

HELLO EVERYONE

Welcome to our Summer newsletter. Summer is always a lovely time of year for seeing friends and family, for parties and for festivals. But without wanting to seem a 'party pooper' please spare a thought for all those who are immune suppressed and worried about the current and increasing resurgence of Covid, as well as all those with Long Covid which seems to cause side effects very like those many of us experience during and after cancer treatment. It's interesting that there is now a significant debate about whether Long Covid, like Cancer, should be treated as a disability. Currently the view is 'It depends'. Let's see how this plays out.



Items featured in this newsletter are:

- A blog by Stephen Bevan about how retaining workers with chronic illnesses can help employers at a time of skill shortages and the 'Great resignation'.
- A blog by me about cancer and the menopause.
- A link to the recent InstaLive session I did with Liz O'Riordan about requesting reasonable adjustments. We are also showing short clips on Twitter.
- An update on our self-employment initiative
- Information about two terrific cancer charities: Shine Cancer Support and Little Lifts
- An update on our work in Europe with the TBCT
- Our latest workshop programme for 2022.

CANCER AND SELF-EMPLOYMENT

In our last newsletter we stated that we have set ourselves the goal of publishing a Best Practice Guide next year for the self-employed. We would really welcome from those of you who are or have been self-employed during, with or after cancer, your stories and feedback about:

- Your experiences – good, bad and indifferent
- The key challenges you have faced and how you have dealt with them
- What changes you would like to see in government policy, the benefits system etc to address those challenges.

We need more participants!

If you would like to contribute, please write to us at admin@workingwithcancer.co.uk or contact us via our website at www.workingwithcancer.co.uk.

SKILL SHORTAGES? GREAT RESIGNATION? HOW RETAINING WORKERS WITH CHRONIC ILLNESSES CAN HELP

Stephen Bevan, Institute for Employment Studies

At the start of the pandemic there were gloomy forecasts which confidently predicted a rapid rise in unemployment once the furlough scheme ended. Policymakers in government and many employers braced themselves for unprecedented job losses. But to the surprise of many commentators, over two years later, this pessimism has not proven to be well founded. Unemployment remains very low by historical standards and, across the country as a whole, there are now more vacancies than there are unemployed people to fill them.

.....It seems ironic that, at a time when so many employers are facing often crippling staff shortages, we are also standing by as thousands of experienced and highly skilled workers with long term health conditions (including cancer) leave the labour market, often never to return. So why is this happening and what can employers do about it?

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



LITTLE LIFTS

[Little Lifts](#) is an East-Anglian based charity which provides free, thoughtfully curated Little Lifts gift Boxes to every breast cancer patient in the UK who receives chemotherapy or radiotherapy treatment. Since 2017, this small charity has helped over 6000 people undergoing chemotherapy or radiotherapy treatment for primary or secondary breast cancer. The charity was founded by Oa Hackett, after she was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2014, aged 28.



What is a Little Lifts Box? From a pain-easing heat pack to luxury body lotion, organic chocolate, and treats to aid relaxation, Little Lifts Boxes are filled with premium goodies to support people through their chemotherapy and radiotherapy treatment. Each Box is packed with specially selected products to help relieve the side effects of treatment. They are carefully

curated by people who have personal experience of breast cancer treatment.

Get a Little Lifts Box via **The Little Kindness Fund**. The Little Kindness Fund is a discretionary fund for women and men undergoing chemotherapy or radiotherapy treatment for primary or secondary breast cancer, living in the UK. The fund enables eligible applicants to receive a Little Lifts Box, free of charge.

To find out more or to apply for a Little Lifts Box visit www.littlelifts.org.uk

CANCER AND THE MENOPAUSE: IT'S NOT JUST ABOUT WOMEN GETTING OLDER

Barbara Wilson

So, here's the thing.

I was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2005 and because of my diagnosis had to give up 10 glorious years of being on HRT. That was not unusual for my kind of breast cancer which is oestrogen receptive.....



What I find interesting – and frankly that is an understatement – is how little attention health professionals and society as a whole has given to the fact that many women, and many men undergoing hormone therapy for their

cancer, will experience menopausal symptoms as a result of cancer treatment... Read the full article [here](#).

WORKSHOPS FOR 2022

Our free Open workshops “How to return to work successfully after cancer” for cancer patients is proving to be very popular, the next one being on **11 October**. The programme helps attendees to

- Understand the impact of side effects on managing work and on the journey ‘back to normal’
- Manage their own and their employer’s expectations
- Negotiate a return-to-work plan and reasonable adjustments

Please [click here](#) to see a full list of our open workshops and master classes for managers, HR and health professionals.

REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS EXPLAINED

A few weeks ago Liz O’Riordan and Barbara Wilson did an InstaLive about the Equality Act and requesting reasonable adjustments.



They answered lots of your questions. You can view and listen to the recording [here](#).

SHINE CANCER SUPPORT



Shine Cancer Support provides information, support and connection to anyone diagnosed with cancer in their 20s, 30s or 40s. Shine is running two programmes in September which may be of interest. The **Break Out Programme** is a six-week programme (2 hours) a week for anyone diagnosed with cancer who is either coming to the end of their treatment or finished treatment. The **Circles Programme** is for anyone living with incurable cancer and is also run for 2 hours per week over six weeks. Details are on Shine’s website.

Shine have also published a booklet on **Living with Advanced Cancer** you might be interested in downloading.

WORKING WITH CANCER IN EUROPE



As I mentioned in our last newsletter, this year the European Group ‘Transforming Breast Cancer Together’ of which we are a founding member, is focusing on advocating for a European Right to Work for cancer survivors and improving the overall quality of life of cancer patients. The campaign launched on International Worker’s Day (6th May) and will continue throughout the year.

The TBCT now has its own website which you can find [here](#). On the site there is an excellent video ‘Live a normal life’ where MEP Frances Fitzgerald, the Chair of TBCT, talks to Yasmina Krossa about her experience of breast cancer which led her to becoming an advocate for the rights of breast cancer patients. You can also find some excellent articles on the website, for example, ‘Return to Work – A symbol of normality or yet another challenge for cancer patients?’ by MEP Fitzgerald

You can follow the work and campaigns of the TBCT on Twitter [@tbct_eu](#).