

# TOP 10 TIPS

FOR LINE MANAGERS

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CANCER SUPPORT

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

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

## Top 10 tips

- 1 Be sensitive to your employee's needs.
- 2 Respect your employee's right to privacy.
- 3 Listen, understand and ask.
- 4 Check guidelines and policies.
- 5 Be prepared to make adjustments.
- 6 Recognise the impact on your team.
- 7 Check financial entitlements.
- 8 Respect carers' rights at work.
- 9 Discuss a return to work plan.
- 10 Don't forget, Macmillan is here to help.

# 1

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

Every person has a different cancer experience. Cancer treatments, and physical and emotional reactions to cancer, will vary from person to person. What may be best for one employee 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 the Macmillan Support Line on **0808 808 00 00**.

# 7

## **Check financial entitlements.**

Find out whether your organisation has policies for workplace financial entitlements for time 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 to identify any further support that might be needed before, during and after cancer 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 that Macmillan Cancer Support is here to help everyone affected by cancer, including family, friends, carers and employers. If you or your employees have questions about cancer, call the Macmillan Support Line free on **0808 808 00 00** or visit **[macmillan.org.uk/work](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/work)**



## Work and cancer information from Macmillan

This information has been taken from *Managing cancer in the workplace*, our guide for employers on supporting staff affected by cancer. Macmillan produces a range of information about work and cancer.

### For employers:

- *Cancer in the workplace* (a DVD to help employers manage people affected by cancer at work)
- *Managing cancer in the workplace: an employer's guide to supporting staff affected by cancer.*

## **For employees:**

- *Work and cancer: a guide for people living with cancer*
- *Working while caring for someone with cancer*
- *Work it out: essential questions about work and cancer*
- *Your rights at work when you're affected by cancer.*

This leaflet and all of the resources above (apart from *Your rights at work when you're affected by cancer*) are also included in *The essential work and cancer toolkit*, a pack for employers that can be ordered from **macmillan.org.uk/worktoolkit**

You can order any of our resources online from **be.macmillan.org.uk**

## 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.

## Thanks

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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.

If you or your employees have questions about cancer, call Macmillan on 0808 808 00 00 (Mon–Fri, 9am–8pm) or visit [macmillan.org.uk/work](http://macmillan.org.uk/work)

Hard of hearing? Use textphone 0808 808 0121, or Text Relay.

Non-English speaker? Interpreters available.

Braille and large print versions on request.

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