

HELLO EVERYONE

So what happened to Spring? Despite the unseasonably cold weather we have lots of articles and news to keep you occupied while you keep warm by the radiator!



We have lots of great new content this month:

- An update on the employer survey of work and cancer we have been conducting in partnership with the [IES](#) and part sponsored by our client [Schroders](#) and our partners at [Perci Health](#).
- A link to a brief Radio 4 interview I did with Nick Robinson and Jeremy Bowen about working with cancer, occasioned by the King's announcement of his return to public duties, plus some advice that we would give to him or anyone else returning to work during or after cancer treatment.
- And on the same theme, a link to an article about how to help employees make the transition back to work after active treatment published in Unleash in March.
- Links to two outstanding blogs by Harmer Parr: the first about 'entering the home straight' of care and the second about his experience of palliative care. Harmer has a wonderful sense of humour despite everything he is going through. Believe me the blogs are a 'must read'.
- Links to more articles about the work that we do which appeared in the TTG (the Travel Trade Gazette) and the online British Safety Council magazine in February/March.
- A link to the recently published report from the Lancet Commission on Breast Cancer.
- Finally, we bid farewell to Isabel van der Ven, an outstanding associate who has worked with us since 2016 and played a major role in the preparation of this newsletter as well as numerous other WWC publications.

The aim of the 'Bevan Employer and Cancer Survey' is to inform employers about how best to support employees working with cancer and transitioning back to work after active treatment.

It will illuminate continuing gaps in service provision and enable employers to develop services which will make a significant difference to the wellbeing of their employees affected by cancer. We are planning on launching the report at an event on 26th June in Westminster, and the report will be available on our website and on the IES website. We will notify you about this as soon as it becomes available.

HOME STRAIGHT AND PALLIATIVE PERCEPTIONS: TWO BLOGS BY HARMER PARR

In these two blogs, Harmer Parr who has been a contributor to our website articles and newsletter since 2018 discusses with his usual good humour how he is dealing with the end of treatment and palliative care. When he started writing for us about 'Melvyn the Melanoma' he wrote about how humour can help put cancer in its place – his humour continues to shine through.

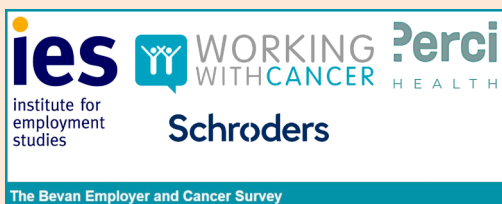


Home Straight: 'Melvyn the Melanoma has finally got his way and we've reached the home straight. I've now been transferred from Addenbrooke's Hospital to Macmillan Nursing and the hospice care team. In 2017, when I was diagnosed as Stage 4 cancer, I was given about 18 months to live, so I'm certainly not complaining. I even suggested to Melvyn that we should call it a score draw, but he wasn't keen.' To read the full article click [here](#).

Palliative Perceptions: 'I've been on palliative care for two months now. As I revealed in my last article, I was transferred from hospital to hospice. While death is a long-established taboo subject, I've discovered that the words 'hospice' and 'palliative' create their own frisson as well. Can friends send you a message asking simply how you are? Do they wonder if this implies the question: 'are you dead yet?' Well, the answer to that question is that I'm still around. I was told to 'think months not years' and I'm determined not to be short-changed.' To read the full article click [here](#).

THE BEVAN STUDY

Last month we launched a ground-breaking new employer survey of work and cancer in partnership with the Institute for Employment Studies.



The survey has now closed, and it looks like we have over 200 responses from organisations which is excellent.

HOW TO NAVIGATE THE TRANSITION FROM CANCER TREATMENT TO THE WORKPLACE

In March we had an article published in Unleash about how employers can help their employees make the difficult transition from cancer treatment back to the workplace.

The article sets out good practice and some valuable top tips. You can read the full article [here](#).



ISABEL VAN DER VEN



We are sorry to be losing the experience and expertise of Isabel van der Ven who is moving to Antwerp in June. Isabel has been an excellent coach and trainer and we shall miss her enormously, not least because she publishes this newsletter.

In fact, Isabel has done a huge amount to develop the look and feel of all our publications and training materials including our Best Practice Guides of which she was a joint author with Louise Barrett, Mary McPhail, Maggie Newton and me.

We are hoping this will be au revoir rather than adieu!

WORKING WITH CANCER AND THE TRAVEL INDUSTRY



Our Ambassador Gail Kenny and volunteer Debbie Hindle have been working hard to promote the [Working with Cancer Pledge](#) campaign and our services within the travel industry. The TTG (the Travel Trade Gazette) has published two articles about managing

work and cancer and has also joined the Pledge campaign which we were delighted to hear. You can read the second article '[Cancer And The Workplace: What To Do And What Not To Do](#)' including an excellent case study about Jae Hopkins, Marketing Director at Explore Worldwide, [here](#).



WORKING WITH CANCER AND THE BRITISH SAFETY COUNCIL

In March we also had an article published in Safety Management, the online journal of the British Safety Council. The article provides employers and employees with lots of practical guidance and tips about managing work and cancer.



Because
Experience
Counts

In an opinion piece, the article goes on to outline the steps we believe government and employers must take to ensure better support for employees impacted by cancer including changing current employment law to:

- Reflect the increase in treatable but incurable illness so that those with advanced cancer cannot be dismissed unreasonably on the grounds of capability.
- Ensure employees are allowed a reasonable amount of time for a phased return. We would like to see a minimum of 12 weeks.

You can read the full article [here](#).

THE LANCET COMMISSION REPORT ON BREAST CANCER



On April 15th the Lancet Commission published its long awaited report on the inequities in breast cancer care and support. It states that although progress

in research and cancer management led in 2020 to a decrease of over 40% in breast cancer mortality in most high-income countries, 685,000 women died from the disease. Moreover, glaring inequities and suffering related to physical symptoms, emotional despair, and the financial burden of cancer remain and persist. You can access the full report at the bottom of the infographic [here](#).

Of particular interest is CASCARA, a UK pilot study scoping the economic burden, financial toxicity, and supportive care needs of individuals with breast cancer (page 32 of the report).

For those with early cancer comparing their situation at diagnosis vs at the time of survey completion: 77% were employed at diagnosis vs 61% at survey completion and experienced a 25% drop in income bracket.

And for those with metastatic cancer: 79% were employed at diagnosis vs 40% at survey completion and experienced a 38% drop in income bracket.

MAKING A ROYAL RETURN TO WORK



30th April marked King Charles' first public appearance in three months following his cancer diagnosis. We as the public, and the King himself, must be patient about his recovery and

recognise that like anyone else's, his cancer journey will require time and support.

Whilst Buckingham Palace has said that his return will be 'carefully calibrated',

there will of course be physical and mental side effects that will remain even after treatment.

The most common side effect of a cancer diagnosis is

fatigue and for many it is the most troubling and disruptive symptom, serving as a constant reminder of what they have been through.



No one is superhuman, and the King's return to work may face further challenges. Patients often need help both physically and mentally to process what they have experienced, and a gradual and flexible phased return to work is necessary for most people so they make the best recovery possible.

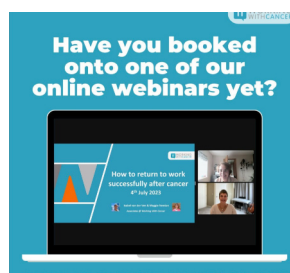
And of course, all of this will apply but even more so to the Princes of Wales recovery from cancer.



In the meantime, on Saturday 27th April I was invited on to the Today programme to discuss the King's return to work after cancer with Nick Robinson and Jeremy Bowen both of whom have had cancer.

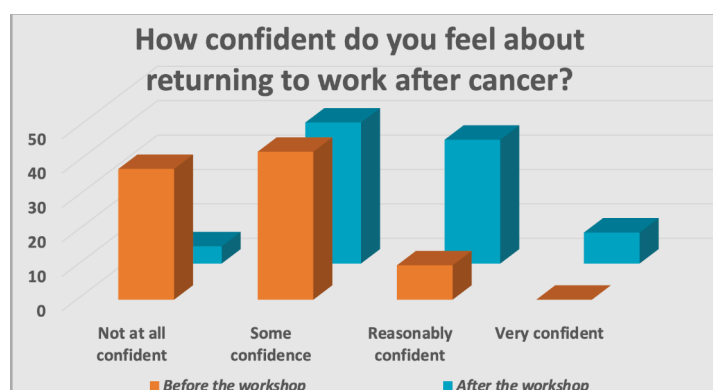
[This link](#) will take you straight to the start of the clip (unfortunately BBC Sounds won't allow anyone to save segments in isolation).

WWC WORKSHOPS FOR 2024



This year's [Open Workshop](#) programmes for employees with cancer and for line managers - continue to be very popular. THEY ARE ALL FREE and [new dates](#) are now published for September and December.

Some insights on our latest workshop 'How to return to work successfully after cancer': we polled confidence levels at the start and end of the workshop and even after a one hour session there was an increase as shown below.



How a little knowledge can go a long way and make a big difference.

AND FINALLY

If you would like further information about our services including providing speakers for company or other events please contact:

Admin@workingwithcancer.co.uk

Tel: 07910 835585

Or visit our website at www.workingwithcancer.co.uk

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