

HELLO EVERYONE

Hello everyone and welcome to our Summer 2023 newsletter. In this edition we include:

- An update about the [#workingwithcancer](#) Pledge campaign and some exciting new organisational changes at WWC.
- Links to an article I co-authored with Stephen Bevan about how employers should support an employee who is terminally ill, and to a recent interview between Stephen and fellow WWC ambassador Liz O’Riordan.
- A video interview with WWC associate Sarah Dawson about her experience of being a working carer for her son and her husband and having her own cancer diagnosis.
- A note by our associate Genevieve Isaacson, about how employers should support employees dealing with the anxiety of returning to work. I have also provided a link to an excellent short film about providing empathy rather than sympathy to others.
- An update about some organisational changes here at WWC.
- An update about our work in Europe.
- Our workshop programme for 2023.



WWC ORGANISATIONAL CHANGES

Following the initiation of the Working With Cancer Pledge campaign, I am pleased to announce some organisational changes at WWC. We now have three new ‘Heads’ of practice: Louise Barrett is now Head of Coaching; Maggie Newton is now Head of Training and Veronica Foote is Head of Consulting and Policy.

I am delighted to have their support along with that of our other outstanding associates and ambassadors as we take the business forward.



THE PUBLICIS #WORKING WITH CANCER PLEDGE CAMPAIGN

Over 700 companies have now signed the Working with Cancer Pledge representing more than 30 million employees. The campaign is running for another year, so if you haven’t had the time to look, please visit our website [here](#) to find out more, or the Pledge website [here](#) where you can read about all the companies which have signed up and the pledges they have made.

And, please do get in touch if you would like to find out more about the work we are doing to support companies joining the campaign by contacting us at admin@workingwithcancer.co.uk

FOUR ACTION AREAS FOR SUPPORTING EMPLOYEES WITH TERMINAL ILLNESS

STEPHEN BEVAN AND BARBARA WILSON



Our Ambassador, Stephen Bevan, was diagnosed with terminal Oesophageal cancer in December last year. In May he and I co-authored an article which appeared in Occupational Health and Wellbeing Plus (part of Personnel Today). The article highlights the need for: compassionate dialogue; practical support measures; work adaptations and planning for death and beyond. This is a must read for employers – you can find the full article [here](#).



LIZ O’RIORDAN INTERVIEW WITH STEPHEN BEVAN

Earlier this month our Ambassador Liz O’Riordan interviewed Stephen about the impact of his terminal diagnosis on his family, his life and his work. He provides some important messages and advice for others facing a terminal diagnosis and undergoing palliative care. You can listen to the interview [here](#).

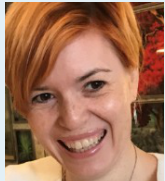
ASSOCIATE SARAH DAWSON DISCUSSES HER EXPERIENCE OF BEING A WORKING CARER AND HAVING HER OWN CANCER DIAGNOSIS



Last week, I interviewed our WWC associate Sarah Dawson about the challenges she has faced working with cancer: caring for her 14-year-old son as a single mum of three, more recently for her husband, and receiving her own cancer diagnosis.

‘When AI was diagnosed, although not yet divorced, I was a single parent, a mum of 3 teenagers, self-employed. During his treatment there was an expectation by the ward I would be in hospital with AI. AI wanted me there too. We were in patients for 5-6 days each round of treatment. So, I had to consider my other 2 children? How could I earn money if I was in hospital? I was very pragmatic about what could and could not be done’.

Click [here](#) to watch the full interview.



ANXIETY AND RETURNING TO WORK

GENEVIEVE ISAACSON

As some of you will know, 15 to 21 May was mental health week and it made me think about the queries we often receive from those with cancer and cancer carers about returning to work. Many of the queries are from employees regarding their rights when returning to work and inevitably the conversation will pivot to the mental and physical toll it takes in order to make a successful return.

The mental aspect of returning to work after a period of absence while attending treatment can be fraught with anxiety and become debilitating. Not knowing how people will react to your return and whether you can adequately perform your work duties can be all consuming.

So, what is anxiety and how should an employer deal with it? To read the full article click [here](#).

WHAT IS EMPATHY VS SYMPATHY? EMPATHY DRIVES CONNECTION; SYMPATHY DRIVES DISCONNECTION

One of the issues we come across when supporting employees affected by cancer and trying to manage their work at the same time, is that they get lots of sympathy from their managers, colleagues, friends and family but not much empathy. Empathy is much the more useful approach. What do we mean by this? [This short film](#) by Brene Brown is really excellent.



CANCER AND THE MENOPAUSE – PUBLICATION OF NEW BSI MENOPAUSE STANDARD

Remember that cancer treatment induced menopause is covered by the Equality Act and you can request reasonable adjustments. For those of you – men and women - experiencing menopausal symptoms as a result of your cancer treatment, or just because you are at that age, you might be interested in knowing that the BSI has recently published a new Guide: Menstruation, menstrual health and menopause in the workplace. The Guide contains lots of practical advice and guidance including examples of conversation topics and suggested adjustments. You can access the Guide [here](#).

WWC's WORK IN EUROPE



In June, I spoke at a [Europa Donna](#) MBC advocacy webinar about working with advanced cancer and the need to advocate for:

- 1) making returning to work with cancer a lifelong right for anyone who has had an advanced cancer diagnosis;
- 2) employers to follow best practice;
- 3) making return to work a valid clinical outcome.

In June WWC was invited to speak at the [IBTA](#) (International Brain Tumour Alliance) World Summit of Brain Tumour Patient Advocates in Vienna with representatives from 33 countries from across the world. Speakers addressed a wide range of topics from innovative treatments and therapies to rehabilitation and ongoing care, with testimonials from brain tumour patients, caregivers and patient advocates.



Representing WWC was Veronica Foote, Head of Consulting & Policy, who spoke on the topic of: 'Getting back to work with a brain tumour'. In addition to her broad expertise and understanding of cancer patient experiences from across the world, Veronica is also a brain tumour patient. Under the broader umbrella of survivorship, various topics were addressed including the importance of the right to work and ensuring countries have the adequate legislation in place to protect the employment rights of those impacted by cancer.

Work with [TBCT](#) continues with the topic of cancer and work gaining momentum with more and more stakeholders across Europe including EU policy makers too. Employment rights of those impacted by cancer across the EU varies greatly and under the auspices of TBCT, WWC will continue to advocate for the employment rights of those working with cancer.

WWC WORKSHOP PROGRAMME FOR 2023

Our free Open Workshop programmes for cancer patients and for employers continues to be very popular and the feedback we get is excellent. You can book a place by clicking [here](#).

HOW TO RETURN TO WORK SUCCESSFULLY AFTER CANCER

Topics:
* Impact of side effects on managing work
* Journey back to normal
* Return to work plan
* Reasonable adjustments
* Managing expectations



Changing the conversation about work and cancer

THE CHALLENGES OF MANAGING WORK AND CANCER

Learn more about
the impact of cancer
on employees and
your business



Changing the conversation about work and cancer