

# Working With Cancer News



## Here's what we've been up to and what's to come!

We always say that the cancer journey is never linear. That's been made clear by the recent news that King Charles had to delay some visits because of a reaction to his treatment. He's a working royal, working through his treatment.

Working with cancer is the reality for many people and we're here to help organisations and individuals to understand how to navigate this journey.

This spring we ran an uplifting impact survey to ask people we'd worked with whether we had helped. The feedback was phenomenal and you can read the details in this newsletter. But what was worrying was that a large proportion of people said they thought it would have been hard to return to work without help.

Our research has shown there is a need for employers to do more.

It's one thing to say we need to do more. It's another to help businesses know what to do.

That's why we are repeating our free webinar on 1 May where we'll talk through the lessons of our research and outline the best practice steps to address those lessons so you are ready and able to handle cancer in the workforce. Do sign up to hear from Veronica Foote our Head of Policy and Consulting, Maggie Newton our Head of Training and Louise Barrett our Head of Coaching.

We hope you enjoy this newsletter and do let us know if there's anything you'd like to hear about in future issues.

*Barbara Wilson*

**FOUNDER - BARBARA WILSON**

### In this newsletter you can expect:

WWC Impact report

1 May Webinar

National Health England

Bowel Cancer Awareness

WWC In the News

Free Webinars

Top Tips for Employers

New Coaches Welcome

The Last Word



## High likelihood of cancer sufferers not returning to work without support

**More than four in ten people who used the services of Working With Cancer last year said it was highly likely they would have left work without the coaching or career support they received.**

- The stark figure in our annual impact survey found that it was likely that **45%** of people felt it was *likely* that they wouldn't have continued working without career coaching or guidance.
- Only **37%** of respondents said they would have been likely to continue working *without* any additional support.
- The question of returning to work was not applicable for **18%** of those surveyed for reasons including the fact they were already unemployed or self-employed, or they had only found WWC's services after they had returned to work.
- Sadly another reason given was lack of confidence in telling their bosses with one respondent saying:

***"I never disclosed my challenges to any employer, as I never felt safe enough, never felt they would understand."***

**Working With Cancer's Impact Report also found that:**

- One third of people who used WWC's services in 2024 said they found the support essential.
- 40% said it was extremely beneficial.
- 16% found it helpful.

**Services used included:**

- One-to-one career coaching (80%),
- Legal or employment advice (8%),
- Creation of a cancer policy (8%) and overall provision of general information.

**Employers completing the impact survey:**

- Unanimously valued WWC's services as helpful up to essential in giving them the confidence they needed to support staff members.

**100% of those surveyed would recommend WWC's services to others; 80% recommending them highly.**

Read more: [WWC Impact Survey](#)



## Research and Best Practice Webinar, 1 May 2025, 12 till 1pm

Would your organisation benefit from knowing the challenges and opportunities facing other companies addressing cancer in the workforce?

We have just the session for you. We are running a concise one hour webinar on 1 May to run through the lessons that fall out of our ground breaking research with the Institute for Employment Studies.

Plus we'll give you the questions to ask internally to ensure you're ahead of the curve and are ready for cancer when it hits.

- Veronica Foote, our Head of Policy and Consulting, will clarify what policies should consider and contain.
- Maggie Newton, our Head of Training, will explain how and why the managers of people affected by cancer should be trained.
- Louise Barrett, our Head of Coaching, will summarise why individuals need career support to help them navigate the workplace with cancer or after treatment.

Please sign up here: [Webinars](#)

**enhance**

Improving the lives of patients with cancer



In March, Barbara Wilson had the pleasure of speaking at an NHS England multi-professional development day on improving the lives of those living with cancer, held at The Fielder Centre, University of Hertfordshire.

The day was run by NHS England's 'Enhance' Team and held for a diverse range of healthcare professionals including doctors, dentists, nurses, pharmacists and AHPs.

Other speakers included Meera Shah, Associate Post Graduate Dental Dean speaking about her own experience and Ceinwen Giles from Shine Cancer Support.



## Bowel Cancer Awareness

As we approach Bowel Cancer Month in April, employers should be aware of the increase in Bowel Cancers in younger people.

According to recent reports, while it was unheard of in the last century, bowel cancer in young people now accounts for 10% of all cases. Read more about it: here:

[The Week: Why are more young people getting bowel cancer?](#)



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## Working With Cancer in The News



### AP News

King Charles showed that returning to work and undertaking cancer treatment is not a linear journey when he had to pause work because of the side effects from ongoing treatments.

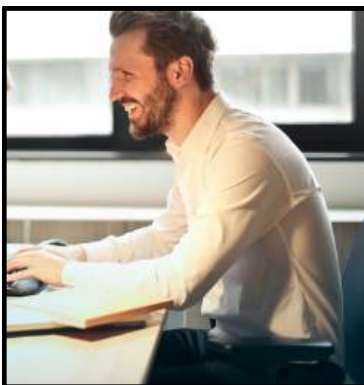
Read more: [AP News](#)



### TTG

"Bosses urged to introduce cancer policies for employees" is the headline of this January article in travel trade title TTG. The report looks at the results of the Working With Cancer and Institute for Employment Studies research.

Read more: [TTG Media](#)



### On Rec

On Rec reported on our research flagging that companies need to do more to support employees affected by cancer.

Read more : [OnRec](#)



### Webinars for you

47% of those working when diagnosed with cancer had to give up work or change roles as a result of their diagnosis.

**Take control** and sign up to one of our free webinars to help you learn how to navigate work and cancer.

**Our next dates** are 8 July and 18 November.



## Free webinars for employers

We offer free one hour interactive workshops for anyone **in a managing role** to get a greater understanding of:

- the most common challenges resulting from cancer in the workplace
- the impact of cancer on your business
- how to support employees affected by cancer

Learn what's in place and what's missing within your organisation for effectively managing work and cancer.

**Next dates:** 10 July and 20 November

Find out more here: [Webinars](#)



## 8 Top Tips for employees

Working With Cancer has published a concise summary of 8 top tips it is useful for employers to adapt to share with staff when they are diagnosed.

The 8 top tips are:

1. **Know your options** including disabled legislation and sick pay provisions
2. **Take control** of who knows about your cancer
3. Ask for **reasonable adjustments**
4. Be **kind** to yourself. This is not a linear journey.
5. Access **financial** support
6. Utilise workplace and external **support networks**
7. Plan your **career**
8. Consider **coaching**

To read the detailed tips and resources please click here: [Working With Cancer](#)

## Welcome to our new coaches!

Please say a big warm hello to our new coaches:

**Caitlin McDonald** has been a coach since 2017 and draws on her anthropology background for a coaching approach rooted in curiosity and empathy.

Caitlin has a multidisciplinary career as an award-winning academic researcher and strategic advisor and became a coach following her own experience of triple negative breast cancer.

**Claire Warnes** is an executive coach and consultant, working with experienced professionals to help them explore what they want from the next stage of work and life. As a young adult Claire lost her mum to ovarian cancer. And in 2021 Claire was diagnosed with breast cancer and faced the challenges of stepping back from a busy career as a consulting partner at KPMG.

Now she uses her lived experiences and coaching skills, to support people during and beyond their own cancer experiences.

**Read more about our team:** [WWC - Our Team](#)





## Last word: The importance of cancer policies

**This spring the UK government launched an independent review to Keep Britain Working, to review the role of UK employers in creating and maintaining an healthy and inclusive workplace,**

The figures that have driven this review are startling:

“Today there are nearly 800,000 or 40% more people of working-age who are economically inactive for health reasons than there were in 2019. The growth in the number who are becoming economically inactive for health reasons is nearly 10 times the growth of the working age population.”

The initial discovery report says that this growth has created a loss of productive capacity for employers and the economy of 150 billion pounds. And, by 2030 the economically inactive in the UK could reach 1.4 million.

**You can read more about the review here:**

[Keep Britain Working Review Discovery](#)

We will be contributing to this review and our comments will include:

The volume of cancer cases is increasing and the increasing quality of care and new treatments mean that many people are living longer and have the potential to continue working during their treatments.

Employers want to be able to help but our research with the Institute for Employment Studies has shown that many organisations don't understand the scale of the issue.

We recommend:

- Begin to collect cancer in the workforce data
- Establish a dedicated cancer workplace policy
- Train HR staff on the scale, scope and opportunities to deliver best practice support to colleagues
- Train managers to give them the tools and skills to help staff affected by cancer
- Coach those people affected and mentor line managers to help them through what can be a difficult journey

*Thank you for reading!*

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