



## WELCOME TO OUR SPRING NEWSLETTER!

### A foreword from our Founder, Barbara Wilson

It is good to be back.

After a short period of stepping back, returning to Working With Cancer and to this team has reminded me, more powerfully than ever, why we do what we do and why the work has never felt more urgent.

The headlines around cancer right now are stark. More people are being diagnosed in the UK than at any point in history, one person every 80 seconds. Waiting times are at record highs. And yet, for all the focus on clinical outcomes, the conversation about what happens at work when someone receives a diagnosis is still not being had loudly or consistently enough. That is the gap Working With Cancer exists to close.

In this edition of the newsletter, we explore some of the themes that are shaping our work right now. The record levels of cancer diagnosis across the UK and what that means for employers. The often invisible weight carried by caregivers, partners and spouses who are holding everything together while quietly losing themselves in the process. The progress, and the persistent gaps, in prostate cancer screening. And the conversations that were had at the House of Commons event that I joined as a panel guest, about what a genuinely person-centred approach to keeping people in work actually looks like in practice.

What connects all of these stories is something we believe deeply at Working With Cancer that the workplace has a critical role to play in the cancer experience. Not just in policy terms, but in the day-to-day culture, behaviours and leadership that determine whether someone feels supported or invisible at the hardest moment of their life.

We have some exciting developments ahead that we look forward to sharing with you in the coming months. In the meantime, I hope this edition gives you something valuable, whether that is insight, reassurance or simply the knowledge that this community exists and that you are not alone.

Warm wishes,

*Barbara Wilson*

Founder, Working With Cancer

# Institution of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH): How can a Prevention-First and Person-Centred Approach Keep Britain Working?

Working With Cancer Founder Barbara Wilson was recently invited to speak at the House of Commons as a panel member at a workshop organised by the Institution of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH): How can a Prevention-First and Person-Centred Approach Keep Britain Working?

The event followed the launch of IOSH's report, From Perks to Prevention: Redefining Health and Wellbeing for Today's Workforce, a significant piece of work challenging organisations to move beyond surface-level wellbeing initiatives and embrace approaches that are genuinely preventative and person-centred.

Alongside host Lee Barron MP, Minister for Employment Dame Diana Johnson and Charlie Mayfield, Chair of the Keep Britain Working Review, Barbara joined a discussion about what it truly takes to keep people in work in a way that is sustainable, compassionate and human.

At the heart of Barbara's contribution was a question that sits at the core of everything Working With Cancer does: what does it really mean to create a cancer-inclusive workplace? Not policies on paper. But practical, meaningful support for the 1 in 2 people who will receive a cancer diagnosis in their lifetime and for the many more navigating treatment or caring responsibilities alongside work.

**The Bevan survey we undertook in 2024 showed that only 4 in every 100 companies have a cancer policy, and that only 18% of organisations collected data on cancer incidence.**

**It also showed that over 50% of the HR managers we questioned had concerns about managerial capability to manage someone with cancer but only 11 % of organisations provided cancer-specific line manager training.**

The message from the day was clear. Person-centred approaches are not a nice-to-have. They are essential and the national conversation around health, work and wellbeing is shifting, with employers having a critical role to play in driving that change from within their own organisations.

You can read the reports in full via the following links: [IOSH Report](#) [The Bevan Report](#)





## Record Cancer Diagnoses in the UK: What It Means for Workplaces

New figures from Cancer Research UK reveal that more people are being diagnosed with cancer in the UK than ever before with one person receiving a diagnosis every 80 seconds. More than 403,000 people are now diagnosed each year, a record high driven largely by a growing and ageing population.

The statistics are striking. Incidence rates have risen to 620 per 100,000 people, and while death rates have fallen and ten-year survival rates have improved since the 1970s, Cancer Research UK warns that progress is now at risk of stalling. NHS cancer waiting times are among the worst on record, with more than 107,000 patients waiting over 62 days to begin treatment across the UK in 2025 alone.

For employers, these numbers are not abstract. With one in two people expected to receive a cancer diagnosis in their lifetime, cancer is already present in virtually every workplace in the country, whether visibly or not.

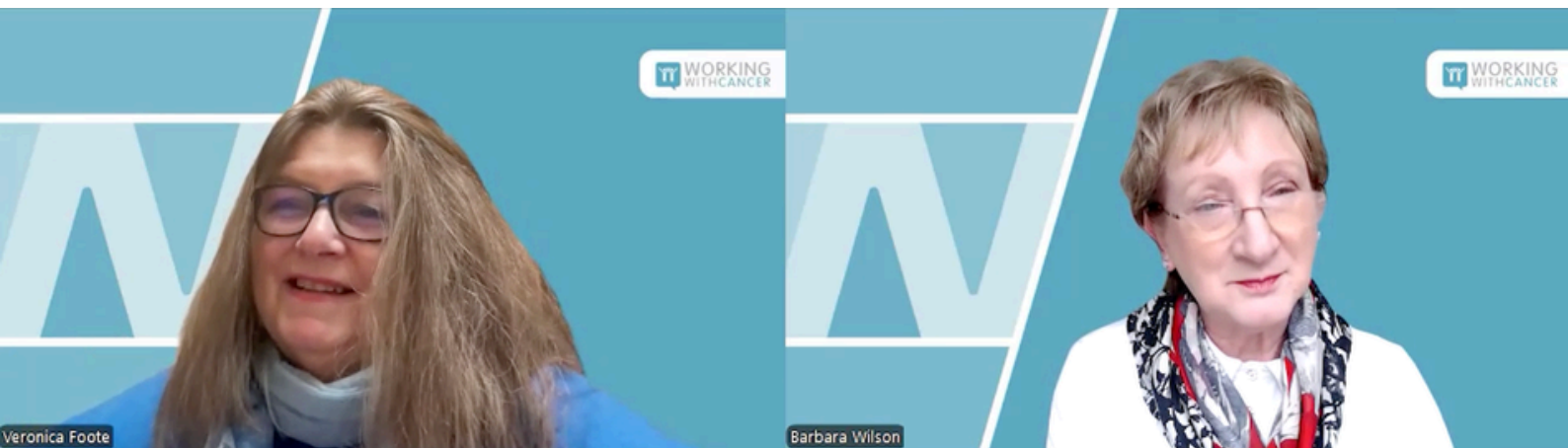
The question is whether organisations are equipped to respond. Many are not. And as diagnosis rates continue to rise, the gap between the support employees need and what workplaces currently provide becomes increasingly difficult to ignore.

Early diagnosis, faster treatment and better clinical outcomes matter enormously. But so does what happens at work. How a colleague is supported from the moment they share their diagnosis, through treatment and beyond, can have a profound impact on their recovery, their financial security and their sense of identity.

At Working With Cancer, this is exactly the gap we work to close and these figures underline why that work matters more than ever.

[Read Guardian article here](#)

# The Hidden Side of Cancer: Supporting the Supporters



## Veronica Foote and Barbara Wilson

When someone receives a cancer diagnosis, the focus naturally shifts to them, their treatment, their appointments, their recovery. But behind almost every person navigating cancer is someone else quietly holding everything together.

Partners. Spouses. Family members. People who wouldn't necessarily call themselves caregivers, but who are showing up every single day in ways that take an enormous toll.

In a recent conversation, Working With Cancer Founder Barbara Wilson spoke with Veronica Foote about her experience supporting her husband through cancer. It is a conversation that will resonate with anyone who has been in that position or who is in it right now.

What makes Veronica's reflections so powerful is not just what she did, but what she wishes she had done differently. Ask for help sooner. Set clearer boundaries. Take better care of herself alongside caring for her husband.

It sounds simple. But when you are in survival mode, focused on the next appointment, the next treatment, being strong for everyone around you, your own wellbeing can quietly slip down the list until it disappears entirely.

Hindsight offers a different perspective. One where the person doing the supporting matters just as much as the person being supported.

This is a conversation the workplace needs to have too. Employees who are caring for a loved one with cancer are often navigating an invisible weight and organisations have a real role to play in recognising and responding to that.

Watch and listen to Veronica's full story here: [Conversation about being a Cancer Carer](#)

If this resonates, please share it with someone who might need to hear it.

## WWC Team Meeting in London



Last month our team came together in London and it was one of those days that leaves you feeling genuinely grateful for the people you work with.

As a fully remote team, getting everyone in the same room doesn't happen often. But when it does, it's always energising, grounding and a reminder of why this work matters so much.

We spent the day reviewing the year so far, catching up on the latest developments across the organisation and planning ahead for what promises to be a significant few months. There was a lot to talk about and even more to look forward to. But what strikes us every time we're all together is something that goes beyond the agenda.

Every single person around that table has lived experience of cancer whether that's a personal diagnosis or caring for someone they love. That shared understanding isn't incidental to what we do. It's the foundation of it. It shapes how we show up, how we listen and why Working With Cancer is so much more than an organisation.

We also had a very special reason to celebrate. Our founder Barbara Wilson is back after her sabbatical and it is wonderful to have her energy, vision and leadership in the room again. Welcome back Barbara.

2026 is shaping up to be a significant year for Working With Cancer. There are some genuinely exciting developments on the horizon and we can't wait to share them with you.

# Prostate Cancer Screening: Progress Made, But Too Many Men Still Left Behind



The UK National Screening Committee has recommended introducing prostate cancer screening for men with BRCA gene variations, those at highest risk of developing an aggressive form of the disease. It is a step in the right direction. But for the vast majority of men at risk, screening remains out of reach.

For Working With Cancer, this matters deeply. Cancer in the workplace does not discriminate and prostate cancer is one of the most common cancers affecting working-age men in the UK today.

The most significant concern raised by Prostate Cancer UK is the treatment of Black men in these recommendations. One in four Black men will develop prostate cancer, double the risk of other men. Yet gaps in the available data mean the committee has stopped short of recommending screening for this group. Crucially, the NHS already holds electronic health records that could help address those gaps. The data exists. The decision not to prioritise it is one that will cost lives.

Prostate Cancer UK is funding urgent research to analyse that NHS data and deliver findings within a year, with the aim of pressing the committee to reassess its position on screening for Black men as quickly as possible. Their landmark TRANSFORM trial, the largest prostate cancer screening study in twenty years is already underway. In the meantime, every man should know his risk. A PSA blood test remains available, and GPs can discuss testing options with patients who request it.

For more information and support, visit Prostate Cancer UK directly.

[Prostate Cancer UK](#)

## Online Webinars happening in June



### FREE ONLINE WORKSHOPS

In June, we will be running more sessions of our popular free online Workshops for employees, HR, and line managers.

Did you know Working With Cancer offers two free webinars each month, one designed for employees affected by cancer, and another for HR professionals and line managers? Each session provides practical guidance, shared experiences, and expert advice on how to manage cancer at work with confidence and compassion.

Our next online workshops are in February next year. You can find the link to book and further details of both below:

**HR/Line Managers June 23, 2026 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm**

**The challenges of managing work and cancer**

[Book here](#)

**Employees June 9, 2026 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm**

**How to return to work successfully after cancer**

[Book here](#)

*Thanks for reading*