

**MACMILLAN**  
CANCER SUPPORT

# MANAGING CANCER IN THE WORKPLACE

Work and cancer series – for employers

In partnership with

**CIPD**

*Championing better  
work and working lives*



**I cared for her as a colleague and knew that supporting her through her experience would have a really positive impact on her and her pupils. 🍀**

**Judy (right), who supported her employee Julia (left) at work when she was diagnosed with cancer**



# The Macmillan work and cancer series

Macmillan produces a range of information about work and cancer.

## **For people living with cancer:**

- Work and cancer
- Questions to ask about work and cancer

## **For employers:**

- 10 top tips for line managers
- Managing cancer in the workplace

## **For people caring for someone with cancer:**

- Working while caring for someone with cancer
- Questions for carers to ask about work and cancer

## **For self-employed people with cancer:**

- Self-employment and cancer

## **More information:**

- Your rights at work when you are affected by cancer

# About this booklet

**This booklet is about how you can support people affected by cancer in your workplace. It is for anyone who is a manager, an HR professional or an employer.**

This booklet has information about:

- practical actions you can take, including examples of best practice
- your responsibilities as an employer and your employees' rights
- understanding your employee, whether they have cancer or are caring for someone who does
- how to reduce the impact on your organisation.

This booklet also has information about the extra support Macmillan could offer your organisation, including more training, resources and consultancy. This programme is called Macmillan at Work – see page 114 for more information.

## How to use this booklet

This booklet is split into sections to help you find what you need. You do not have to read it from start to finish. You can use the contents list on page <?> to help you.

It is fine to skip parts of the booklet. You can always come back to them when you feel ready.

On pages 122 to 124, there are details of other organisations that can help.

## Quotes

In this booklet, we have included quotes from people affected by cancer in the workplace. Some are from our Online Community ([macmillan.org.uk/community](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/community)). The others are from people who have chosen to share their story with us. This includes Judy, who is on the cover of this booklet. To share your experience, visit [macmillan.org.uk/shareyourstory](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/shareyourstory)

## For more information

If you have more questions or would like to talk to someone, call the Macmillan Support Line free on **0808 808 00 00**, 7 days a week, 8am to 8pm, or visit [macmillan.org.uk](https://www.macmillan.org.uk)

If you would prefer to speak to us in another language, interpreters are available. Please tell us, in English, the language you want to use. If you are deaf or hard of hearing, call us using NGT (Text Relay) on **18001 0808 808 00 00**, or use the NGT Lite app.

We have some information in different languages and formats, including audio, eBooks, easy read, Braille, large print and translations. To order these visit [macmillan.org.uk/otherformats](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/otherformats) or call **0808 808 00 00**.

Microsoft Ink

aBbCc

AaBbCc

Heading 1

Heading 2

Change  
Styles

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Editing

Let's catch up  
later today!

Judy

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BISLEY



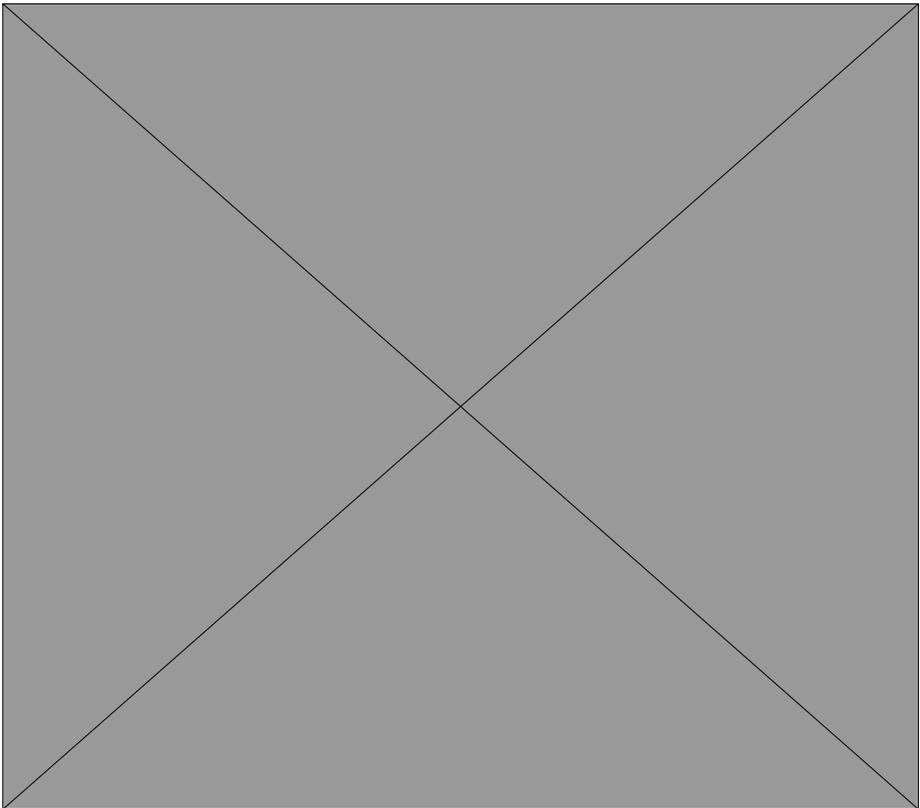
# GETTING STARTED

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# Key facts about work and cancer

Cancer affects many people who work. The diagram below shows the number of working age people who are diagnosed with cancer each year in the UK. By working age, we mean people aged from 16 to 64. But because of the data available, some of the figures below are for people aged 15 to 64. Employees who are living with cancer may need to change how or when they work.



A cancer diagnosis can also affect family and friends. For example, they may become a carer for the person with cancer. A carer is someone who provides unpaid support to someone who could not manage without this help. Macmillan estimates there are around 700,000 employees in the UK caring for someone with cancer. Employees who are carers may also need to change how or when they work.

Employers can make a huge difference to the working lives of people affected by cancer. This can often be done by making reasonable adjustments for the employee (see pages 63 to 65). Reasonable adjustments are changes to the workplace or a job that allow your employee to keep working or come back to work. More than two thirds of organisations that make these adjustments consider them easy to make.

'I hadn't been in that situation before, where I needed to manage someone who would be facing cancer. I didn't know what to expect.'

**Judy**

# Why work is important for someone affected by cancer

Work is important for many people living with cancer, and for carers. This may be because of the following reasons:

- A job can help keep or bring back a sense of normality, routine and stability.
- It can provide an income and social contact.
- For people living with cancer, staying in work, or going back to work after cancer, can help with recovery and lead to better health.

Managers and employers can play an important role in supporting people with cancer and carers. But you may not always know the best way to support them. There can be challenges at the time of diagnosis, during treatment, when returning to work and afterwards.

Employers usually also have to meet the needs of other people in the workplace, and the organisation as a whole. This can sometimes cause difficult situations. You may be affected in both a practical and personal way. This information can help.



**'I wanted to go back to work as it is something I love. It helped me feel that life was carrying on as normal.'**

**Julia**

# Benefits of being a supportive employer

Supporting an employee affected by cancer can help them deal with this difficult time. You can help reduce any anxiety they are feeling, and give them the confidence to cope with cancer at work.

There are other clear benefits of supporting people affected by cancer at work:

- **Maintaining efficiency** – You can keep their valuable skills, knowledge and experience, and maintain productivity.
- **Saving time and money** – You can avoid the cost and time of recruiting and training employees. The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD – see page 123 for details) estimates the average cost of recruitment is £6,000 for senior managers and directors, and £2,000 for other employees.
- **Being inclusive** – You will understand the needs of employees affected by cancer, including those who are carers.
- **Better engagement** – It may promote a greater sense of loyalty from your employee and their colleagues. This will usually have a positive impact on employee engagement.
- **Reducing pressure** – You can reduce pressure on the rest of the team. This is because they might have needed to take on more work or train new employees.
- **Positive image** – A company or organisation that supports employees affected by cancer may be more attractive to job applicants and customers.

- **Fulfilling your legal obligations** – People affected by cancer have legal rights at work (see pages 94 to 111) under the Equality Act 2010 in England, Scotland and Wales, or the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 in Northern Ireland. Meeting the requirements of these laws will help avoid potential discrimination compensation. It will also help avoid the cost of management time, legal fees and potential damage to reputation.

'I cared for her as a colleague and knew that supporting her through her experience would have a really positive impact on her and her pupils.'

**Judy**

# Simple first steps you can take

Reasonable adjustments are changes to the workplace or working arrangements that allow your employee to keep working or come back to work. Making reasonable adjustments is a legal obligation and can make a big difference to your employees and your organisation (see pages 63 to 65).

Reasonable adjustments could include:

- allowing time off for medical appointments
- offering different working hours
- organising a phased return to work.

These changes are normally easy to make. They do not have to be disruptive. Many adjustments are free and where there is some cost, it is usually small. Grants from Access to Work schemes (see page 122) can cover some or all of the cost.

**‘That person is going through the most traumatic time of their lives both mentally and physically. As an employer, you must do everything you can to support them. Showing them loyalty at this time may make them want to do everything to give back when they are well.’**

**Juan, diagnosed with testicular cancer**

## Check your policies are up to date

If you have policies for sickness, long-term conditions or health and wellbeing, you may want to check they are up to date. You may also want to introduce a cancer-specific policy. Or your organisation may have general policies that can be applied to people with cancer and their carers. It is important to make sure these policies are easy to understand. They should also recognise the difference between managing short-term absence and managing someone with a long-term condition such as cancer. They should also include managing an employee who is also a carer. We have a cancer policy template which you might like to use. You can download this from [macmillan.org.uk/employer](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/employer)

## Provide training for managers

You may want to think about using some of the information in this booklet when training managers. This could be helpful for managing people with other long-term conditions, as well as cancer.

Macmillan offers training for managers through our Macmillan at Work programme. Visit [macmillan.org.uk/atwork](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/atwork) for more information. We also provide online learning. Visit [learnzone.org.uk](https://www.learnzone.org.uk)

## Educate employees

We produce **Your work and cancer toolkit** to help employers support people affected by cancer. It is designed to be shared with employees at your organisation who are affected by cancer. It can also be used by other employees to learn more about cancer. If you do not already have the toolkit, you can order one by signing up at [macmillan.org.uk/atwork](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/atwork)

## Raise awareness of cancer

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

This could mean encouraging staff to take part in fundraising. Or you could put up a poster promoting cancer awareness months.



**YOUR  
WORK AND  
CANCER  
TOOLKIT**

**MACMILLAN  
AT WORK**

**MACMILLAN  
CANCER SUPPORT**  
RIGHT THERE WITH YOU

# Why line managers are important

If you are a line manager, you may be managing a person with cancer, or someone who is caring for someone with cancer. You are an important source of support for that employee for lots of reasons:

- You are often the first person the employee contacts when they are unwell and cannot go to work.
- You are responsible for the day-to-day management of the employee on their return.
- You play an important role in making any reasonable adjustments for the employee.
- You may be the first person the employee contacts when they need to meet human resources (HR) or occupational health.
- You manage the employee's workload and can change the level of pressure or demand on them. This will be important if the employee is returning to work after some time off.
- You can help make sure the employee is not too stressed by supporting them when they come back to work after time off. This can help to avoid the need for more time off.

If you are a line manager, you should contact your HR manager and occupational health. They can give you the information and support you need as a manager. This could be guidance about the employee's health condition, advice on any reasonable adjustments needed (see pages 63 to 65), or information about their return-to-work plan (see pages 74 to 75). You might find it helpful to discuss your worries with occupational health or your HR manager. However, if an employee wants to keep their diagnosis confidential, you must respect this.

You might find the tips on pages <?> to 22 helpful.

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

These tips will help you support your employee when they have been diagnosed, and through treatment and living with cancer.

## 10 top tips

### **1 Remember that communication is important**

Listen to your employee and try to understand their situation. It is fine to ask questions when they are sharing information with you. It is important to keep in contact with them if they are on sick leave. Agree together how and when you will keep in contact and put this in writing. Remember to review these plans regularly as their situation and how they want to be contacted may change. You may find it helpful to watch our video on talking about cancer. Visit [macmillan.org.uk/workvideos](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/workvideos)

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

The physical, emotional and practical effects of cancer, and cancer treatment, are different for each person. What is best for one employee may not be right for another. Make time to understand your employee's individual needs.

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

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

### **4 Be prepared to make adjustments**

Cancer is legally defined as a disability. Under equality laws, you may need to make changes to the workplace or the employee's job that allow them to stay in work, or come back to work. These changes are called reasonable adjustments. If you have a HR manager or occupational health service, they can give you advice.

## 5 Check guidelines and policies

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

## 6 Find out about financial support

Find out whether your organisation offers financial support to people who are off work, such as sick pay. You may also want to check whether there are any other benefits that could help your employee. You could suggest they talk to a Macmillan financial guide or welfare rights adviser. They can call us on **0808 808 00 00**, or visit **macmillan.org.uk/moneyworries**

## 7 Respect carers' rights at work

If an employee is caring for a person who has cancer, they may need your support. Carers have certain rights at work, including taking unpaid time off to care for the person they look after in an emergency. Flexible working could make it easier for carers to keep working. Any employee has the right to request flexible working. Find out more at **macmillan.org.uk/carersatwork**

## 8 Discuss a return-to-work plan

If your employee is off work, agree a plan with them for keeping in contact. When they are ready, talk with them about a return-to-work plan. This discussion can help you find out what support they might need at work before, during and after treatment. Their return-to-work plan might involve a phased return where they increase their hours slowly over a period of time. Or it might mean you slowly handing over work to them. You could also consider reasonable adjustments to support their well-being.

## 9 Recognise the impact on your team

Be aware of the impact that having an employee with cancer can have on colleagues and on you. If you need more support, talk to your line manager, your HR manager, or call the Macmillan Support Line on **0808 808 00 00**.

## 10 Remember that Macmillan is here to help

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

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

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

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0000  
MacMillan Center  
Support



# HOW CANCER AFFECTS PEOPLE

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# Understanding cancer

If you are a line manager, you may be one of your employee's most important sources of support. Having a basic understanding of cancer and its treatment can help you recognise and plan for any issues that may develop at work.

There are more than 200 types of cancer. Each has its own name and treatment. There are around 2.5 million people in the UK living with cancer, and that number is increasing. On average, people are living with cancer for longer than they did in the past.

We have an animation on our website that explains what cancer is. You can watch it at [macmillan.org.uk/cancer](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/cancer)  
We also have more information about different types of cancer and cancer treatments. Visit [macmillan.org.uk](https://www.macmillan.org.uk) or call us for free on **0808 808 00 00**.

## How cancer may affect someone at work

The effect of cancer and its treatment on a person and their work can be different for everyone. For example, it can depend on:

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

Some people find working helps them feel more normal and in control. Being able to keep working or go back to work can help people cope while they are waiting for a diagnosis. It can also help while they are having treatment or caring for someone with cancer. Other people need to work for financial reasons.

Some people give up their jobs. This might be because the cancer is advanced, or because the symptoms make it impossible for them to work. The side effects of treatment can also sometimes make it difficult to work. Other people may not feel able to work because they have lost their confidence.

If your employee is caring for someone with cancer, they may need to work fewer hours or give up work. Before an employee decides to leave their job, it is important that you talk with them about their options. This might include arrangements that could help them stay in work.

# Treatment and side effects

Knowing more about cancer treatments can help you understand how it may affect your employee's work life.

Cancer can be unpredictable. Someone with cancer may need to have treatment for a long time, and lots of hospital appointments. This may mean they need time off work at short notice.

They may have a combination of treatments. Many people have side effects from cancer treatment. These may change over time. For example, your employee may become more tired.

After certain treatments, some people may need to go back into hospital. For example, to have speech therapy or physiotherapy.

If the treatment affects how a part of the body works, it may stop the person doing some parts of their job.

Ask them to let you know how things are going, so you can review their working arrangements. You may be able to make it easier for the person to cope at work by making reasonable adjustments. For example, you could allow them to have frequent breaks, access to a fridge to store medicines in, or to wear a different work uniform.

We have more information about some of the main treatments over the following pages. We also have more information about other side effects that we do not mention here in our booklet **Side effects and symptoms** (see page 118).

## Surgery

Some people do not need to stay in hospital overnight after an operation. This is called day surgery. Others might need to stay in hospital for a while. How long they are in hospital for depends on the type of operation they have. It also depends on their own recovery.

This will affect the amount of time off work your employee will need to recover.

## Radiotherapy

Radiotherapy uses high-energy x-rays to destroy cancer cells. Treatment usually happens between Monday and Friday. A course of treatment may take a few weeks.

Each treatment only takes a few minutes. But going to and from the hospital and waiting in hospital for treatment to start can take up most of the day.

Some people feel able to work during radiotherapy. But they may need to reduce their hours. The radiographers (who give the radiotherapy) may be able to give the treatment outside the person's working hours, but this is not always possible. Other people need to stop working completely during radiotherapy, and for a few weeks afterwards.

## Side effects

Radiotherapy can make you very tired. This can continue for weeks or months after treatment finishes. Other side effects depend on the part of your body that is being treated. Side effects usually last for a few weeks after treatment and then start to improve.

## Chemotherapy

Chemotherapy uses anti-cancer (cytotoxic) drugs to destroy cancer cells. Most people have chemotherapy as an outpatient in hospital, but it can take most of the day. Some people may need to stay in hospital overnight, or for a few days. The drugs may be given as an injection into a vein (intravenously), or as tablets.

People usually have a break of a few weeks between treatments. This gives them time to recover. Some people cannot work because they are too unwell. Others may take a few days off after each treatment and work fewer hours. A course of chemotherapy may last for a few months.

### Side effects

These can include:

- risk of infection (because of the effects on blood cells)
- risk of bleeding (because of the effects on blood cells)
- fatigue (tiredness)
- hair loss
- feeling sick
- diarrhoea.

If your employee feels they are well enough to work, there are things they may need to do to reduce their risk of infection. This could include working from home. Or it could mean working different hours so they can travel to and from work at quieter times. These adjustments could mean they are around fewer people who may have an infection. Before making any changes, talk to your employee and ask what advice they have had from their hospital team.

## Hormonal therapies

Hormonal therapies reduce the level of certain hormones in the body, or block their effects on the cancer cells. People usually have these drugs as tablets, for months or years. Some are given as injections every few weeks or months.

### Side effects

Hormonal therapies usually do not affect a person's ability to work as much as some other cancer treatments. But they can cause:

- tiredness
- weight gain
- hot flushes
- sweats
- muscle pain.

## Targeted therapies

Targeted therapy drugs affect the way cancer cells grow. People can have them as a drip (intravenous infusion) or as tablets. They are often given with other treatments.

### Side effects

Possible side effects include:

- flu-like symptoms
- chills
- headaches
- a raised temperature
- risk of infection
- tiredness.

People may be able keep working if they are having a targeted therapy on its own. But tiredness and other side effects may sometimes make it difficult.



## Coping with fatigue

Fatigue is a feeling of tiredness or exhaustion. It is a very common problem for people with cancer.

Cancer-related fatigue is different from the tiredness that someone without cancer may get. People with cancer may get tired more quickly after less activity. Their fatigue may not be helped by rest or sleep. For most people, fatigue gets better after treatment finishes. But for some it may continue for months or sometimes years.

Fatigue can affect people in different ways. It may get worse during different stages of cancer treatment, or at different times of day. It may mean your employee:

- finds it harder to do certain tasks
- has less strength and energy than they did before
- has difficulty concentrating and remembering things
- becomes exhausted during meetings or after tasks that do not need much energy
- struggles to control their emotions
- becomes irritable and finds it hard to talk to others
- sometimes feels dizzy or light-headed.

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

If your employee is caring for someone who has cancer, that person's fatigue can affect them too. They may need more time off to look after the person with cancer.

You can help your employee cope with fatigue by making some adjustments at work. For example you could allow flexible working, working from home or reduced hours, or give them easier tasks. Simple things like allowing them breaks to rest, or to go for a short walk outside can also help. Ask your employee what might work best for them. We have more information about these kinds of adjustments (see pages 63 to 65).

We have more information about how fatigue can affect someone (see page 118). Your employee might like to read it too. There is also more information and a video about fatigue on our website at [macmillan.org.uk/fatigue](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/fatigue)

## Body changes

Cancer and its treatment can change the way a person looks. These changes may be temporary or permanent. Body changes will depend on the person's situation, but can include:

- hair loss
- changes in complexion or skin tone
- scarring
- weight loss or weight gain.

Changes like these could affect how your employee thinks and feels about their body. You and your colleagues may need to be prepared for this.

Changes like these could affect how your employee thinks and feels about their body. Our booklet **Body image and cancer** may be helpful. See page 118 for ways to order this.

# Emotional effects of cancer

Being diagnosed with cancer and then having treatment can have a huge impact on someone. It can also affect their family, friends and colleagues.

Going for tests and waiting for the results can be a worrying time. Many employees may want to keep their situation confidential at this point. If they tell you what is happening, you can ask them if they need time off for medical appointments. See pages 44 to 53 for tips on talking to your employee.

When someone is diagnosed with cancer, they may feel shocked and numb at first. Some people take a while to accept that they have cancer. They may try to carry on as if nothing is wrong. They may feel many different emotions, including:

- anger
- sadness
- fear – of the cancer, treatment or dying
- loneliness.

Your employee may need some time off if they, or a family member or friend, are diagnosed with cancer. They may want to be with people close to them and try to recover from the shock before coming back to work.

Finding out that cancer has come back can also be upsetting news. This can be particularly difficult if the person needs more treatment, or if there are fewer treatment options than before.

Uncertainty can be one of the hardest things to deal with when faced with a cancer diagnosis. This can cause a mixture of emotions. It might make someone feel irritable, angry or scared. 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 about their situation to get back a feeling of control.

## If your employee becomes upset

Cancer can cause many different emotions. Your employee's mood might change quickly and unexpectedly.

If this happens to your employee at work, it might help to offer them a private space for a while. Or you could suggest they go home for the rest of the day. Ask if they would like you to contact a family member or friend to travel home with them.

## Your own emotions

You and your colleagues may also have strong feelings. This is natural. You can ask for support to help you cope with your own emotions. It may help to talk to another manager in your workplace. Remember to think about confidentiality and how much the person wants others to know (see page 111).

You can also call our cancer support specialists on the Macmillan Support Line on **0808 808 00 00**.

We have a booklet called **The emotional effects of cancer**, which explains more about the different feelings people may have following a cancer diagnosis and what can help. It may help you give support to your employee, and they may also want to read it (see page 118).

## After treatment

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

People may struggle with fatigue, their emotions and any changes to their body caused by the treatment (see pages 28 to 37).

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

- fatigue 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.

'What struck me – and I hadn't been prepared for – was how much energy it drained from me. It was three months before I felt able to get back to work.'

**Tim**

People often want to get back to work. But they might have difficulty going back to their old job. They need your understanding and support to do this successfully. It is also important to support them over time. This is because long-term side effects may improve but then come back.

Some people recover well after treatment and are never affected again by the cancer. But other people may be living with cancer that cannot be cured. Even though they may feel well, their cancer may come back at some point. This means they may need further treatment. For some people, this could happen more than once. For others, the cancer may be more advanced.

Some people will die from the cancer. This could be a few weeks or months after diagnosis, or after the cancer has come back again. It can be a shock when a colleague dies (see pages 82 to 84), especially if it is soon after a diagnosis.

# If your employee is a carer

Your employee may be caring for someone who has cancer. Becoming a carer might not be something they have planned for. It can be physically and emotionally demanding.

Getting the right balance between caring and working can be difficult. But it is possible. Working carers have legal rights, which aim to help them keep working (see pages 103 to 110). These include the right to time off during an emergency and the right to request flexible working.

Caring responsibilities may mean that an employee needs some time off. They might take sick leave or annual leave when there is an emergency, rather than asking for time off to care for someone with cancer. This is often because people do not know that their caring role is a reason to request leave. Or the employee may not want to tell you they are caring for someone.

Cancer can be unpredictable. Someone with cancer may need long courses of treatment, with lots of hospital appointments. This means their carer may need time off work at short notice. Side effects (see pages 28 to 35) and symptoms can also continue after treatment finishes. This means you may need to be flexible about them taking time off for a while.

As soon as you know that an employee is caring for someone, talk to them about:

- your organisation's policies
- their rights as a carer and their options for leave
- what you need from them and any information they can provide to help you support them.

## The carer's own health and wellbeing

Caring for someone can be physically and emotionally demanding. It 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 health problems they may have worse, such as high blood pressure or back problems. So they may need time off to look after their own health.

They may feel guilty or lose confidence if they are unable to do their usual work while they are caring. Being a carer may also affect their own career development. They may not feel confident about looking for promotion or applying for a new job.

Being a carer should not have a negative effect on an employee's future job prospects. It will help if you can reassure them about this. There may also be things you can do to help them feel confident.

We have more information for people who are caring for someone with cancer, including information about working while caring and questions for carers to ask about work.

We also have a video that provides expert advice on supporting an employee who is a carer, including carers talking about their experiences. You can watch it at [macmillan.org.uk/workvideos](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/workvideos)

You can find this information on [be.macmillan.org.uk](https://www.be.macmillan.org.uk) or by calling our support line on **0808 808 00 00**.



**'Listen to what they want and talk with them about how they are and the cancer. By listening to them, you can come up with a plan that works for the individual and the organisation.'**

**Judy**

# TALKING ABOUT CANCER

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# Talking to your employee

You might find it difficult to talk to someone who has been diagnosed with cancer. You 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 is important to keep communication open. Not talking will make things harder to deal with.

The person who has cancer may also find talking difficult. Everyone reacts differently. Some people find it easy to talk about their thoughts and feelings. But others are more private.

Cultural differences matter too. Some languages do not even have a word for cancer. In some communities, cancer is something people do not think they should talk about (taboo).

Be aware that some people may be embarrassed to talk about the physical details of their cancer. They may prefer to speak to someone who is the same gender.

If your employee is looking after someone with cancer, remember that they may not think of themselves as a carer. They may also not want to talk about their personal life in the workplace.

Talking about cancer might be hard at first, but it can be helpful for everyone. There are things you can do to make your conversations easier.

We have more information about talking about cancer in our booklet **Talking to someone with cancer**. See page 118 for ways to order this.

# First conversations

As soon as you find out that an employee has cancer, or is caring for someone with cancer, encourage them to talk to their line manager, HR manager or occupational health provider. Sometimes it can be helpful to involve more than one of these people in the conversation. However, your employee should decide who they want to speak with. If your organisation has access to a welfare rights officer, your employee might find it helpful to involve them early on.

Your employee may want to meet with someone other than their line manager. This may be someone they find easy to talk to. Or it may be because they are the same gender or age group.

Your employee may also want to have another person with them at the meeting, or any future ones. This may be a colleague, family member, friend or trade union representative. You may want to take notes – but this should be done carefully so that the meeting is kept confidential.

Some employees prefer to look for help themselves and read existing policies. They may not tell anyone about the cancer. Others find an informal chat easier.

If they can, let your employee take the lead by telling you what has happened. Let them tell you what support they feel they need from you.

# Be sensitive

Communication is very personal and you will need to think about what you might say to your employee. Remember, everyone is different. What is right for one person might not be helpful for someone else. Think about the individual person and their situation.

## Getting started

Here are some tips to help you prepare for the meeting:

- Choose a private place to talk and make sure you will not be interrupted.
- Be prepared for the meeting to overrun – let your employee set the pace.
- Show you are listening – use eye contact and encourage conversation by nodding or saying things like, ‘I see’ or ‘what happened next?’.
- Show that it is okay to be upset by giving your employee time to express their emotions, and recover if necessary, while staying calm yourself.
- Show empathy with phrases like, ‘that must be very upsetting’.
- Respond to humour but do not start it – humour can be a helpful coping strategy for people going through a difficult time.
- End the meeting if your employee becomes too upset to continue, and say you can talk again when they are ready.

Try not to:

- be afraid of silence – it is okay if it goes quiet for a bit
- be too quick to offer advice
- use phrases like, ‘things could be worse’ or ‘things will work out’
- ignore your employee’s feelings
- share stories about other people you know who have cancer – this takes the focus away from your employee.

## Keep the conversation going

It is important to keep talking to your employee to make sure they are getting the support they need. Here are some things you can do:

- You could ask about how they are feeling – both emotionally and physically. Tell them you understand how difficult their situation must be.
- Check you understand what the person is saying – if you are unsure what they mean or how they feel, just ask.
- Do not judge or offer advice that has not been asked for – if you must offer advice, think about how helpful it will be.
- Ask if they want colleagues to know and what information should be shared. Respect the person’s feelings and wishes.
- Ask what sort of time off they might need for medical appointments and during treatment. They may not know at this point – it is often a case of seeing how things go.



## Give them information

It is important that your employee has the right information to help them make decisions about work. But try not to give them too much information straight away, as this might be overwhelming. When they are ready, start sharing helpful information.

- Tell them the options for taking time off.
- Show them organisational policies on reasonable adjustments and coming back to work after sick leave.
- If the person is a carer, they may benefit from seeing the flexible working policy.
- For people with cancer, flexible working should be arranged as a reasonable adjustment (see pages 63 to 65).
- Tell them about their rights to be protected against discrimination (see pages 94 to 105), either because they have cancer or because they are caring for someone with cancer.
- Give them details of any services your organisation provides to help them. This could be an employee assistance programme (EAP) that offers counselling.

Make sure you end the meeting by telling your employee that their work is valued. Let them know that they can talk to you at any time if they need your help. Agree how you will keep communication open, and set a date for the next meeting.

Line managers are often in the best position to speak with an employee affected by cancer. It is also important to look after yourself, as well as the person with cancer, and to get support if you need to.

# How to tell colleagues

It is important to talk with your employee early on about what they want their colleagues to know. You need to talk about what can and cannot be said, who will be told and who will do the telling.

Your employee may not want to tell others they are affected by cancer. This needs to be your employee's decision. You must keep their situation confidential if that is what they want. However, colleagues may be more understanding about absences and any changes in work arrangements if they know what is happening.

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

- if they want to tell people themselves
- if they do not want to tell people themselves, who they would like to do it and if they want to be there
- how people should be told, for example telling one person at a time, in a meeting or by email
- how much information should be shared and what should stay confidential.

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

Try to:

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

You can suggest staff to speak to you or another manager if they have any concerns about the situation, or if they are feeling upset. You could also tell them about the Macmillan Support Line, which can provide more support. Our number is **0808 808 00 00** and it is free to call. If your organisation has an employee assistance programme, that could also be a source of support.

We also have a video called Talking about cancer at work. You can watch this on online at **[macmillan.org.uk/workvideos](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/workvideos)** This looks at the importance of good communication when managing someone affected by cancer.

# Keep in touch

People living with cancer or people caring for someone with cancer often feel out of touch with work if they take time off. It is important to keep the right contact with your employee during periods of sick leave, or time off they might need. This contact could be through their manager or a nominated buddy. Be careful how you communicate with them. You should aim to make your employee feel valued, but not feel pressured to come back too soon.

## Check how your employee wants to communicate

If possible, talk to your employee before their time off about arrangements for keeping in touch with them. Ask them:

- how they want to be contacted, for example face to face, on the phone or by email
- how often they want to be contacted
- if there is a good time for you to contact them
- what type of information they would like when you talk
- if they want to receive newsletters and important work emails
- if they want their colleagues to contact them at all.

You should keep reviewing how you keep in touch with your employee as their needs may change.

## Keep to arrangements

Cancer treatment may make it difficult for your employee to be in contact at certain times. This may only become clear after treatment has started. If you have agreed to call or meet with them at a certain time on a certain day, keep that arrangement. Your employee may have made an effort to be able to take the call. But try to be flexible if your employee needs to change the arrangements.

## If your employee does not want contact with work

Sometimes an employee may not want any contact with work. Ask them about their reasons for this and reassure them you just want to be supportive. It may simply be because of how they are feeling at that moment. You can ask them about it again later, when they may find the idea of contact with work less worrying.



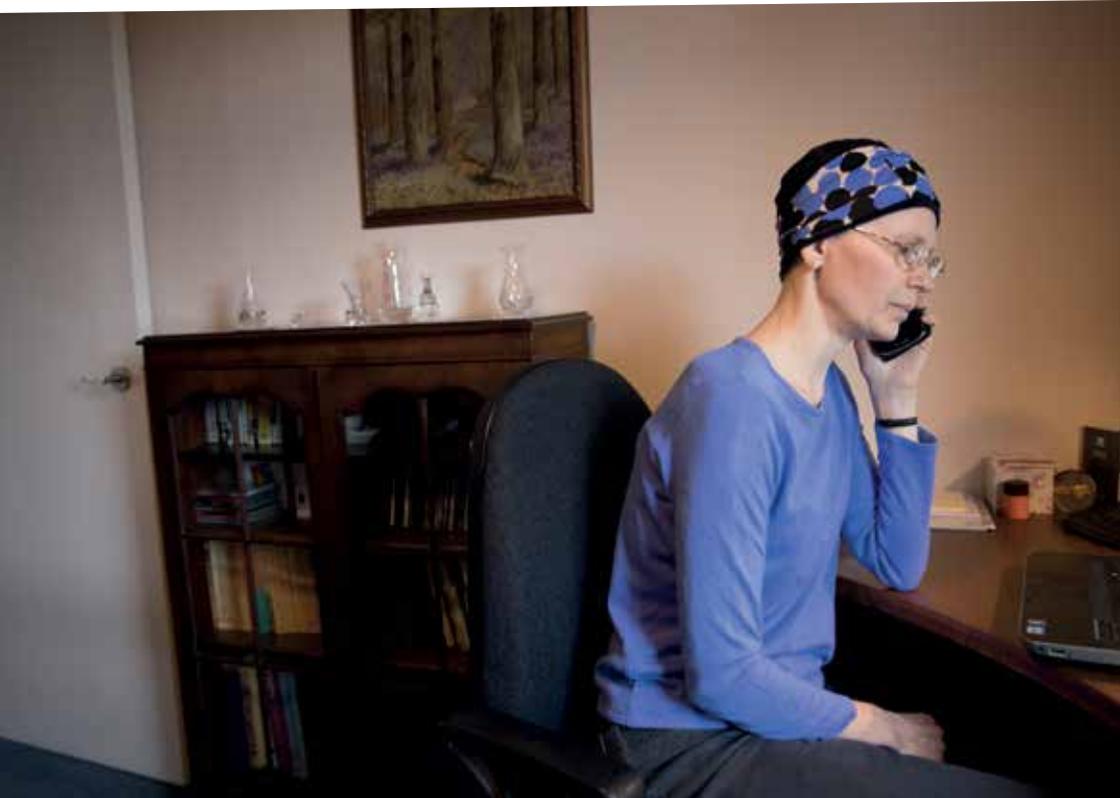
# SUPPORTING YOUR EMPLOYEE AT WORK

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# Knowing what your employee needs

Many employees choose to share their cancer diagnosis with their employer or manager. Knowing this can help you to make reasonable adjustments (see pages 63 to 65). But you do not have a legal right to know the diagnosis or clinical details of an employee's condition. Employees have a right of confidentiality under the Human Rights Act 1998.



You could refer your employee to an occupational health provider. You need your employee's permission before you make this referral. The occupational health provider can support them and offer advice about how their health may affect their ability to do their job. This could include:

- how long they are likely to be off work for
- how their health issues could affect their return to work
- how long any health issues may affect their ability to do their job
- if there are any adjustments needed in the workplace to help overcome any disadvantages they may have because of health issues
- how long any adjustments are needed for
- the potential impact of health issues on performance or attendance
- the potential impact of health issues on health and safety
- if they could do other roles in your organisation (see page 78).

If you need occupational health advice about an employee's condition, you should get the employee's permission before talking to an occupational health provider. If your employee is referred to occupational health, try to keep talking with them about any support they may need from you.

# Options for time off

Some people with cancer are able to keep working. Others need time off during treatment. Time off can be planned or unplanned.

## Sick leave

Find out if your organisation has sick leave policies. Most organisations should have clear sick leave policies, but small to medium sized organisations may not. Sick leave policies are usually part of an employment contract. They should include information about taking time off for appointments. Cancer is often a long-term and uncertain condition, so flexibility around sick leave policies should be considered. For example, you could allow more time off to attend medical appointments. Or you could adjust sickness absence triggers (the level of sick leave that would normally lead to action by an employer). These are examples of reasonable adjustments for an employee with cancer.

Your employee may be entitled to company sick pay under their employment contract. This is also called occupational or contractual sick pay. It may be more generous than the legal minimum, which is called Statutory Sick Pay (SSP). It cannot be less than SSP.

If your organisation can, you could think about reasonably adjusting your company sick pay policy. This could be to cover extended periods over and above the level of sick pay that an organisation legally or contractually must provide.

SSP is paid after 4 days of sickness and lasts for up to 28 weeks of illness. If SSP is due to end soon, your organisation should provide the employee with a form called SSP1. This gives them information about when the last payment will be. It also tells them about applying for a benefit for people who cannot work because they are ill or disabled. This is called new style Employment Support Allowance. We have more information about benefits in our booklet **Help with the cost of cancer**. See page 118 for ways to order this.

If your employee is likely to be off work for longer than 28 weeks, your organisation can give them the SSP1 form up to 6 weeks before their SSP is due to finish. This means they can start a claim for ESA (see page 91) before their sick pay ends. As a manager, it is a good idea to tell your employee about the SSP1 form before it is sent to them. You should explain to what the form is and what it means.

## Fit note

During the first 7 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 used to be called a sick note. A fit note allows doctors to advise if someone may be fit for work or not fit for work. The fit note will also say why. Someone completely fit for work will not be given a fit note.

If the note says that someone may be fit for work, the GP should include information about how the person's illness affects them. They may also give advice about what could be done to help the person be able to work. The employer and employee should then talk about, and agree, any changes that would help them come back to work.

## Time off for appointments

Your employee may want to agree some time off. They should try to let you know in advance, so you can arrange cover if needed. But this may not always be possible.

People with cancer need to go to medical appointments. Some may need to stay in hospital for treatment. They may also need time off if they are having complementary therapies.

Your sick leave policy should include information on how to deal with time off for medical appointments. But you may need to be flexible sometimes. This will depend on how many appointments they have and how often they are. Allowing time off work for appointments is a reasonable adjustment (see pages 63 to 65).

## Time off for carers

If your employee is a carer, they may be legally entitled to take time off to deal with an emergency (see pages 106 to 108). Or if something unexpected happens to the person they care for.

## Hiring temporary cover

You may need to arrange temporary cover. This could be because your employee cannot work for a long period of time, or if they want to work fewer hours. You should:

- talk about this honestly with your employee
- be clear about your reasons for hiring temporary cover
- listen to their thoughts and concerns
- tell them that the extra help is temporary
- follow your organisation's standard process for employing temporary workers.

The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) has more information about managing absence and other employment issues. See page 123 for contact details.

Employers and employees in England, Scotland and Wales can contact the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (Acas– see page 122) for help on any employment issue. This includes absence management. In Northern Ireland, you can contact the Labour Relations Agency (see page 124).

Remember to ask your employee about how they would like to be contacted (pages 52 to 53) while they are off work.

ALL THE PEOPLE  
BY MARK LEE  
OF 1992

PARIS



# Making reasonable adjustments

Both the Equality Act and the Disability Discrimination Act (see pages 94 to 108) say that employers must make reasonable adjustments. These are changes to the workplace or a job that allow your employee to keep working or come back to work.

There is no fixed description of what a reasonable adjustment should be. It will depend on:

- how much the adjustment will help the employee
- how practical it is to make the adjustment
- the cost of making the adjustment
- how the adjustment will affect the company or organisation
- the size of the company or organisation, and the resources it has.

Employers have to make a reasonable adjustment if they know (or should reasonably expected to know) that an employee has cancer.

You should talk to your employee about possible adjustments. It is important to involve them at every stage. This usually benefits both you and your employee, as the adjustments should allow them to keep working.

## Examples of reasonable adjustments

One or two small changes could help an employee keep working or come back to work. The type of reasonable adjustment you need to make always depends on the situation. It is important to talk about and agree any changes with your employee before they are put in place. Reasonable adjustments could include the following:

- Giving your employee time off for medical appointments or for rehabilitation. This may be included in existing policies.
- Changing your employee's job description to remove tasks that are particularly difficult for you because of the cancer.
- Temporarily giving some of the employees work to a colleague.
- Allowing them to work different hours, such as working part-time, having a flexible start or finish time or working from home. This can help if your employee has fatigue, as it allows them to work when have the most energy. It can also mean your employee does not have to travel at busy times.
- Giving them extra breaks if they feel very tired or are coping with fatigue. A short rest in a quiet place can be helpful.
- Changing their performance targets to allow for time off or any treatment side effects, such as fatigue.
- Moving them to a job with more suitable tasks for their situation – if they agree.
- Making sure they can access the building if they use mobility equipment, such as a wheelchair or crutches.
- Giving them a parking space closer to the entrance may be helpful.

- Change where they work, for example by moving them to a ground floor office if they find it difficult to climb stairs. A professional assessment can help with this – for example you could get advice from an occupational health adviser (see pages 66 to 68).
- Giving them computer equipment that might help, for example voice-activated software if they cannot type.
- Making sure they can get to the toilet easily (providing an accessible toilet).
- Changing the date or time of a job interview if it was planned at the same time as a medical appointment.
- Giving them the option to work from home. Working from home can help your employee save energy, and means they do not have to travel to work. Make sure their home has a suitable work environment and that they have the right equipment to do the job. It is also important to make sure they stay in touch with colleagues and do not become isolated.
- Allowing a phased return to work (see page 73).

You may find it helpful to watch our video **Making work adjustments for an employee affected by cancer**. You can find this on our website at [macmillan.org.uk/workvideos](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/workvideos)

'I worked in my own office and stayed away from people who had a cold. During the few days after chemotherapy where I felt rough, I worked from home.'

**Ryan**

# Occupational health advice

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 offer advice based on their clinical knowledge and an understanding of the tasks and demands of the employee's role. You may want to speak to an occupational health adviser at an early stage. For example, you could contact them before making important changes or decisions to policies, the workplace or a job description.

## How they can help

Occupational health advisers can help you understand your responsibilities under employment and health and safety law. They can also help with business decisions about:

- reasonable adjustments
- recruitment
- return-to-work plans
- continuing with work
- accessing company benefits, such as pensions.

They can also help managers do risk assessments for employees with cancer or other chronic health problems. This is to make sure that, from a health and safety point of view, the employee is doing work that is right for them.

## When you might need workplace occupational health advice

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

- considering if a job applicant is well enough to work
- you need to supporting an employee after their diagnosis
- there is a management concern about the health and safety or performance of an employee who has been off sick
- considering if someone is well enough to return to work after being off sick.

'The challenge for me was getting the balance right in terms of work. I knew she wanted to come back, but didn't want her doing too much too soon.'

**Judy**

## If your workplace does not have an occupational health service

Many companies offer occupational health consultancy to businesses:

- If you are based in England, you can contact NHS Health at Work. This is an occupational health service for small and medium-sized businesses. It charges fees. You can visit [nhshealthatwork.co.uk](https://nhshealthatwork.co.uk) for more information.
- If you are based in Wales, you can contact Healthy Working Wales. This scheme offers free occupational health support for employers and individuals. You can find more information at [healthyworkingwales.wales.nhs.uk](https://healthyworkingwales.wales.nhs.uk)
- If you are based in Scotland, you can contact Healthy Working Lives. This service offers information on workplace health, safety and wellbeing. Visit [healthyworkinglives.scot](https://healthyworkinglives.scot)

Macmillan has e-learning for occupational health advisers. Visit [macmillan.org.uk/learnzone](https://macmillan.org.uk/learnzone) for more information. You can also speak to Macmillan's Work Support Advisers on **0808 808 00 00**.

# Access to Work

Access to Work (see page 122) is a government scheme. It offers grants and advice to help employees with a disability or health condition stay in work. You can contact the scheme either as an employer or an employee.

The scheme may pay for:

- special aids and equipment needed in the workplace
- travel to work if an employee cannot use public transport
- a support worker.

For the scheme in England, Scotland and Wales, you can download an employers' guide from [gov.uk/government/publications/access-to-work-guide-for-employers](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/access-to-work-guide-for-employers)

In Northern Ireland, visit NIDirect (see page 122) for more information.



# HELPING YOUR EMPLOYEE BACK TO WORK

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# Joint return-to-work planning

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

Many employees do not get medical advice about when to go back to work. They have to make this decision on their own. This is usually based on when they feel it is the right time to return.

Joint return-to-work planning is where both you and your employee talk about, and agree, the best way forward. Cancer can be unpredictable, so plans should be flexible. They should be regularly reviewed so things can change if needed.

Making reasonable adjustments (see pages 63 to 65) could be helpful for someone coming back to work. These could be allowing flexible working or planning a phased return to work. It is important to involve your employee in these conversations, to make sure you make the decisions together.

As well as agreeing a return-to-work plan, it is a good idea to arrange a meeting with your employee. This should be 1 to 2 weeks before their first day back at work.

Having a meeting before they come back to work gives them a chance to visit the workplace, hear important updates and discuss any concerns. It is also a chance for you to find out how they are feeling and prevent any problems. You can check how much they want the team or the rest of the organisation to know about their condition. You can also talk to them about how comfortable they are with people asking them how they are.

If you are their manager, you will need to be flexible with your employee's return to work. Their recovery from cancer may be difficult to predict, so the plan may need to change over time. Recovering from cancer is often a long process, and side effects may continue for months or even years.

As part of your joint return-to-work plan, you will need to talk about and finalise any reasonable adjustments you need to make. This will need to include how these will be reviewed over time.

## **Phased return to work**

An example of a reasonable adjustment you could make is to allow your employee a phased return to work. This is when they increase their hours slowly over a period of time.

You and your employee could do this by agreeing a lighter workload. Or by them using any holiday they have to shorten the working week.

A phased return to work can allow your employee to return to work sooner. It can also allow them to settle back into work at a pace that suits them and you. This can be a good way to help employees after being off work for a long time.

# When your employee comes back to work

You can take some of these practical steps to help your employee settle back into work:

- Be there on their first day, or phone them if you cannot be there. Make sure the rest of the team are expecting them. This will make them feel welcomed.
- Meet with them at the start of the day to talk about their return-to-work plan (see pages 72 to 73) and any handovers. This is another chance to check if they are worried about anything.
- Plan and agree regular reviews with your employee. This is to monitor their progress and make sure their workload is manageable. If their workload is not manageable, you can make or change some reasonable adjustments to help them.
- Make sure they are taking breaks and leaving work on time. It is important that they are not overworking.
- Consider a health and safety assessment, especially if there has been a change in their job description or working arrangements. If they are working from home, you should assess this environment too.

- Show them where to find more support if they need it. Suggest they talk to an occupational health or HR manager, if this is possible in your organisation. If there is a confidential counselling service at work, you can tell them about this. Macmillan's work support advisers (see page 121) can also help. Call **0808 808 00 00**.
- Plan for more time off in the future. This may be for medical appointments or because your employee, or the person they care for, is not feeling well. Side effects such as fatigue (see pages 34 to 35) can continue long after treatment is over.

# Making the handover of work easier

These tips can make sure your employee's workload is manageable:

- Make sure your employee does not return to an unmanageable amount of work and emails. Spread the work out so not everything is given to them at once.
- Try to split tasks into smaller steps, to make the job simpler. This can encourage a sense of achievement.
- Prioritise jobs so your employee knows what the most important tasks are. This will give them a greater sense of control and achievement. It will also make sure they meet the needs of the job.
- You could reallocate or change certain tasks. Manage this carefully, so other colleagues do not feel overworked. You should also talk about and agree this with your employee. You can reassure them that this is temporary and is not meant to make them feel less valued.
- Adjust performance targets for a short time so they are realistic for your employee.



# Alternative employment

Suitable alternative employment may be an option if, even with support and reasonable adjustments, your employee is unable to do their job. If the situation is likely to change in the future, this can just be for a short time. You could agree a date with your employee for reviewing the situation later on.

Remember, changes to your employee's working conditions can be for a short time or permanent. These changes may have an impact on their terms of employment, such as hours or pay.

Before any changes are agreed:

- make sure the employee fully understands what the changes mean
- review your organisation's policies to find out what support you can offer them.

Any significant or permanent changes should be confirmed in writing. Your employee should sign this document to show they agree to the change.

# If your employee wants to resign

If your employee wants to resign, it is important to understand their reasons. Sometimes their emotions can have an impact on their decision. You could try to help them make a different decision by offering extra support and explaining all the options. This could help you keep a valued member of staff.

For some people, leaving work is the best option. If this is their decision, make sure you follow your organisation's leaving procedure.

Stopping work because of cancer can have a big impact on someone's finances. Resigning or retiring early can affect the state benefits, pensions and insurance they can get. This is complicated, and every situation is different. Because it is a big financial change, encourage your employee to get expert guidance. It is a good idea for your employee to get advice before any formal action is taken.

You could suggest your employee calls our financial guides on **0808 808 00 00**. See pages 89 to 90 for more information.



# BEREAVEMENT

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# If the cancer cannot be cured

Many people live for months or years after being told the cancer cannot be cured.

Your employee may choose to keep working for as long as possible. In this case, you should make reasonable adjustments (see pages 63 to 65) and do your best to help the person keep working. For more advice about this, you can call our work support advisers on **0808 808 00 00**.

If the employee is slowly getting weaker, this can be difficult to manage. An occupational health adviser should be able to help (see pages 66 to 68). Colleagues may also find this time upsetting. Tell employees about any counselling or employee assistance programme (EAP) that is available in your organisation. You can also suggest they call our free support line on **0808 808 00 00**.

The person with cancer may also need advice about things like their pension or writing a will. You could tell them about Macmillan's financial guides who can help with this. They can call our support line free on **0808 808 00 00** to speak to one.

# If your employee dies

For many people, treatment is successful and the cancer is cured. But your employee may die from their illness.

If your employee dies, you will be responsible for taking the following practical steps:

- Telling colleagues in the organisation.
- Telling clients, customers and suppliers. This can prevent embarrassment and upset if they try to contact your employee without knowing what has happened.
- Talk to your employee's family. There should be just one point of contact between the employer and the family. This is usually the line manager or HR manager. Financial issues, such as remaining pay, pensions and insurance, should be sorted out quickly. Make sure any letters or emails you send to the family are not addressed to the person who has died.
- Telling colleagues about funeral arrangements. The family's wishes must be respected in every way. Ask what kind of contact and involvement, if any, they want from people at work.
- Returning the employee's belongings to the family. This should be done as soon as possible and dealt with sensitively.
- Arranging the return of any equipment or a company car. Again, be sensitive when you do this.

## Supporting your team

Even if the team knew that a colleague's cancer could not be cured, it can be extremely difficult to deal with their death. People will react differently. Some people will need your support, personally as well as professionally. This could be a very tiring time for you. Remember to look after your own needs and know where you can get support from too.

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

If anyone at work needs someone to talk to, they can contact us on **0808 808 00 00** for emotional support. They can also contact Cruse Bereavement Care. This is an organisation which provides information and support to anyone who has been bereaved. They can call Cruse on **0808 808 1677**, or visit their website at **cruse.org.uk**

You should also tell your team about any counselling service or employee assistance programme (EAP) that your organisation provides.

Our video **Managing bereavement and end of life** offers advice on how to cope with bereavement, and includes stories about how a bereavement has affected other people at work. You can watch this on our website at **macmillan.org.uk/workvideos**

# Carers

If your employee is caring for someone who is dying, they may start to need more time off. You may need to be flexible about this. When the person they have been caring 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 might need to give them extra support. It may not always be easy to know when they will be needed at home.

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

Some people may want to talk about the person who has died, while others may not. Take guidance from your employee. If you have an employee assistance programme at work, tell them about it. You can also suggest they call the Macmillan Support Line on **0808 808 00 00**.



# FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR YOUR EMPLOYEE

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# How changes at work can affect someone's finances

If your employee has been diagnosed with cancer, or is caring for someone with cancer, they may need to make changes to their job. This could be changes to working hours, a resignation or taking early retirement.

Changes to their job can mean:

- they lose some of their income
- the pension they are entitled to changes
- they get payouts from insurance policies, including life insurance, mortgage protection insurance, income protection and critical illness cover
- the state benefits they can get change – it could mean they can get more benefits, which would increase their income.

The decisions your employee makes about work can affect what financial help they are eligible for. It may also affect their finances in the future. Before formally agreeing to any changes, make sure your employee has had expert advice about what might happen. They can call our financial guides on **0808 808 00 00** for more information.

# Financial support from Macmillan

Cancer can have a serious impact on someone's finances. People often lose some of their income, while spending more on things like travelling to hospital. Macmillan can help with money worries.

## The Macmillan Support Line

On the Macmillan Support Line, we have specialist advisers who can help people with their money worries:

- Welfare rights advisers can help people apply for benefits and other financial support.
- Financial guides can give guidance on personal finance options, such as insurance, pensions, mortgages and financial planning.
- Energy advisers can help people to reduce their heating and electricity costs.

We can also give people information about Macmillan Grants. These are small payments for people affected by cancer who have a low income and a small amount in savings. They are usually a one-off payment to help people with the extra costs that cancer can cause.

If your employee is worried about debt, we can refer them to our charity partner StepChange Debt Charity for advice. You can find more details at [stepchange.org](https://stepchange.org)

Your employee may also find it useful to read our booklet **Help with the cost of cancer** (see page 118), which has information about financial support and benefits.

The Macmillan Support Line is open 7 days a week, 8am to 8pm. Our financial guides are available Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm on **0808 808 00 00**.

You can also find out more about how we can help at **[macmillan.org.uk/financialsupport](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/financialsupport)**

## Face-to-face support

Your employee may also be able to talk to a Macmillan welfare rights adviser in person through a local service. Visit **[macmillan.org.uk/inyourarea](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/inyourarea)** Other organisations can also provide support in person, such as Citizens Advice (see page 123).

## Our financial support tools

Employees can also use the following online financial support tools to find out which benefits they may be eligible for:

- quick benefits checker
- benefits calculator.

Visit **[finance.macmillan.org.uk](https://www.finance.macmillan.org.uk)** to find out more.

# Other sources of support

Your employee can find out about and apply for state benefits, and get more information about financial support, their rights, employment and living with a disability, at:

- **gov.uk** if they live in England, Scotland or Wales
- **nidirect.gov.uk** if they live in Northern Ireland.

If they live in Northern Ireland, they can also call the Benefit Enquiry Line on **0800 022 4250** or textphone **0289 031 1092** for more information.

Citizens Advice (see page 123) also has more information about benefits.

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

Your employee may want to talk to a financial adviser about financial products such as pensions, insurance and investments. These advisers may charge a fee for their services. Visit the Financial Conduct Authority's website at **fca.gov.uk**, or visit **unbiased.co.uk**

The Money Advice Service is an independent body set up by the UK government. It offers a free financial health check service and general advice about finances. Call **0800 138 7777** or visit **moneyadviceservice.org.uk**



# LEGAL RIGHTS

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# How people with cancer are protected from discrimination

If a person has, or has ever had cancer, the law considers them to be disabled. This means they cannot be treated less favourably than other people (who do not have cancer) at work, because they have cancer, or for reasons connected to the cancer. That would be discrimination.

There are laws that protect people with cancer from being discriminated against at work because of cancer:

- People who live in England, Scotland and Wales are protected by The Equality Act 2010.
- People who live in Northern Ireland are protected by the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

These laws do not just protect employees. They also protect people applying for jobs and, in most cases, people who are self-employed.

The legal protection against discrimination does not end when a person's cancer treatment finishes. If they have been diagnosed with cancer in the past, they continue to have legal protection against discrimination even when they no longer have cancer (remission).

This means employers must not treat people less favourably than people who have not had cancer for any reason related to cancer they have had in the past. This protection applies even if they no longer need treatment or they move to another employer.

Carers are also protected from some types of discrimination. We have more information about this on pages 103 to 105.

## **Which areas of employment are covered by this legislation?**

The Equality Act and the Disability Discrimination Act cover all areas of employment. This includes:

- recruitment
- terms and conditions of employment, and any benefits
- opportunities for promotion and training
- ending someone's employment.

## Reasonable adjustments

Reasonable adjustments are changes to the workplace or job that allow an employee to keep working or return to work. If a person is in paid employment and they have or have had cancer, an employer should consider making reasonable adjustments to support them.

Both the Equality Act and the Disability Discrimination Act say that an employer must make reasonable adjustments when the workplace or work practices that put an employee at a 'substantial disadvantage' because they have cancer. This is compared to people who do not have cancer. The disadvantage has to be 'more than minor or trivial'.

Employers have to make a reasonable adjustment if they know (or should reasonably know) that an employee has cancer. For example, if an employee is behaving differently because of cancer, but their employer does not know they have cancer, it would be reasonable for the employer to check whether their behaviour is related to a disability. The employer can then ask how to support them.

We have more information about reasonable adjustments (see pages 63 to 65).

# Types of disability discrimination

Employment laws provide protection against different types of disability discrimination. The Equality Act protects people in England, Scotland and Wales from all of them. The Disability Discrimination Act protects people in Northern Ireland from some of them.

People who live in England, Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland are protected from:

- direct disability discrimination
- harassment because of a disability
- victimisation (with some differences in Northern Ireland)
- failure to make a reasonable adjustment (see pages 63 to 65).

People who live in England, Scotland or Wales are also protected from:

- discrimination arising from disability
- indirect disability discrimination.

## Direct disability discrimination

Protection from direct disability discrimination applies in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Direct disability discrimination is when someone with a disability is treated less favourably than another person (without a disability), because they have a disability.

Sometimes, this type of discrimination happens even if someone feels they are trying to help. For example, an employer might say that an employee with cancer would find a promotion too difficult, because of the cancer. As an employer, you can have a conversation with the employee about the impact of a new job on their health. This way, you can decide together what is best for the employee.

Some problems may happen because of misunderstandings about cancer. Some examples of this are if:

- an employer thinks that a person with cancer cannot do the same job any more
- an employer assumes the employee will be less committed to work because of their illness
- an employer thinks that the stress of having cancer makes the employee less suitable for promotion
- colleagues think they will need to do extra work to make up for the person with cancer being off sick.

Any of these attitudes towards people with cancer can lead to discrimination at work.

To directly discriminate, an employer must know, or be reasonably expected to know, that an employee has a disability.

## Discrimination arising from disability

Protection from discrimination arising from disability (DAD) applies in England, Scotland and Wales, but not Northern Ireland.

Discrimination arising from disability is when someone with a disability such as cancer is treated unfavourably because of something that happens as a result of their disability. This is different to direct disability discrimination, which is discrimination based on the disability itself.

With discrimination arising from disability, an employee does not need to show that a non-disabled person would have been treated differently. Instead, they have to show that the unfavourable treatment they have experienced is because of something that happened as a result of the disability.

Direct disability discrimination cannot be justified (considered fair). In some cases, discrimination arising from disability may be justified if an employer can show they acted in a way that was necessary. For example, it might be justified if the employer's actions were for a genuine business need. Deciding what is justified depends on the case. If an employer could have made reasonable adjustments that would have prevented any unfavourable treatment, it will be difficult for the employee to justify a case of DAD.

Discrimination arising from disability does not apply if the employer can show they did not know, and could not reasonably be expected to know, that the person has a disability.

## Indirect disability discrimination

Protection from indirect disability discrimination applies in England, Scotland, and Wales, but not Northern Ireland.

Indirect disability discrimination is when a rule, policy or practice appears to treat all employees the same, but it actually puts employees with a disability at a disadvantage. This is compared with employees who do not have that disability.

An employer may be able to justify their actions if they can show that there is a genuine business need. For example, they may be justified if the rule, policy or practice is necessary and there is not a non-discriminatory option available.

To claim indirect disability discrimination, the employer does not need to know about a person's disability.

## Harassment

Protection from harassment applies in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Harassment is when someone is treated in a way that makes them feel uncomfortable, insulted or intimidated. This might include written or spoken comments, or being teased. When this behaviour is related to cancer, the employee is protected by law.

## Victimisation

Protection from victimisation applies in England, Scotland and Wales, and partly in Northern Ireland.

Victimisation is when a person is treated badly because they have done, or intend to do, something that is protected by law (a protected act). Protected acts include:

- making a complaint about discrimination or harassment under the Equality Act or the Disability Discrimination Act
- helping someone else to make a complaint about discrimination or harassment.

A person does not have to be disabled to claim victimisation. They only have to show that they have done a protected act.

In England, Scotland and Wales, under the Equality Act, a person does not need to show 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.

In Northern Ireland, under the Disability Discrimination Act, a person also needs to show that they have been treated less favourably than someone who has not made a complaint.

A person is not protected by this legislation if they do not act honestly and do not believe what they are saying is true. However, they will be protected if they give information that is wrong, but which they thought was true at the time.

## Vicarious liability

An employer can be held responsible for how its employees behave during their employment. This is called vicarious liability. An employer could be vicariously liable for acts of discrimination, harassment or victimisation that are done by other employees. An employer can still be vicariously liable if they are unaware that the acts are happening.

An employer could also be vicariously liable for harassment that a person experiences from other employees because they are a carer (see pages 103 to 105).

# How carers are protected from discrimination

If you are a carer, there are laws that protect you from being discriminated against at work because of your connection with a disabled person (associative discrimination):

- If you live in England, Scotland or Wales, the Equality Act 2010 protects you.
- If you live in Northern Ireland, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 protects you.

Carers may be protected against associative discrimination in situations where they have experienced one of these types of discrimination:

- direct discrimination (see page 104)
- harassment (see page 104)
- victimisation (see page 105).

Your employer does not have to make reasonable adjustments (see pages 63 to 65) if you are not disabled. This applies to carers too. However, other laws may give you the right to request flexible working, and the right to a reasonable amount of time off work for caring responsibilities.

## Direct disability discrimination

This is when a person is treated less favourably than somebody else because they are connected to someone who has cancer.

Direct disability discrimination includes situations where, because someone is a carer for a person with a disability, they are:

- not offered a job
- refused promotion, for example because an employer is worried they will not be focused on the job
- given worse employment terms (for example, lower pay).

## Harassment

This is when a person is treated in a way that makes them feel uncomfortable, insulted or intimidated, and this behaviour is related to your association with the person with cancer. This might include written or spoken comments, or jokes.

Protection from harassment applies in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

## Victimisation

Protection from victimisation applies in England, Scotland and Wales, and partly in Northern Ireland.

Victimisation is when a person is treated badly because they have done, or intend to do, something that is protected by law (a protected act). Protected acts include:

- making a complaint about discrimination or harassment under the Equality Act or the Disability Discrimination Act
- helping someone else to make a complaint about discrimination or harassment.

A person does not have to be disabled to claim victimisation. They only have to show that they have done a protected act.

In England, Scotland and Wales, under the Equality Act, a person does not need to show 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.

In Northern Ireland, under the Disability Discrimination Act, a person also needs to show that they have been treated less favourably than someone who has not made a complaint.

A person is not protected by this legislation if they do not act honestly and do not believe what they are saying is true. However, they will be protected if they give information that is wrong, but which they thought was true at the time.

## Flexible working and reasonable adjustments

Flexible working could make it easier for carers to keep working while caring for someone. Employees have a legal right to request flexible working (see pages 109 to 110) under certain laws. This includes people who are carers.

Employers do not have to make reasonable adjustments if a person is not disabled, including if they are a carer. However other laws may give carers the right to a reasonable amount of unpaid time off work for caring responsibilities (see below).

## Time off in an emergency

Carers who are employees have the legal right to take a reasonable amount of time off work to deal with an emergency that involves the person they care for. They have this right under the following laws:

- The Employment Rights Act 1996, for people who live in England, Scotland and Wales.
- The Employment Rights (Northern Ireland) Order 1996, for people who live in Northern Ireland.

*'I had a flexible employer who let me work around my husband's hospital appointments. I had to switch off from the cancer when I was at work, so it gave me an escape.'*

**Jane**

The person they are caring for is called a dependant. This person could be:

- a mother, father, son, daughter, spouse or civil partner
- anyone who lives with the carer, but is not a tenant, lodger, boarder or employee
- someone who relies on the carer to help them if they become ill
- someone who needs the person to make care arrangements for them.

An emergency might include:

- an unexpected change or problem with care arrangements
- the person being cared for becoming ill, giving birth, being injured, being assaulted or having an accident
- the employee needing to make care arrangements when their dependant is ill or injured – this could mean arranging for a temporary carer, but not taking extra time off to care for the dependant themselves
- the death of a dependant
- the employee having to deal with an unexpected incident that involves their child during school hours.

Carers do not need to have been in their job for a certain amount of time before they can take time off to help someone they look after in an emergency. But how much time off they can have depends on the situation. An employer may decide, by looking at what has happened, how close the person's relationship is to the dependant and whether someone else could help instead.

Someone who wants to use this type of time off must tell their employer about the emergency as soon as possible. If possible, they should tell their employer when they expect to return to work. The time off is usually unpaid, but this depends on the employer's policy.

A person's legal right to time off in an emergency does not apply if they want to take planned time off to care for someone. For example, it would not apply if they want to take them to a medical appointment.

As an employer, you may have a policy for other types of leave for carers. Or you could talk to the person about arranging time off. Some options could be:

- carers' leave (paid or unpaid)
- compassionate leave
- flexible working
- borrowing holiday days from next year or buying additional days
- career breaks and sabbaticals (usually unpaid).

It is up to the employer to decide whether or not to agree to these other types of time off.

These options aim to allow your employee to look after their own health, or the health of the person they care for, while reducing the impact on your organisation. They also protect the employee as much as possible from financial problems.

Employers for Carers offers advice on employment issues and rights for carers, including time off. See page 124 for details.

# Right to request flexible working

Flexible working can help someone with cancer keep working during treatment, or to go back to work after time off. It can also make it easier for carers to keep working while caring for someone.

Under the Employment Rights Act 1996 and the Work and Families (Northern Ireland) Act 2015, all employees (including carers) have a legal right to request flexible working. This right only applies if they:

- have worked for an employer for at least 26 weeks before their request
- are not an agency worker (unless they are returning from parental leave).

Flexible working arrangements could include changes to hours or working from home.

## Requesting flexible working

There is a process that employer and employee must follow for flexible working request:

- the employee needs to make their request in writing
- the employee can only make one request in a 12-month period
- the employer must consider the request in a fair way
- the employer must make a decision within 3 months (or longer if the employee agrees)
- if the employer agrees, this will change the terms and conditions in the employee's contract
- if the employer does not agree, they must write to the employee and explain their reasons – the employee may be able to appeal this decision or complain to an employment or industrial tribunal.

An employee does not have a right to flexible working. They only have a right to ask for it. An employer must consider the request in a fair way, but can refuse a request for flexible working if it is not in the best interests of the business. This might be because it would be too expensive or could affect the performance of the business.

Acas (see page 122) and the Labour Relations Agency (LRA) in Northern Ireland (see page 124) have free online guides about dealing with flexible working requests reasonably.

# Confidentiality

Everyone who lives in the UK has the right to have their personal information kept private. This includes medical information. This right is protected under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016.

The Access to Medical Reports Act 1988 also says that an employer must ask an employee for their permission to get a medical report on their health from their doctor or other health professional. An employee has the right to:

- ask for and see the report before it is given to an employer
- refuse permission for the employer to see the report.

As an employer, you may want to talk your employee about whether they want colleagues and clients to be told about their condition. Employers cannot give out this information without the consent of the person with cancer.

Employers should take care to protect personal records, including emails and any meeting notes containing details about a person's condition. This type of personal data should only be used with the person's permission.



# FURTHER INFORMATION AND SUPPORT

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# Macmillan resources for employers

Does one of your employees have cancer? Or are they caring for someone with cancer? Supporting them to keep working or come back to work has many benefits (see pages 12 to 13) for your employee, for your business and for other colleagues. We have resources that can help you with this.

## Macmillan at Work

Macmillan at Work is a programme that provides:

- expert training on how to better support employees affected by cancer
- information and support
- resources, including our e-newsletter and the essential work and cancer toolkit.

By joining Macmillan at Work, you will have the opportunity to book our specialist work and cancer training sessions for your line managers and HR professionals. You will also receive our essential work and cancer toolkit. This pack of resources helps employers support people affected by cancer. It contains practical advice, top tips, and guidance for HR professionals, managers and employees. Find out more by emailing us at [\*\*workandcancer@macmillan.org.uk\*\*](mailto:workandcancer@macmillan.org.uk)

## 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](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/employer)

## Cancer in the workplace videos

Videos showing different situations of people who are affected by cancer, and the problems it causes for them in the workplace. You can watch them online at [macmillan.org.uk/workvideos](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/workvideos)

## Cancer policy template

A template to help HR departments develop a company policy for dealing with cancer in the workplace. You can find the template at [macmillan.org.uk/employer](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/employer)

## Carers' policy template

A template for HR teams to develop a company policy for supporting staff who are caring for someone with a long-term condition. You can find the carers' policy template at [macmillan.org.uk/employer](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/employer)

## 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. Find out more at [macmillan.org.uk/learnzone](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/learnzone)

## Further resources

We have a booklet called **10 top tips for line managers** (see page 118), which is designed to guide you and support your employee. This is from diagnosis, through treatment and living with cancer.

**1****Communication is key**

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

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

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

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

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

**4****Be prepared to make adjustments**

Cancer is legally defined as a disability. As law will require, you may need to make changes to arrangements in working your employees that allow these changes to work. Reasonable adjustments, if you have an HR department or occupational health service, they will be able to give you advice.

MACMILLAN  
CANCER SUPPORT

9th 55 To Do



# About our information

We provide expert, up-to-date information about cancer. And all our information is free for everyone.

## Order what you need

You may want to order more booklets or leaflets like this one. Visit [be.macmillan.org.uk](https://www.be.macmillan.org.uk) or call us on **0808 808 00 00**.

We have booklets about different cancer types, treatments and side effects. We also have information about work, financial issues, diet, life after cancer treatment and information for carers, family and friends.

## Online information

All our information is also available online at [macmillan.org.uk/information-and-support](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/information-and-support) You can also find videos featuring stories from people affected by cancer, and information from health and social care professionals.

## Other formats

We also provide information in different languages and formats, including:

- audiobooks
- Braille
- British Sign Language
- easy read booklets
- eBooks
- large print
- translations.

Find out more at [macmillan.org.uk/otherformats](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/otherformats)

If you would like us to produce information in a different format for you, email us at [cancerinformationteam@macmillan.org.uk](mailto:cancerinformationteam@macmillan.org.uk) or call us on **0808 808 00 00**.

# Other ways we can help you

At Macmillan, we know how a cancer diagnosis can affect everything, and we're here to support you.

## Talk to us

If you or someone you know is affected by cancer, talking about how you feel and sharing your concerns can really help.

### Macmillan Support Line

Our free, confidential phone line is open 7 days a week, 8am to 8pm. Our cancer support specialists can:

- help with any medical questions you have about cancer or your treatment
- help you access benefits and give you financial guidance
- be there to listen if you need someone to talk to
- tell you about services that can help you in your area.

Call us on **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. There, you can speak with someone face to face.

Visit one to get the information you need, or if you'd like a private chat, most centres have a room where you can speak with someone alone and in confidence.

Find your nearest centre at **macmillan.org.uk/informationcentres** or call us on **0808 808 00 00**.

## Talk to others

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

## Support groups

Whether you are someone living with cancer or a carer, we can help you find support in your local area, so you can speak face to face with people who understand. Find out about support groups in your area by calling us or by visiting [macmillan.org.uk/selfhelpandsupport](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/selfhelpandsupport)

## Online Community

Thousands of people use our Online Community to make friends, blog about their experiences and join groups to meet other people going through the same things. You can access it any time of day or night. Share your experiences, ask questions, or just read through people's posts at [macmillan.org.uk/community](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/community)

## The Macmillan healthcare team

Our nurses, doctors and other health and social care professionals give expert care and support to individuals and their families. Call us or ask your GP, consultant, district nurse or hospital ward sister if there are any Macmillan professionals near you.

## Book reviews

Our volunteers review many books about cancer. These include people's stories of living with cancer, and books for children. Visit [publications.macmillan.org.uk](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/publications) and search 'book reviews'.

'Everyone is so supportive on the Online Community, they know exactly what you're going through. It can be fun too. It's not all just chats about cancer.'

Mal

## Help with money worries

Having cancer can bring extra costs such as hospital parking, travel fares and higher heating bills. If you've been affected in this way, we can help.

### Financial guidance

Our financial team can give you guidance on mortgages, pensions, insurance, borrowing and savings.

### Help accessing benefits

Our benefits advisers can offer advice and information on benefits, tax credits, grants and loans. They can help you work out what financial help you could be entitled to. They can also help you complete your forms and apply for benefits.

### Macmillan Grants

Macmillan offers one-off payments to people with cancer. A grant can be for anything from heating bills or extra clothing to a much-needed break.

Call us on **0808 808 00 00** to speak to a financial guide or benefits adviser, or to find out more about Macmillan Grants.

We can also tell you about benefits advisers in your area. Visit **macmillan.org.uk/financialsupport** to find out more about how we can help you with your finances.

## Help with work and cancer

Whether you're an employee, a carer, an employer or are self-employed, we can provide support and information to help you manage cancer at work.

Visit **macmillan.org.uk/work**

### Work support

Our dedicated team of work support advisers can help you understand your rights at work. Call us on **0808 808 00 00** to speak to a work support adviser (Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm).

### Macmillan Organiser

This includes a records book to write down information such as appointments, medications and contact details. You can also download the app on IOS or Android.

## Other useful organisations

There are lots of other organisations that can give you information or support.

### Work support

#### **Access to Work**

**Tel** 0800 121 7479

**Textphone** 0800 121 7579

(Mon to Fri, 8am to 7.30pm)

**[www.gov.uk/access-to-work](http://www.gov.uk/access-to-work)**

Provides advice and practical support to people with long-term health conditions and their employers. This helps pay for practical support, so you can do your job.

#### **Access to Work (NI)**

**[www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/access-work-practical-help-work](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/access-work-practical-help-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)**

**Helpline** 0300 123 1100

(Mon to Fri, 8am to 6pm)

**[www.acas.org.uk](http://www.acas.org.uk)**

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

#### **Business Disability Forum**

**Tel** 0207 403 3020

**Email** [enquiries@](mailto:enquiries@businessdisabilityforum.org.uk)

[businessdisabilityforum.org.uk](http://businessdisabilityforum.org.uk)

**[www.businessdisabilityforum.org.uk](http://www.businessdisabilityforum.org.uk)**

Provides advice and support to make it easier for businesses to employ disabled people and welcome disabled customers.

### **Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD)**

**Tel** 0208 612 6200  
**www.cipd.org.uk**

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. Use their online webchat or find details for your local office in the phone book or by contacting:

#### **England**

**Helpline** 0344 411 1444  
**www.citizensadvice.org.uk**

#### **Scotland**

**Helpline** 0808 800 9060  
**www.cas.org.uk**

#### **Wales**

**Helpline** 0344 477 2020  
**www.citizensadvice.org.uk/wales**

### **Equality Advisory Support Service (EASS)**

**Tel** 0808 800 0082  
(Mon to Fri, 9am to 7pm,  
Sat, 10am to 2pm)  
**Textphone** 0808 800 0084  
**www.equalityadvisoryservice.com**

Promotes equality and provides information to people about their rights in England, Scotland and Wales.

### **Equality Commission Northern Ireland (ECNI)**

**Tel** 028 9050 0600  
**Email** information@equalityni.org  
**www.equalityni.org**

Aims to promote equality of opportunity, encourage good relations and challenge discrimination.

### **Institution of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH)**

**Tel** 0116 257 3100  
(Mon to Fri, 9am to 5pm)  
**www.iosh.co.uk**

Supports health and safety professionals with training and resources to help create workplaces that are safer, healthier and more sustainable.

### **Labour Relations Agency**

**Tel** 0330 055 5300

(Mon to Fri, 9am to 5pm)

**Email** [info@lra.org.uk](mailto:info@lra.org.uk)

Responsible for promoting the improvement of employment relations in Northern Ireland. Provides advice and support to both employees and employers, and helps resolve disputes.

### **Working With Cancer**

**[www.workingwithcancer.co.uk](http://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**

**[www.worksmart.org.uk](http://www.worksmart.org.uk)**

This website provides information on employment rights, health at work and financial matters. It is part of the Trades Union Congress (TUC).

### **Supporting carers**

#### **Employers for Carers**

**Tel** 0207 378 4956

**Email**

[client.services@carersuk.org](mailto:client.services@carersuk.org)

**[www.employersforcarers.org](http://www.employersforcarers.org)**

Provides practical advice for employers to help them support and retain employees who are also caring for someone.



## 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 photos are of models.

## Thanks

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

With thanks to: Louise Bain, Solicitor, The Glasgow Law Practice; Louise Dinsdale, Macmillan Financial Guide; Sarah Gregory, Macmillan Senior Policy Adviser – Social Care and Carers; Polly Guest, Macmillan Work Support Adviser; Laura Lee, Macmillan Financial Guide; Sharon McArdle, Employment Law Adviser, Mark Mason Employment Law; Fiona McLellan, Partner, Hempsons; Ross Milvenan, Associate, Digby Brown Solicitors; and Kathryn Phillips, Macmillan Welfare Rights Technical Lead. Thanks also to the people affected by cancer who reviewed this edition, and those who shared their stories.

We welcome feedback on our information. If you have any, please contact [\*\*cancerinformationteam@macmillan.org.uk\*\*](mailto:cancerinformationteam@macmillan.org.uk)

## Sources

We have listed a sample of the sources used in the booklet below. If you would like more information about the sources we use, please contact us at [\*\*cancerinformationteam@macmillan.org.uk\*\*](mailto:cancerinformationteam@macmillan.org.uk)

gov.uk (accessed September 2018).

nidirect.gov.uk (accessed September 2018).

equalityhumanrights.com (accessed September 2018).

# Can you do something to help?

We hope this booklet has been useful to you. It's just one of our many publications that are available free to 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. When the time is right for you, here are some ways in which you can become a part of our team.



## **Share your cancer experience**

Support people living with cancer by telling your story, online, in the media or face to face.

## **Campaign for change**

We need your help to make sure everyone gets the right support. Take an action, big or small, for better cancer care.

## **Help someone in your community**

A lift to an appointment. Help with the shopping. Or just a cup of tea and a chat. Could you lend a hand?

## **Raise money**

Whatever you like doing you can raise money to help. Take part in one of our events or create your own.

## **Give money**

Big or small, every penny helps. To make a one-off donation see over.

**Call us to find out more**

**0300 1000 200**

**[macmillan.org.uk/getinvolved](http://macmillan.org.uk/getinvolved)**

## 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

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Signature

Date

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## 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 tax payer and I would like Macmillan Cancer Support to treat all donations I make or have made to Macmillan Cancer Support in the last 4 years as Gift Aid donations, until I notify you otherwise.

I understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference. I understand 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](https://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

**This booklet is for you if you are a manager, an HR professional or an employer. It is about how you can support people affected by cancer in your workplace.**

**It suggests practical things you can do and explains your responsibilities as an employer. It helps you understand what your employee is going through, whether they have cancer or they are looking after someone with cancer.**

We're here to help everyone with cancer live life as fully as they can, providing physical, financial and emotional support. So whatever cancer throws your way, we're right there with you. For information, support or just someone to talk to, call **0808 808 00 00** (7 days a week, 8am to 8pm) or visit **macmillan.org.uk**

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

Need information in different languages or formats? We produce information in audio, eBooks, easy read, Braille, large print and translations. To order these, visit **macmillan.org.uk/otherformats** or call our support line.

**MACMILLAN**  
**CANCER SUPPORT**  
**RIGHT THERE WITH YOU**

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