

Hello everyone

Welcome to our Autumn 2019 edition of the Working With Cancer newsletter.



Our big news this Autumn is that we are delighted to have had Stephen Bevan join us last month as an Ambassador for our company. Stephen is Head of HR R&D at the Institute for Employment Studies (IES) and we hope to work on various projects together. He was previously Director of Research and Managing Director at The Work Foundation. Read more about Stephen and his blog about managing work and cancer in this newsletter.

In this edition, we are also delighted to include:

- A blog about returning to work by Fay Field: Finding my new 'normal': a journey of self-discovery about achieving a new balance in her work and in her life.
- And another blog by Debbie Picken about her experience of applying for and taking on a new job after a three-year gap. There are some great tips too for anyone returning to work after a spell away.
- A link to an article WWC has contributed to, as part of the Transforming Breast Cancer Together Initiative.
- And we have a few places left on our Open Workshop if you'd like to come along.

I will also be speaking at two major cancer conferences in October about work and cancer policy issues: [The European Health Forum Gastein](#) and [Europa Donna's Pan European Conference](#).

For more information about these conferences please click on the links provided.

"Quite soon I realised that returning to work after cancer required more thought and understanding about how best to set things up so that I could be as effective as possible, whilst acknowledging the need to allow myself sufficient time to recover"

- Cancer Survivor -



WWC Open Workshop

We still have a few places available at our London (City) workshop on 8th October. For more details [click here](#).

From 10am - 1pm at:

Lockton Companies LLP
The St. Botolph Building
138 Houndsditch
London, EC3A 7AG.



If you'd like to reserve a place, you can [register here](#).

Our new Ambassador Stephen Bevan

Stephen is Head of HR R&D at the [Institute for Employment Studies \(IES\)](#). He was previously Director of Research and Managing Director at The Work Foundation. His expertise lies in both his research and consultancy on the future health of the UK workforce and the ways that the world of work is likely to change over the next 30 years.



He was the lead author of a book looking at the future of work (21st Century Workforces & Workplaces) published by Butterworth in 2018. He is Visiting Scientist at the Centre for Musculoskeletal Health & Work at Southampton University and was an advisor to the Government's Thriving at Work review of mental health and employment.

Stephen was an Honorary Professor at Lancaster University Management School between 2011 and 2018 and has been voted one of the UK's 'most influential' HR Thinkers by HR Magazine.

In October 2018 Stephen was diagnosed with oesophageal cancer and has recently returned to work after surgery, chemotherapy and radiotherapy.

[Click here](#) to read Stephen's blog about his own cancer experience and his recent return to work.

Why many cancer survivors want to work

There are a number of reasons why most cancer survivors of working age, want to continue working either full or part-time:

- A sense of identity: many people define themselves in relation to their work and their job. It's about who they are
- Self-esteem: for many people their work is a source of pride and gives them a sense of achievement.
- Sense of purpose: a job also gives an individual a sense of purpose, of doing something that matters, a reason to get up in the morning
- Structure: a job gives our day structure which we don't have when we are at home and unwell.

There is also increasing evidence that being able to work may in many circumstances support an individual's psychological and emotional recovery.



Finding my new 'normal': a journey of self-discovery

by Fay Field, HR Advisor

I was thinking about what sort of things I would talk about in relation to the title of this piece, and like most things cancer-wise it's incredibly subjective.

I remember first seeing the term 'finding my new normal' when I was undergoing chemotherapy back in May 2018, and at the time I didn't think it was even something I could contemplate.

But the journey of self-discovery started just there – without even realising it at the time.....

What was normal before wasn't normal anymore, and talking about how that looked and felt helped me to find what was right for me moving forward.

And that's the best piece of advice I have for anyone fighting cancer, or for those supporting someone who is.

Talk about it....

To read the full article [click here](#).



Mind the gap: resuming a career after cancer

by Debbie Picken, Senior IT Analyst at
Motability Operations Ltd



'Going back to work after cancer can be exhausting, but it does get easier.'

Gaps on your CV can be tricky to handle and explain away to employers and mine had a rather long, awkward silence on it thanks to time spent enduring treatment for breast cancer after being diagnosed in 2017.

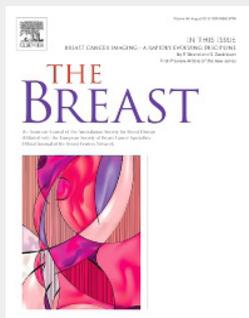
Transforming breast cancer together: European elections manifesto calling for lasting change

With the European Parliament elections having taken place in May 2019 and a new European Commission (EC) taking office in November 2019, this year is critical for European policymakers, as goals and priorities of the European Union (EU) for the next five years will be discussed and agreed upon.

This Manifesto issued by the Transforming Breast Cancer Together initiative calls upon policymakers to improve services for patients in an area still of high unmet need and to reduce the societal impact of breast cancer by elevating it as a health policy priority to improve breast cancer prevention, diagnosis and care across Europe.

The article can be accessed via a Share Link, a personalized URL providing 50 days' free access to the article. Click on the link below before November 02, 2019 and you will be taken directly to the article in ScienceDirect, which you are welcome to read or download. No sign up, registration or fees are required.

Your personalised Share Link can be [found here](#).



It wasn't just cancer that had kept me out of the workplace though; life had been fairly normal until 2016 when the unanticipated career break from my IT contract work started. I went on maternity leave with the intention of returning to work the following year, but then my older daughter became seriously ill with a disabling autoimmune disease and was hospitalised for a long period of time. As she recovered and life slowly returned to normal, I started to make tentative plans to look for work and then the cancer diagnosis struck.

To read the full article [click here](#).

"People assumed that if I was back at work then I must be fine, but it's not that simple.

I didn't understand, or want to acknowledge, how vulnerable I was, so how could my manager understand?"

- Cancer Survivor -

And finally...

Working With Cancer® is always happy to arrange speakers for conferences and events – if you would like to book us for an event, please [contact us](#). Tel: **07910 835585**