick pay

Your employee may be entitled to occupational or company sick pay on top of SSP under their employment contract. Where organisations are in a position to do so, we encourage them to look at the possibility of reasonably adjusting their occupational sick pay to cover extended periods over and above the standard statutory or contractual obligations.



'From the moment I knew I had cancer, my employer could not do enough to help me through. After the first six months, I'd expected to go on to half pay, but they continued to pay me in full for another six months until I returned.'

Fran

Time off for carers

If your employee is a carer, they may be legally entitled to take reasonable time off to deal with an emergency affecting the person they care for. Whether this is paid or not will depend on your organisation's policy (see pages 86–88).

Other options you can explore with your employee include:

- compassionate leave
- parental leave (if their child has cancer)
- flexible working (carers have the right to request this – see pages 87–88)

- working from home
- reduced or condensed hours
- taking time off in lieu, if appropriate.

The above options aim to allow your employee to look after their own health or the person they care for, keep your organisation running smoothly, and protect the employee as much as possible from financial hardship.

Cover for an absent employee

You may need to arrange cover, for example, if your employee is unable to work for a long period, or if they choose to reduce their hours. You should try to:

- discuss this honestly with your employee
- be clear about your reasons for hiring temporary cover
- be sensitive to their views and concerns – they may feel you don't have confidence in their treatment programme
- let them know that the extra resource is temporary
- follow your organisation's standard procedures for employing temporary workers.

More information

There is more information about sick leave in our booklet *Help with the cost of cancer*. Order this from be.macmillan.org.uk or call **0808 808 00 00**. There's also lots of information on our website at macmillan.org.uk/financialissues

For more information about managing absence and other employment issues, you can refer to the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) website – cipd.co.uk

Carers UK offers advice on employment issues and rights for carers, including time off – visit carersuk.org

Employers and employees can contact the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) for help on any employment issue, including absence management. The website also has useful information about this and other relevant topics. Visit acas.org.uk or phone their free, confidential telephone helpline on **0845 747 4747**.

In Northern Ireland, you can contact the Labour Relations Agency on **028 9032 1442** or visit lra.org.uk

Keeping in touch

People living with cancer often feel 'out of touch' with work during their absence. It's important to maintain appropriate contact with your employee during periods of sick leave. This contact can be maintained through their line manager or a nominated 'buddy'. Handle communication carefully so that your employee still feels valued but doesn't feel you are pressuring them to return too soon.

If possible, discuss arrangements for keeping in touch with your employee before their absence. Ask them:

- Do they want to receive newsletters and key emails?
- Do they want to hear from colleagues? If they do, how (by phone, email), and how often?
- Is there is a good time to get in contact?

Cancer treatment may make it difficult for your employee to be in contact at certain times, and this may only become apparent after treatment has started. If you have agreed to call at a certain time on a certain day, keep that arrangement as your employee may have made the effort to be able to take the call.

Sometimes an employee may not want any contact. Explore their reasons and reassure them you just want to be supportive. It may simply be because of how they are feeling at that point in time. You can ask them about it again later, when they may find the idea of contact from work less daunting.

'I had to take two months off work for treatment and recovery. My boss didn't contact me to ask how I was doing in all that time. When I returned to work, I was criticised for being negative and impacting on the rest of the team. I took up an offer of early retirement because I couldn't continue to work for someone who handles a cancer patient in such an insensitive way.'

Michiko



CLAUDE

The role of occupational health

Your employee and your organisation may benefit from the help of an occupational health adviser. This is a health professional, such as a nurse or doctor, who specialises in workplace health issues. Occupational health advisers draw on their clinical knowledge and an awareness of the specific duties and demands of the employee's role. You may consider consulting an occupational health adviser at an early stage, before going ahead with important changes or decisions affecting policies or individuals.

Most occupational health advisers serve in an advisory role for managers and employees. They can help you understand your responsibilities under employment and health and safety law. They can also inform business decisions about:

- reasonable workplace adjustments
- recruitment
- return-to-work plans
- ongoing employment
- release of company benefits such as pensions.

Occupational health advisers can also help managers carry out appropriate risk assessments for employees with cancer or other chronic health problems. This is to ensure that, from a health and safety perspective, the work the employee returns to is appropriate.

When someone has cancer, occupational health advisers are most often used when:

- considering a job applicant's fitness for employment
- considering someone's fitness for returning to work after sickness absence
- there is management concern about the health and safety or performance of an employee who has been sick.

Occupational health services are not provided free under the NHS or health service and are offered at the discretion of employers. Some large organisations have occupational health expertise in-house. Medium-sized and smaller organisations often access this expertise through external contracts, although some won't have any occupational health arrangements.

Many commercial companies offer occupational health consultancy to businesses. Or, you can use NHS Health at Work, an occupational health service (that charges fees) for small and medium-sized businesses. Visit [nhshealthatwork.co.uk](https://www.nhshealthatwork.co.uk)

Free occupational health advice is available to employees and their employers over the phone if they work in a small business. Call **0800 077 8844** in England, **0800 019 2211** in Scotland or **0800 107 0900** in Wales.

In Northern Ireland, you can contact the Workplace Health Advisors at Health and Safety Executive Northern Ireland (HSENI) by calling **02890 347 437**. Or, visit [hseni.gov.uk/workplace-health](https://www.hseni.gov.uk/workplace-health) They provide guidance on workplace health and well-being promotion and their services are available to businesses for a fee.

Macmillan has an e-learning module for occupational health advisers. *Working with cancer: the occupational impact of cancer* is a two-hour module about the occupational impact of a cancer diagnosis on working-age adults. Visit [macmillan.org.uk/learnzone](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/learnzone)

Return-to-work options

If your employee has been away from work having treatment, it can be difficult to know when they are ready to return.

When Macmillan surveyed employees about their experiences of work and cancer, most said they received little or no worthwhile medical advice about returning to work at the right time.

Many people are left to make this decision alone, based on when they feel it's the right time to return.

'On returning back to work I was tired and used my holidays to shorten weeks. I know now I should have been advised differently. The trust had a phased return policy, which would have meant I didn't use my annual leave.'

Crystal

Finding out your employee's needs

While many employees choose to share their cancer diagnosis with their employer, as a manager, you have no legal right to know the diagnosis or the clinical details of an employee's condition. In fact, employees have a right of confidentiality under the Human Rights Act 1998 (see page 89). However, law and medical ethics recognise that employers may legitimately seek

information relating directly to operational matters (although this still does not oblige an employee to disclose their medical information). For example, with the employee's permission, you could ask an occupational health provider for advice about the person's health in relation to their ability to perform their role. This conversation may cover:

- the likely duration of absence
- the likely effect health issues may have on their return to work
- the likely duration of any health issues that may affect the individual's ability to carry out their role
- whether there are any adjustments needed in the workplace to help overcome any disadvantage the individual may suffer as a result of health issues
- the likely duration of any adjustments
- the potential impact of health issues on performance and/or attendance
- the potential impact of health issues on health and safety
- if the individual will be unable to carry out their role for some time, whether the individual could carry out alternative roles within your organisation (see page 64).



If you seek occupational health advice about an employee's condition (with their permission), you should frame your requests for information around questions that are relevant to running your organisation.

Joint return-to-work planning

This is where both you and your employee discuss and agree the best way forward. Cancer can be unpredictable so plans should be flexible, allowing for regular reviews and changes along the way. The possibility of flexible working and a gradual, phased return to work are potentially helpful ways of easing someone back into the workplace. It's important to fully involve the employee in these conversations to ensure it's a shared decision-making process.



In addition to agreeing a return-to-work plan, it's a good idea to schedule a meeting with your employee a week or two before they start their first day back at work.

Having a meeting before their return to work gives them a chance to visit the workplace, hear important updates and raise any concerns. It also allows you to find out how they are feeling and sort out any potential problems before they occur. In addition, you can check how much they want the team or the rest of the organisation to know, and how comfortable they will be with people asking them how they are.



As a line manager, you will need to be flexible with your employee's return-to-work scheme. Their recovery from cancer may be difficult to predict, so the plan may have to change over time.

Reasonable adjustments

Under the Equality Act 2010 (England, Scotland and Wales) and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (Northern Ireland), employers have a duty to make reasonable adjustments if the location, working arrangements or a lack of extra support (auxiliary aids) puts a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage compared with others. People with cancer are considered disabled for the purpose of this legislation and are therefore protected from the point of diagnosis. See pages 78–79 for more information.

As part of your joint return-to-work plan, you will need to discuss and finalise any reasonable adjustments needed in the workplace or the employee's working day.

What are reasonable adjustments?

There is no fixed definition of 'reasonable'. What is reasonable will depend on the circumstances, including practicality, cost, the extent to which the adjustment will be effective, and the extent to which business may be disrupted.

An employer will not be obliged to make reasonable adjustments unless they know or ought to reasonably know that the individual is disabled.

Any planned adjustments should be discussed with the employee.

Reasonable adjustments for someone with cancer may include the following:

- Allowing a phased return to work – see page 59.
- Letting them take time off to attend medical appointments – this may already be covered by your existing policies.

- Modifying a job description to remove tasks that cause particular difficulty – either on a temporary or permanent basis.
- Being flexible about working hours. This can help enormously if fatigue is a problem, because it allows your employee to work when they feel strongest and have the most energy. Flexible hours also means your employee can avoid the strain of travelling at peak times.
- Offering the option to work from home. Home working for one or more days a week has many of the same benefits as flexible hours. It allows your employee to conserve their energy. Make sure their home has a suitable work environment and that they have the required facilities and equipment to do the job. It's also important to make sure they stay in touch with colleagues and don't become isolated.
- Allowing extra breaks to help them cope with fatigue. A short rest in a quiet place can be helpful.
- Adjusting performance targets to take into account the effect of things like sick leave or fatigue, or giving them a role with more suitable duties.
- Making sure there is easy access to the workplace for someone using a wheelchair or crutches.
- Providing disabled toilet facilities.
- Changing the date or time of a job interview if it coincides with a medical appointment.

Just one or two small changes could be all it takes to help an employee stay in work.



Our short film *Making work adjustments for an employee affected by cancer* may be helpful. You can watch this on our *Cancer in the workplace* DVD or online at macmillan.org.uk/workvideos

i Respondents to a Macmillan Cancer Support/YouGov online survey reported being denied time off for medical appointments, passed over for promotion, or feeling abused by their employer or colleagues (for example by being given unfair workloads).

Phased return to work

Allowing a gradual, phased return to work is one example of a reasonable adjustment you can make.

Agreeing a lighter workload or using holiday entitlement accrued during time off to shorten the working week could be one way of doing this.

i Research commissioned by Macmillan has shown that a phased return to work (as well as line manager support) is an important predictor of a successful adjustment back to work.

Changes to the work environment

Reasonable adjustments can involve making changes to the work environment. For example:

- Is mobility is a problem? If so, having a car parking space closer to the entrance is helpful.
- Are there any issues with accessibility that should be considered and, if so, what changes would it be reasonable to make?
- Does your employee need different equipment or a change in the location of their workstation? For example, you may need to move a workstation to avoid stairs. A professional assessment can help with this – seek advice from an occupational health adviser (see pages 51–53).

Access to Work

The Access to Work scheme can help if a person's long-term health condition affects the way they do their job. It gives employees and employers advice and support to meet the additional costs that may arise because of the employee's health condition.

The scheme may pay for special aids and equipment needed in the workplace as a direct result of the employee's condition, travel to work if the employee can't use public transport, or a support worker. See page 97 for contact details of your local centre, or ask to speak to a disability employment adviser at your local Jobcentre Plus office.

The *Employers' guide to Access to Work* is available to download from [gov.uk/government/publications/access-to-work-guide-for-employers](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/access-to-work-guide-for-employers)

To find out more about Access to Work in Northern Ireland, contact an Employment Service Adviser in your local Jobs and Benefits Office or JobCentre, or visit nidirect.gov.uk

i In a Macmillan Cancer Support/YouGov survey, 46% of people said their employer did not discuss sick pay, flexible working and making reasonable adjustments with them.

Other ways you can help

You can also try these specific and practical steps, to help your employee settle back into work:

- Be there on their first day or, failing that, make sure you phone them. Make sure the rest of the team are expecting them, adding to the welcome.
- Meet at the start of the day to discuss their work plan and handover arrangements. This is another opportunity to check for concerns they may have.
- Help them feel part of the team again. Treat all your employees equally to ensure everyone knows arrangements are fair.
- Agree a regular review process with your employee. This way, you can monitor their progress, make sure their workload is manageable and make any necessary adjustments to help them succeed.
- Make sure they are taking breaks and that they are not overworking. Overtime should be discouraged, so check your employee is leaving work on time.

- Consider a health and safety assessment, especially if there has been a change in duties or working arrangements. If they are working from home, you should assess this environment too.
- Signpost them to sources of further support. See pages 92–103 for how Macmillan can help and some other useful organisations. Suggest they talk to an occupational health or HR professional if this is possible in your organisation. If there is a confidential counselling service at work, you can let them know about this.
- Plan for occasional future absences. These may be due to medical appointments or because your employee, or the person they care for, is not feeling well. Fatigue can persist long after cancer treatment has been completed.

These tips can ensure a smooth handover of work:

- Make sure your employee doesn't return to an unmanageable amount of work and emails. Spread the work out so everything isn't given to them at once.
- Try to break tasks down into smaller steps to make the job more manageable and encourage a sense of achievement.
- Prioritise duties so your employee knows what the most important tasks are. They'll have a greater sense of control and achievement. This will also ensure the needs of the job are met.
- Reallocate or change work duties. Manage this sensitively, so colleagues don't feel overburdened, and reassure the person with cancer that this is temporary and not designed to undermine them or their work.
- Adjust performance targets temporarily so they remain realistic for your employee.

Macmillan Nurse General

- CP

- District Nurse

- Consultant

Go to hospital

Information Centre

Discharge Plan

hospital

Alternative employment

Suitable alternative employment may be an option if, despite best efforts, your employee is unable to fulfil their role. If the situation is likely to change in the future, this can be offered on a temporary basis with an agreed date for review.

Remember, changes to your employee's working conditions can be temporary or permanent and may have an impact on their terms of employment.

Before any substantial changes are agreed, make sure the employee is completely clear on what the changes mean.

Review your organisation's policies to find out what support can be offered. Any substantial and/or permanent changes should be confirmed in writing, and your employee should sign this document to indicate their agreement to the change.

These measures don't have to be expensive or disruptive. Many of these ideas are just common sense. Sometimes, small changes can make a big difference for your employee.

Carers

Most of the points above can also apply to carers. However, carers may have additional difficulties re-entering the workforce, particularly if they have been bereaved. Their confidence and skills may have been affected by absence from work, and they may also have emotional and practical issues to deal with following the death of a loved one. A carer may require professional help in overcoming these issues, although some people may want to work through problems themselves.

You may find our short film *Supporting carers* helpful. You can watch this on our *Cancer in the workplace* DVD or online at macmillan.org.uk/workvideos

Leaving work

If your employee wants to resign, it's important to understand their reasons. However, sometimes the person's emotional state can lead them to make this big decision. Additional support and an explanation of all the options may lead to a different decision – and help you retain a valued member of staff. Of course, for some people, leaving work is the best choice. If this is their decision, make sure you follow your organisation's leaving procedures.

Stopping work because of cancer can have serious financial implications. Resigning or retiring early can change a person's entitlement to state benefits, pensions and insurance. It's a complex area and every person's situation is unique. Because so much is at stake, encourage your employee to seek expert advice and establish what their position is, before any formal action is taken on either side. See pages 71–75 for more information about personal finances.

Bereavement

Although many people survive cancer treatment, your employee or the person they are caring for may die from their illness.

If your employee is terminally ill

Many people live for months or years after a diagnosis of incurable cancer. By law, an individual should be allowed to work for as long as they want, subject to medical advice and any health and safety concerns.

Many people with cancer choose to remain at work for as long as possible. In this case, the employer should make adjustments and do their best, within reason, to allow the person to keep working.

If the employee is gradually getting weaker, this can be difficult to manage. An occupational health adviser should be able to help. Colleagues may also find this time upsetting. Let employees know about any counselling or employee assistance programme (EAP) that's available. You can also suggest they call the Macmillan Support Line on **0808 808 00 00** for support.

The person who is ill may also need advice about things like their pension or writing a will. Macmillan's financial guidance service on the support line can also help with this.

If your employee dies

If the person with cancer dies, as an employer you will be responsible for carrying out these practical steps:

- Informing colleagues within the organisation.
- Telling clients, customers and suppliers. This can prevent embarrassment and upset if they attempt to contact your colleague without knowing what has happened.
- Assisting the family. There should be just one point of contact between the employer and the family. Normally this would be the line manager or someone in the HR department. Prompt action should be taken to settle financial matters such as remaining pay, pensions and insurance, and ensuring as far as possible that correspondence is not addressed to the person who has died.

- Letting colleagues know about funeral arrangements. The family's wishes must be respected in every way. Ask what kind of contact and involvement they want from people at work.
- Returning belongings to the family. This should be done as soon as possible and with sensitivity.
- Arranging the return of any employer property, such as computers or a company car. Be sensitive about when you do this.

Even if the team has known that a colleague is terminally ill, it can be extremely difficult to come to terms with their death. People will react differently and some team members will need your support, personally as well as professionally. This could be an exhausting time for you. Remember to look after your own needs and be aware of where you can get support from too.

You may want to think about ways to remember the person, perhaps by setting up a memorial, such as a garden or plaque.

If anyone at work needs someone to talk to, whether or not there is an in-house counselling service, they can contact us on **0808 808 00 00** for emotional support. They can also contact Cruse Bereavement Care – see page 100.

We have a series of videos on work and cancer. Our short film *Managing bereavement and end of life* offers advice on how to cope with these issues and includes stories about how they have affected real lives in the workplace. You can watch this on our *Cancer in the workplace* DVD or online at macmillan.org.uk/workvideos



Carers

An employee that is caring for someone who is dying may start to need more time off. You may need to be flexible about this. When the person they care for dies, they will need time off work to grieve and be with their family. This is sometimes known as compassionate leave.

If there are children who were close to the person who died, your employee will need to give them extra emotional support. It may not always be easy to predict when they will be needed at home.

They may also need time off work to sort out practicalities, such as arranging the funeral and dealing with financial or legal matters.

This is obviously an emotional time. Some people won't want to talk about their feelings at work, but it will help if you can provide an appropriate opportunity (see pages 31–40 for advice on talking about cancer). If your company provides counselling or an employee assistance programme (EAP), you should bring this to their attention.

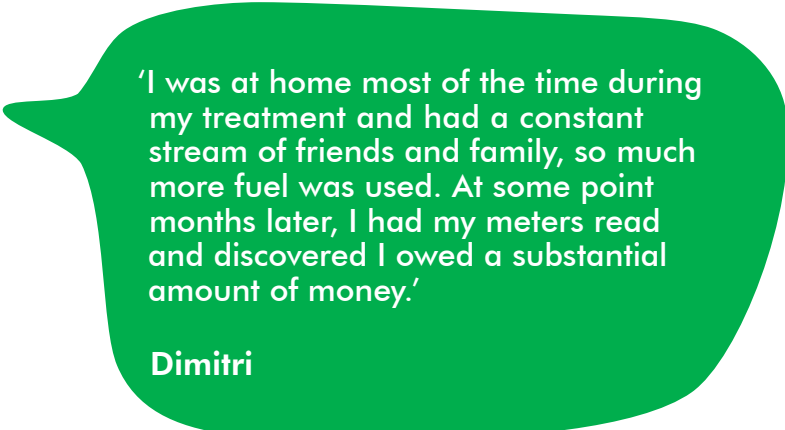


FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR YOUR EMPLOYEE

Financial support	72
Impact of employment changes	74

Financial support

Cancer can have a serious impact on personal finances. People often experience a loss of income and, at the same time, increased expenses such as travelling to hospital. Macmillan is well-equipped to help with money worries, offering a wide range of publications and services. Find out more at [macmillan.org.uk/financial support](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/financial-support)



'I was at home most of the time during my treatment and had a constant stream of friends and family, so much more fuel was used. At some point months later, I had my meters read and discovered I owed a substantial amount of money.'

Dimitri

How Macmillan can help

Welfare Rights Advisers

Many people affected by cancer will be entitled to financial help, but state benefits can be hard to understand and difficult to access. Research shows that the benefits system is not well-designed to meet the needs of people affected by cancer.

Our Welfare Rights Advisers on **0808 808 00 00** can tell your employer which benefits they may be entitled to. They can also help them complete the forms and apply for benefits.

We also have a national network of financial advice centres that your employee can visit. Go to **macmillan.org.uk/benefitsadvisers** to find your nearest one.

Financial Guidance Service

Our expert financial guides understand how cancer can affect someone's finances. They can support people affected by cancer to plan and manage their money. They can help with matters such as pensions, borrowing, savings, mortgages, investments, banking and insurance. For this support, your employee can call us on **0808 808 00 00**.

Publications

Your employee may find our booklet *Help with the cost of cancer* useful, which explains state benefits and how to apply for them. We also have booklets about financial planning, managing money day-to-day, and debt. Visit **be.macmillan.org.uk** to order these.

E-learning module

Macmillan offers a free benefits awareness course, which you might find helpful. Visit **macmillan.org.uk/learnzone**

Other sources of support

If you live in England, Scotland or Wales, you can find out about state benefits and apply for them online at **gov.uk** This website has information about financial support, your rights, employment and independent living. You can also get information about these issues from the relevant Department for Work and Pensions helplines (see page 100).

If you live in Northern Ireland, you can find out more about financial support, employment and your rights online at **nidirect.gov.uk** Or you can call the Benefit Enquiry Line Northern Ireland for more information (see page 97).

You can also find out more about benefits from Citizens Advice (see page 99).

If your employee belongs to a trade union, they may also be able to offer advice.

Impact of employment changes

If a cancer diagnosis causes changes to someone's employment, they should seek expert advice.

Changes to the person's employment can cause:

- a loss of income
- a change in pension entitlement and payouts under insurance policies, including life, mortgage, income protection and critical illness insurance
- a change in eligibility for state benefits – this can be a very significant source of new income for people affected by cancer and it may not occur to your employee to apply for benefits.



The choices someone makes about employment can significantly affect their entitlement to financial help and their long-term financial outlook. Before formally agreeing changes in working hours, resignation or early retirement, ensure your employee has obtained expert advice about the consequences for their own situation.

Your employee may wish to consult a financial adviser about financial products such as pensions, insurance and investments. Financial advisers may charge a fee for their services. Your employee can find a qualified professional at **unbiased.co.uk**. They can confirm a financial adviser's credentials by checking the Financial Conduct Authority website – **fsa.gov.uk**

Your employee can also get information from the Money Advice Service – an independent body set up by the UK government. It runs a free financial health check service and gives general advice about all types of financial matters. It can also recommend where to go for more detailed help. Visit **moneyadviceservice.org.uk** or call **0300 500 5000**.



LEGISLATION

The Equality Act 2010 and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA)	78
Discrimination	80
Carers' rights	86
Confidentiality	89

The Equality Act 2010 and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA)



The information in this section is not a substitute for legal advice. If you need legal advice, contact a solicitor. While we do everything we can to provide information of the highest quality, Macmillan will not accept any liability for the use, or inability to use, any information provided in this guide.

People with cancer are protected from discrimination by law.

In England, Scotland and Wales, The Equality Act 2010 combined various discrimination laws, including the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA), under one piece of legislation.

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) and its extension, the Disability Discrimination Order of 2006, still protect people with a disability in Northern Ireland.

How are people with cancer protected by The Equality Act 2010 and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA)?

Under these acts, it's unlawful for an employer to treat a person less favourably (discriminate against them) because of their disability. Everyone with cancer is classed as disabled under these acts. Even if a person who had cancer in the past has been successfully treated and is now in remission, they will still be covered by these acts. This means their employer must not treat them less favourably for any reason relating to their past cancer.

Which areas of employment are covered by the legislation?

The Equality Act and the DDA cover all areas of employment, including:

- the recruitment process
- terms, conditions and benefits
- opportunities for promotion and training
- when employment has ended.

They also cover treating someone less favourably than other workers because of their cancer. This includes harassment and victimisation.

Both the Equality Act and the DDA require employers to make reasonable adjustments to make it easier for an employee with a disability to work. These are required to remove any substantial disadvantage they face in the workplace because of their cancer, when compared with others who do not have cancer.

You can read more about reasonable adjustments on pages 56–60.



Around one in 10 people (9%) who returned to work after cancer treatment say they felt harassed to the point they felt they could not stay in their job.

Discrimination

The Equality Act and the DDA cover various types of discrimination. In this chapter, we've given examples to show how these types of discrimination can affect people.

Direct discrimination

Direct discrimination is when, because of their disability, a person receives less favourable treatment compared with someone who doesn't have that particular disability.



Razia was rejected when she applied for a job because her employer knew that she had previously had a cancer diagnosis. The employer was concerned that if it came back, she would have to take sick leave.

Legislation helps to protect people who have a disability from being dismissed, refused a job, or being treated less favourably than people without a disability because people assume they can't carry out their job or certain tasks.

Direct discrimination can happen even if it is meant with good intentions. For example, if an employer suggests that a person with cancer would be better off not being promoted because the new job would be too demanding, this is direct discrimination. However, it would be appropriate to have a sensitive conversation with an employee about the impact of a new role on their health.

Discrimination arising from disability (applies in England, Scotland and Wales)

Discrimination arising from disability (DAD) applies under the Equality Act, but not the DDA. That means it doesn't apply in Northern Ireland. It is when someone with a disability is treated

less favourably because of something relating to their disability. It's different from direct discrimination, which occurs when a person is treated less favourably because of the disability itself. For something to be classed as direct discrimination, you need to show that a non-disabled person would have been treated differently, but with DAD, you don't.



Daffyd's boss gave him a poor appraisal because he had missed targets due to his treatment and cancer-related fatigue. Even if the employer treated other people in the same way for missing their targets, it would be unlawful to treat Daffyd like this, unless the employer could show that the action was justified under the Equality Act.

DAD is unlawful when the unfavourable treatment can't be justified. In some cases, where there is a justifiable reason for it, DAD is allowed. DAD is lawful when you can prove it is meant to meet a real objective in a fair, balanced and justifiable way, and when any reasonable adjustments have been considered.

It is unlikely to be easy for an employer to defend their reasons for DAD and for it to be justified. Usually, any potentially unfavourable treatment can be overcome by making reasonable adjustments. So, assessing whether DAD is justifiable is likely to involve considering whether any adjustments could have been made.

DAD will also be lawful if the employer can show that he or she didn't know, and couldn't be reasonably expected to know, that the person is disabled. Before an employer can use this to defend themselves, they must have taken all reasonable steps to find out if someone has a disability.

Indirect disability discrimination (applies in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales)

Indirect disability discrimination applies under both the Equality Act and the DDA. It is when there is a rule, policy or practice that applies to everyone, but that puts people with a particular disability at a disadvantage compared with people who don't have that disability.

As with DAD, a rule or practice may still be lawful if it can be proved that its aim is to meet a legitimate objective in a fair, balanced and reasonable way, and that any reasonable adjustments have been considered.



Kathleen's company needed to make some redundancies. The company uses the amount of sick leave taken as selection criteria for redundancy. As Kathleen had taken time off work because of cancer, she and other people with cancer were at a disadvantage in comparison with people who had not had cancer. This is indirect discrimination unless the employer could show that it could be legally justified.

Employers need to strike a balance between the negative impact of rules or practices on some people, and the reasons for applying them. Employers therefore need to consider whether there is any other way to meet their objectives that won't have a discriminatory effect. If you're unsure, specialist legal advice relating to employment law is available. Contact the Law Society of England and Wales, the Law Society of Scotland or the Law Society of Northern Ireland (see pages 102–103).

Harassment (applies in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales)

Harassment is covered under both the Equality Act and the DDA. Disability harassment is when someone experiences unwanted behaviour related to their disability, which causes them to feel intimidated, degraded or offended.



After her chemotherapy, Rebecca's colleagues were always teasing her about her hair loss. She felt humiliated but didn't feel able to challenge them. She complained to her manager, who then spoke to the staff.

Victimisation (applies in England, Scotland, Wales and parts of Northern Ireland)

Victimisation is when an employer treats someone badly because they made a complaint under the Equality Act or the DDA, helped someone else to make a complaint, or because the employer thinks that they may be planning to make a complaint. This protection applies whether or not the person is disabled.



Jim's boss was being awkward about his request for time off for a chemotherapy appointment. Jim reported the problem to the human resources department. The HR manager told Jim's boss that she had to give him the time off. Jim's boss was angry that Jim spoke to a different department. She then stopped Jim from going on a training course and gave him a poor appraisal.

Under the Equality Act, but not the DDA, a victim doesn't need to prove that they have been treated less favourably than someone who has not made a complaint. They only need to show that they were treated badly and they believe it was because of their complaint. There is no protection if the employee has been intentionally dishonest.

Asking about health during recruitment (applies in England, Scotland and Wales)

Under the Equality Act, employers can only ask questions about a candidate's health during the recruitment process (including whether the candidate has a disability) in extremely limited situations. Employers can usually only ask someone about their health after they have been offered the job.

If an employer then withdraws the job offer on the basis of information about a candidate's medical circumstances, they must make sure that this is not because they are discriminating against someone due to their health. Employers first need to consider any reasonable adjustments that could be made to allow the person to take the job.

Employers are allowed to ask questions about a person's health during the recruitment process if they are:

- monitoring equality and diversity (making sure their employment policies and processes are not discriminatory to any groups)
- conducting positive action (making sure they recruit people from under-represented groups, such as ethnic minorities or people with disabilities)
- enquiring whether reasonable adjustments are needed for the recruitment process (for example, having the interview in a ground floor room)

- establishing whether the job applicant will be able to carry out a function that is fundamental to the role (for example, heavy lifting).

In Northern Ireland, while employers are not prevented from asking job applicants questions about their health, they are still prevented from discriminating against applicants on the basis of their disability.

How are carers protected?

Disability discrimination legislation provides additional protection for people who experience discrimination or harassment because they are associated with someone with a disability. For example, it would be unlawful if the partner of someone who has cancer was refused a promotion because of concerns that they would be unable to give sufficient attention to the job for that reason.

Employers don't need to make reasonable adjustments for those who are not disabled, including carers. However, carers do have the right to a reasonable amount of unpaid time off work for caring responsibilities – see pages 86–88.



Paula wants to take time off work to care for her husband Mark while he has chemotherapy. While Paula is at work, her colleague makes offensive comments about Mark's cancer and about him losing his hair. If Paula felt her colleague's comments were creating a humiliating or degrading environment, then the employer is likely to be vicariously liable (an employer can be held responsible for the acts of its employees during their employment). This is unless the employer can show it took all reasonable steps to prevent the harassment. A claim could also be made directly against Paula's colleague.

Carers' rights

Emergency time off for dependants

Employed carers have the right to take a reasonable amount of unpaid time off work to deal with particular situations affecting their dependants. This right is covered by the amended Employments Rights Act 1996. In Northern Ireland, these laws are called the Employment Rights (Northern Ireland) Order 1996 and the Employment Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 1999. Some organisations choose to provide paid time off for employees in these circumstances.

A 'dependant' is defined as a spouse, civil partner, child, parent or grandparent of the employee, or someone who depends on them for care, for example an elderly neighbour. In addition, 'dependant' includes those who would reasonably rely on the employee to help them if they were ill, or to arrange care for them. This definition of a dependant is different from the one used under the right to request flexible working (see pages 87–88).

An employee is entitled to take reasonable time off for dependants when:

- They need to provide assistance if a dependant falls ill, gives birth, is injured or assaulted.
- They need to arrange care for a dependant who is ill or injured. This could include, for example, arranging to employ a temporary carer. This does not enable the employee to take additional or ongoing time off to care for the dependant themselves.
- A dependant dies.
- They need to deal with the unexpected disruption of care arrangements for a dependant.

- They need to deal with an unexpected incident that involves their child during school (or other educational establishment) hours.

These allowances don't apply to pre-planned events, for example, medical appointments.

What counts as a reasonable amount of time off work will depend on the individual circumstances. The nature of the incident, the relationship between the employee and the dependant, and the extent to which another person is available to assist with caring for the dependant, are all relevant factors. The employee must tell the employer as soon as possible the reason for the absence and how long they expect to be absent. Decisions about time off should always be based on the individual situation.

Right to request flexible working

The Work and Families Act 2006, the Employment Act 2002, and the Employment Rights (Northern Ireland) Order 1996, together with other pieces of legislation, give employees the right to request flexible working. This includes changed hours or working from home.

Employees must meet the eligibility criteria. And there is no automatic right to actually work flexibility – the right is to make a request to do so.

Employers can refuse a request, but only on specified grounds. Employees can appeal against such a refusal.

If a request is granted, it will be a permanent change to the person's contract, usually after a trial period, unless agreed otherwise.

To be eligible for this right, the person making the request must:

- be making the request about a child under the age of 17 (or 18 if the child is disabled)

and

- be the child's mother, father, guardian, adoptive or foster parent, or the spouse, civil partner or partner of one of these people.

Or, they must be, or expect to be, caring for a person aged 18 or over who is in need of care and who is:

- a spouse, partner or civil partner
- a close relative, such as a parent, parent-in-law, adult child, sibling, sibling-in-law, uncle, aunt, grandparent or step-relative
- any adoptive relation or someone who is living at the same address as the carer.

For the purposes of this legislation, this definition of who a carer is and who they may be caring for is different from the one used when it comes to requesting emergency time off work (see pages 86–87).

Employees must have worked for their employer for 26 weeks at the date an application for flexible working is made. Employees can also make flexible working requests to look after children – and there may be an overlap, for example when a parent has a disabled child.

Confidentiality

The Human Rights Act 1998 and the Data Protection Act 1998, which cover the whole of the UK, protect an individual's right to have personal information kept private. This includes medical information. An employer doesn't have an automatic right to access medical information about an employee. However, an employer may ask an employee for their consent to seek a medical report on their condition from their doctor or other health professional. The employee has the right to see any medical report provided by their GP or health professional before it is supplied to the employer.



It's helpful if the person affected by cancer agrees that colleagues and clients can be informed about their condition. However, an employer can't divulge this information without the employee's consent. Employers should take care to protect the employee's records, including emails and any meeting notes containing details about the employee's medical condition. This is sensitive personal data and should be treated as such.

For more information about dealing with cancer at work, call us on **0808 808 00 00** or visit **[macmillan.org.uk/work](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/work)**



FURTHER INFORMATION

How we can help you 92

Other useful organisations 97

How we can help you

Anyone affected by cancer can turn to Macmillan for practical help and emotional support. If you need to talk to someone who understands what you're going through, or find useful information about cancer, we are here.

And don't forget to point employees affected by cancer in our direction. Macmillan wants to make sure that everyone with cancer who wants to return to work has the support and the information they need to do so.

Get in touch

Macmillan Cancer Support

89 Albert Embankment,
London SE1 7UQ

Questions about cancer?

Call free on **0808 808 00 00**
(Mon–Fri, 9am–8pm)

www.macmillan.org.uk

Hard of hearing?

Use textphone 0808 808 0121
or Text Relay.

Non-English speaker?

Interpreters are available.

Clear, reliable information about cancer

We can help you by phone, email, via our website and publications or in person. And our information is free to everyone affected by cancer.

At any time of day, you can find a lot of information on our website **macmillan.org.uk**. You will also find a section dedicated to work and cancer at **macmillan.org.uk/work**

Macmillan Support Line

Our free, confidential phone line is open Monday–Friday, 9am–8pm. Our cancer support specialists provide clinical, financial, emotional and practical information and support to anyone affected by cancer. Call **0808 808 00 00** or email us via our website, **macmillan.org.uk/talktous**

Information centres

Our information and support centres are based in hospitals, libraries and mobile centres, and offer you the opportunity to speak with someone face to face. Find your nearest one at **macmillan.org.uk/informationcentres**

Publications

We provide expert, up-to-date information about different types of cancer, tests and treatments, and information about living with and after cancer. We can send you free booklets, leaflets, and fact sheets.

Other formats

We have a small range of information in other languages and formats. Our translations are for people who don't speak English and our Easy Read booklets are useful for anyone who can't read our information. We also produce a range of audiobooks. Find out more at **macmillan.org.uk/otherformats**

Please email us at **cancerinformationteam@macmillan.org.uk** if you'd like us to produce our information for you in Braille or large print.

You can find all of our information, along with several videos, online at **macmillan.org.uk/cancerinformation**

Review our information

Help us make our resources even better for people affected by cancer. Being one of our reviewers gives you the chance to comment on a variety of information including booklets, fact sheets, leaflets, videos, illustrations and website text. Email **reviewing@macmillan.org.uk** for more information.

Useful Macmillan resources

Buddying guidelines

Guidelines developed with employers and people affected by cancer to help organisations implement a buddying system in the workplace. Visit macmillan.org.uk/employer

Cancer in the workplace videos

These videos show different scenarios of people who are affected by cancer, and the issues it raises for them in the workplace. You can watch them online at macmillan.org.uk/workvideos or order our DVD, *Cancer in the workplace*, from be.macmillan.org.uk

Cancer policy template

A template to help HR teams develop a company policy for handling cancer in the workplace. Access it at macmillan.org.uk/employer

Making it work

A report about the current situation for people affected by cancer, providing insight into how businesses and government can benefit by making changes. Read it at macmillan.org.uk/employer

The essential work and cancer toolkit

A pack of resources to help employers support people affected by cancer. It contains practical advice, top tips and guidance for HR professionals, managers and employees. Visit macmillan.org.uk/worktoolkit

Work it out: essential questions to ask about work and cancer

This tool lists questions that a person with cancer could ask their GP, healthcare team and employer. It may be helpful to look at, so you can be prepared with the right information for your employee. You could also give them a copy. The tool is available at macmillan.org.uk/employer or you can order copies from be.macmillan.org.uk/work

Your rights at work when you're affected by cancer

This leaflet provides an overview of how disability discrimination law protects people affected by cancer in the workplace. It includes information about the Equality Act 2010 (applicable in England, Scotland and Wales) and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (applicable in Northern Ireland). Order the leaflet from be.macmillan.org.uk

Someone to talk to

When you or someone you know has cancer, it can be difficult to talk about how you feel. You can call our cancer support specialists on **0808 808 00 00** to talk about what's worrying you.

Support for each other

No one knows more about the impact cancer can have than those who have been affected by it themselves. That's why we help to bring people with cancer and carers together in their communities and online.

Support groups

You can find out about support groups in your area by calling us or by visiting macmillan.org.uk/selfhelpandsupport

Online community

You can also share your experiences, ask questions, get and give support to others in our online community at macmillan.org.uk/community

Financial and work-related support

Having cancer can bring extra costs such as hospital parking, travel fares and higher heating bills. Some people may have to stop working.

If your employee has been affected in this way, we can help. They can call us, and one of our cancer support specialists will tell them about the benefits and other financial help they may be entitled to.

We can also give them information about their rights as an employee, and help them find further support.

We produce several booklets and leaflets about financial issues, including:

- *Help with the cost of cancer* (also available in Welsh)
- *Help with the cost of cancer – Northern Ireland edition*
- *It all adds up* – a series of booklets about managing your finances when you're affected by cancer
- *Managing your debt: a self-help guide*
- *Money Worries? How we can help.*

To order any of these for free, call **0808 808 00 00** or visit **be.macmillan.org.uk**

Find out more about the financial and work-related support we can offer at **macmillan.org.uk/financialsupport**

Learning opportunities

Our Learn Zone – **macmillan.org.uk/learnzone** – offers a wide range of online courses and information, such as:

Cancer in the workplace: managers

A course to help managers deal with cancer at work. It contains documentary-style clips of various scenarios and advice on dealing with them.

Cancer in the workplace: union representatives

A course to help union representatives deal with the increasingly common situation of supporting an employee with cancer. It contains documentary-style clips of various scenarios and advice on dealing with them.

Working with cancer

A course developed for occupational health professionals, which covers the impact of a cancer diagnosis on working-age adults. It is endorsed and accredited by the Faculty of Occupational Medicine for two CPD points.

Other useful organisations

Access to Work

Tel (South East and East England, including London)

020 8426 3110

Tel (North West and North East England, Yorkshire and the Humber, and Scotland)

0141 950 5327

Tel (South West England, Wales, and West and East Midlands)

029 2042 3291

www.gov.uk/access-to-work

Provides advice and practical support to people with long-term health conditions and their employers, to help meet the costs associated with work-related obstacles.

Access to Work (NI)

www.nidirect.gov.uk/access-to-work-practical-help-at-work

Gives support and advice to employees with disabilities and their employers. To apply for assistance through this programme, speak to an adviser at your local Jobs and Benefits Office.

Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS)

Euston Tower,
286 Euston Road,
London NW1 3JJ
Tel 08457 47 47 47

www.acas.org.uk

Gives advice to employees and employers to help improve working life and relations. Offers information, advice and training.

Benefit Enquiry Line Northern Ireland

Tel 0800 220 674

(Mon–Wed and Fri, 9am–5pm,
Thu, 10am–5pm)

Textphone 0800 243 787

www.nidirect.gov.uk/money-tax-and-benefits

Provides information and advice about disability benefits and carers' benefits in Northern Ireland.

Business Disability Forum

Nutmeg House,
60 Gainsford Street,
London SE1 2NY

Tel 020 7403 3020

(Mon–Fri, 9am–5pm)

Email advice@businessdisabilityforum.org.uk

www.businessdisabilityforum.org.uk

Organisation that works to make it easier for employers to employ disabled people and welcome disabled customers.

Carers Direct

PO Box 27079,
Glasgow G3 9ET

Tel 0808 802 0202

(Mon–Fri, 8am–9pm,
Sat–Sun, 11am–4pm)

www.nhs.uk/carersdirect

Aims to offer all the information carers need when trying to access financial help, as well as advice on getting a break from caring and going to work.

Carers UK

Tel (England, Scotland, Wales) 0808 808 7777

Tel (Northern Ireland)

028 9043 9843

(Wed–Thu, 10am–12pm
and 2–4pm)

Email advice@carersuk.org

www.carersuk.org

Offers information and support to carers across the UK. Can put people in contact with support groups for carers in their area.

Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD)

151 The Broadway,
London SW19 1JQ

Tel 020 8612 6200

www.cipd.co.uk

A professional body that supports employers and organisations to improve their HR and development practices, to achieve a better working life.

Citizens Advice

Provides advice on a variety of issues including financial, legal, housing and employment issues. Find details for your local office in the phone book or on one of the following websites:

England and Wales
www.citizensadvice.org.uk

Scotland
www.cas.org.uk

Northern Ireland
www.citizensadvice.co.uk

You can also find advice online in a range of languages at adviceguide.org.uk

Carers Trust (Princess Royal Trust for Carers in Scotland)

Carers Trust,
 32–36 Loman Street,
 London SE1 0EH
Tel (England) 0844 800 4361
Tel (Scotland) 0300 123 2008
Tel (Wales) 0292 009 0087
Email info@carers.org
www.carers.org
www.youngcarers.net

Provides support, information, advice and services for people caring at home for a family

member or friend. You can find details for UK offices and search for local support on the website.

Crossroads Caring Scotland

24 George Square,
 Glasgow G2 1EG
Tel 0141 226 3793
Email info@crossroads-scotland.co.uk

www.crossroads-scotland.co.uk

Charity providing support to carers in their own homes. Has services throughout Scotland that provide practical support for carers of all ages.

Crossroads Caring for Carers (Northern Ireland)

7 Regent Street,
 Newtownards, Co Down,
 Northern Ireland BT23 4AB
Tel 028 9181 4455

Email
mail@crossroadscare.co.uk
www.crossroadscare.co.uk

Charity providing respite care, so that carers can have a break.

Cruse Bereavement Care

PO Box 800, Richmond,
Surrey TW9 1RG

Tel 0844 477 9400

Young person's helpline

0808 808 1677

(Mon–Fri, 9.30am–5pm)

Email helpline@cruse.org.uk

Young person's email

info@rd4u.org.uk

www.crusebereavementcare.org.uk

Provides bereavement counselling, information and support to anyone who has been bereaved. Has a network of branches across the UK.

Department for Work and Pensions

Disability Benefits Helpline

08457 123 456

Textphone 0845 722 4433

Personal Independence

Payment Helpline

0845 850 3322

Textphone 0845 601 6677

Carer's Allowance Unit

0845 608 432

Textphone 0845 604 5312

www.gov.uk/browse/benefits

Manages and gives information on state benefits in England, Scotland and Wales.

Disability Benefits Helpline

Warbreck House,
Warbreck Hill,
Blackpool FY2 0YE

Tel 08457 123 456

Textphone 08457 224 433

Email dcpu.customer-services@dwp.gsi.gov.uk

www.gov.uk/disability-benefits-helpline

Provides advice about benefits and can help to complete some disability-related claim packs.

Employers for Carers

20 Great Dover Street,
London SE1 4LX

Tel 020 7378 4956

Email employers@carersuk.org
www.employersforcarers.org

A service for employers to help them retain employees who are caring for a family member.

Equality Advisory and Support Service

FREEPOST Equality Advisory and Support Service
FPN4431

Tel 0808 800 0082

Textphone 0808 800 0084

www.equalityadvisoryservice.com

www.equalityhumanrights.com

Promotes equality and provides information to people about their rights.

Equality Commission Northern Ireland

Equality House,
7–9 Shaftesbury Square,
Belfast BT2 7DP

Tel 028 90 500 600

Textphone 02890 500 589

Email

information@equalityni.org

www.equalityni.org

Aims to promote equality of opportunity, encourage good relations and challenge discrimination through promotion, advice and enforcement.

Financial Conduct Authority

Tel 0800 111 6768

Typetalk 18001 0800 111 6768

Email

consumer.queries@fca.org.uk

www.fca.org.uk

Regulates the financial services industry in the UK.

Gov.uk (UK government information portal)

www.gov.uk

Has information and practical advice about public services. There are sections covering financial support, rights, employment and independent living.

Health for Work (England)

Tel 0800 0 77 88 44

www.health4work.nhs.uk

Provides free advice and information to employers about health issues affecting employees.

Healthy Working Lives (Scotland)

Tel 0800 019 2211

www.healthyworkinglives.com

Provides free, confidential advice and information for employers on health and well-being in the workplace.

Healthy Working Wales Workboost Wales

0845 609 6006

Health at Work

0800 107 0900

www.healthyworkingwales.com

Provides support to employers, employees and health professionals to improve health at work and support people returning to work.

The telephone numbers above offer advice for those employed by or managing a small business.

Institution of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH)

The Grange,
Highfield Drive, Wigston,
Leicester LE18 1NN

Tel 0116 257 3100

www.iosh.co.uk

A health and safety organisation committed to ensuring workplaces are safe, healthy and sustainable.

Labour Relations Agency

Tel 02890 321 442

Email info@lra.org.uk

www.lra.org.uk

Provides an impartial and confidential employment relations service to those engaged in industry, commerce and the public services.

The Law Society

113 Chancery Lane,
London WC2A 1PL

Tel 0870 606 2555

Email

info.services@lawsociety.org.uk

www.lawsociety.org.uk

Represents solicitors in England and Wales and can provide details of local solicitors.

The Law Society of Northern Ireland

96 Victoria Street,
Belfast BT1 3GN

Tel 028 9023 1614

Email info@lawsoc-ni.org

www.lawsoc-ni.org

Represents solicitors in Northern Ireland and can provide details of local solicitors.

The Law Society of Scotland

26 Drumsheugh Gardens,
Edinburgh EH3 7YR

Tel 0131 226 7411

Email lawscot@lawscot.org.uk

www.lawscot.org.uk

Represents solicitors in Scotland and can provide details of local solicitors.

NI Direct

www.nidirect.gov.uk

The online portal for government services in Northern Ireland.

The Pensions

Advisory Service

Tel 0845 601 2923

www.pensionsadvisoryservice.org.uk

An independent, non-profit organisation that provides

free information, advice and guidance about pensions.

Working with cancer www.workingwithcancer.co.uk

Provides coaching, advice and support to people with cancer and carers. Employers can purchase this service to help employees return to or remain in work.

WorkSMART

Tel 0870 600 4882

www.worksmart.org.uk

Part of the Trades Union Congress (TUC), this website provides information in different formats on employment rights, health at work and financial matters.

Unbiased.co.uk

Email contact@unbiased.co.uk

www.unbiased.co.uk

On the website you can search for qualified advisers who specialise in giving financial, mortgage, accounting or legal advice.



APPENDIX

Top 10 tips for line managers

106

Top 10 tips for line managers

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

1 Be sensitive to your employee's needs.

Every person has a different cancer experience. Cancer treatments, and physical and emotional reactions to cancer, vary from person to person. What may be best for one person may not suit another. Make time to understand your employee's individual needs.

2 Respect your employee's right to privacy.

If your employee wants others in the organisation to know that they have cancer, ask them how they'd prefer this to happen. Also ask them whether or not they'd like you to keep in touch if they are off work for a while. Decide together on the best way to do this.

3 Listen, understand and ask.

Listen to your employee without judgment and try to understand their situation. It's fine to ask questions when they are sharing information with you.

4 Check guidelines and policies.

Check if your organisation has any guidelines and policies to provide support to your employee and to you. These may cover sickness absence, long-term conditions, time off work and occupational health policies.

5 Be prepared to make adjustments.

Cancer is legally defined as a disability. So you may need to make reasonable adjustments, just as you would with any other disability. These are changes to the workplace or working

arrangements that allow someone with a disability to work. Your HR department or occupational health service, if you have them, can offer advice.

6 Recognise the impact on your team.

Be aware of the impact that an employee's cancer diagnosis can have on the wider team, the rest of your colleagues and, of course, on you. If you feel you need more support, ask your own line manager, your HR department or call us on **0808 808 00 00**.

7 Check on financial entitlements.

Find out whether your organisation has policies for giving financial support to those off work, including occupational sickness pay. You may also want to check if there are any further benefits that could help your employee.

8 Respect carers' rights at work.

Keep in mind that employees who are caring for a person affected by cancer may need your support too. Be aware that the information here also applies to carers.

9 Discuss a return-to-work plan.

If your employee needs to take time off work, talk with them about a return-to-work plan. This will help identify any further support that may be needed before, during and after treatment. This may include a phased return to work or gradually handing over work. You could also consider flexible options for working hours to support your employee's well-being.

10 Don't forget, Macmillan is here to help.

Don't forget we are here to help everyone affected by cancer, including family, friends, carers and employers. Call us on **0808 808 00 00**.

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. Some photographs are of models.

Thanks

This booklet has been written, revised and edited by Macmillan Cancer Support's Working Through Cancer team and Cancer Information Development team.

With thanks to: bto solicitors; Carson McDowell LLP; Sue Dixon, Occupational Health Manager, Wakefield Council; Fernando Grisales, HR Business Partner, Macmillan Cancer Support; Fiona Harwood, Human Resources Manager, Fiander Tovell LLP; Amanda Huggins, Healthy Workplace Co-ordinator, Callington Community College Academy Trust; Olswang LLP; Deb Tear, HR Business Partner, Macmillan Cancer Support; Ben Willmott, Head of Public Policy, Chartered Institute for Personnel and Development; and Barbara Wilson, Founder, Working With Cancer.

Sources

Amir Z, Neary D, Luker K. Cancer survivors' views of work 3 years post diagnosis: a UK perspective. *European Journal of Oncology Nursing*. 2008. 12(3):190–7.

Cancer Research UK. Cancer incidence by age – UK statistics. www.cancerresearchuk.org/cancer-info/cancerstats/incidence/age (accessed October 2013).

Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD). Manager support for return to work following long-term sickness absence. www.cipd.co.uk/hr-resources/guides/manager-support-return-work-following-long-term-sickness-absence.aspx (accessed October 2013).

Macmillan Cancer Support. *Cured – but at what cost? Long-term consequences of cancer and its treatment*. 2013.

Macmillan Cancer Support. *The road to recovery: getting back to work*. 2007.

Macmillan Cancer Support/Ipsos MORI. *More than a million: Understanding the UK's carers of people with cancer*. 2011.

Macmillan Cancer Support/Synovate. *Evaluation of the Working Through Cancer Resources Pilot research*. 2010.

Macmillan Cancer Support/YouGov online survey of 2,142 UK adults living with cancer. Fieldwork took place 26 November–14 December 2012. Survey results are not weighted.

Maddams J, Brewster D, Gavin A, et al. Cancer prevalence in the United Kingdom: estimates for 2008. *British Journal of Cancer*. 2009. 101(3):541–547.

Maddams J, Utley M, Møller H. Projections of cancer prevalence in the United Kingdom, 2010–2040. *British Journal of Cancer*. 2012. 107:1195–1202.

Policy Exchange. *The cost of cancer*. 2010. www.policyexchange.org.uk/images/publications/pdfs/the_cost_of_cancer_final.pdf (accessed October 2013).

Simm C, Aston J, Williams C, et al. *Organisations' Responses to the Disability Discrimination Act*. Department for Work and Pensions. 2007.

Waddell G, Burton AK. *Is Work Good for Your Health and Wellbeing?* The Stationary Office. 2006.

Legislation

Disability Discrimination Acts 1995, 1999.

Employment Rights Act 1996.

Equality Act 2010.

Human Rights Act 1998.

The Work and Families Act 2006.

Can your company do something to help?

We hope this booklet has been useful to you. It's just one of our many publications that are free for anyone affected by cancer. They're produced by our cancer information specialists who, along with our nurses, benefits advisers, campaigners and volunteers, are part of the Macmillan team. When people are facing the toughest fight of their lives, we're there to support them every step of the way.

We want to make sure no one has to go through cancer alone, so we need more people to help us. Your company can support Macmillan in a variety of ways. Here are just a few examples:

Choose Macmillan as your Charity of the Year

Whatever your company, we can engage your employees and customers, rallying them behind our vital cause. We'll work with you to design a tailored fundraising programme, including simple workplace activities and an exciting selection of individual challenges.

Take part in the World's Biggest Coffee Morning

Our flagship event is the biggest food and drink-related fundraising event in the country. And the reason it's so popular is because it's a fun way to socialise with colleagues while raising money for a great cause.

Offer payroll giving

Payroll giving is the simplest, most tax-effective way for your employees to make a regular donation to Macmillan. They just choose an amount that suits them and it will come off their salary every month, before tax.

Sponsor an event

Whether it's high-profile events or a more local presence you're after, we can customise our PR and marketing to suit your needs. We'll find the right events and use our expertise to lead the partnership to success.

Together, we can help make sure millions of people don't face cancer alone. Call us on 0207 840 4697 or email corporate@macmillan.org.uk To make a one-off donation see over.

Please fill in your personal details

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Other

Name

Surname

Address

Postcode

Phone

Email

Please accept my gift of £

(Please delete as appropriate)
I enclose a cheque / postal order /
Charity Voucher made payable to
Macmillan Cancer Support

OR debit my:
Visa / MasterCard / CAF Charity
Card / Switch / Maestro

Card number

□□□□	□□□□□□	□□□□□□	□□□□□□
------	--------	--------	--------

Valid from

□□	□□
----	----

Expiry date

□□	□□
----	----

Issue no

□□□

Security number

□□□□

Signature

Date / /

Don't let the taxman keep your money

Do you pay tax? If so, your gift will be worth 25% more to us – at no extra cost to you. All you have to do is tick the box below, and the tax office will give 25p for every pound you give.

- I am a UK taxpayer and I would like Macmillan Cancer Support to treat all donations I have made for the four years prior to this year, and all donations I make in the future, as Gift Aid donations, until I notify you otherwise.

I confirm I have paid or will pay an amount of Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax in each tax year, that is at least equal to the tax that Charities & CASCs I donate to will reclaim on my gifts. I understand that other taxes such as VAT and Council Tax do not qualify and that Macmillan Cancer Support will reclaim 25p of tax on every £1 that I give.

Macmillan Cancer Support and our trading companies would like to hold your details in order to contact you about our fundraising, campaigning and services for people affected by cancer. If you would prefer us not to use your details in this way please tick this box.

In order to carry out our work we may need to pass your details to agents or partners who act on our behalf.



If you'd rather donate online go to macmillan.org.uk/donate

Please cut out this form and return it in an envelope (no stamp required) to:
Supporter Donations, Macmillan Cancer Support, FREEPOST LON15851,
89 Albert Embankment, London SE1 7UQ

More than one in three of us will get cancer. For most of us it will be the toughest fight we ever face. And the feelings of isolation and loneliness that so many people experience make it even harder. But you don't have to go through it alone. The Macmillan team is with you every step of the way.

We are the nurses and therapists helping you through treatment. The experts on the end of the phone. The advisers telling you which benefits you're entitled to. The volunteers giving you a hand with the everyday things. The campaigners improving cancer care. The community there for you online, any time. The supporters who make it all possible.

Together, we are all Macmillan Cancer Support.

For cancer support every step of the way,
call Macmillan on 0808 808 00 00
(Mon–Fri, 9am–8pm) or visit macmillan.org.uk

Hard of hearing? Use textphone
0808 808 0121, or Text Relay.
Non-English speaker? Interpreters available.
Braille and large print versions on request.

© Macmillan Cancer Support, October 2013. 3rd edition. MAC12891.
Next planned review 2016. Macmillan Cancer Support, registered charity
in England and Wales (261017), Scotland (SC039907)
and the Isle of Man (604).



Printed using sustainable material. Please recycle.

**WE ARE
MACMILLAN.
CANCER SUPPORT**