WORK SUPPORT ROUTE GUIDE

Helping professionals talk to people about work and cancer

ENGLAND
Talking about work and cancer

With this booklet, it’s now easier for professionals like you to support people affected by cancer, no matter what work-related concerns they have. It suggests relevant questions, recommends responses and lists further sources of support, so that you can give them the guidance they need.

There are over 700,000 people of working age living with cancer in the UK, who face many difficult decisions about work. Having discussions about it early on in someone’s cancer experience can be vital in preventing problems. And there’s strong evidence that work is good for wellbeing, as well as aiding recovery and rehabilitation.

You don’t have to be an expert to start a conversation about work, and it doesn’t have to be time consuming. It’s about including work in your normal conversations and encouraging people to consider their options.

As a professional, you may also use a holistic needs assessment to find out more about someone’s concerns. Work may be one of the issues people raise and, when developing a care plan, this booklet will help you direct them to the right information.

First things first

To get started, simply ask the person affected by cancer which of these options best describes their employment status:

A In employment or on long-term sick leave
   Go to page 3

B Out of work
   Go to page 5

C Self-employed
   Go to page 6
Talking to your employer early on can help address your needs. If you’re not sure what to say, talk it through with the Macmillan Support Line advisers, a trade union representative or a relative or friend. And think about the best person to contact at work and if you’d prefer to do it over the phone or by email.

If your employer knows you’ve been diagnosed with cancer, you’re protected from discrimination under the Equality Act 2010. This means your employer has a duty to make ‘reasonable adjustments’ to help you do your job. You can request flexible working arrangements, such as shorter hours or a phased return to work.

For more information about the Equality Act or your rights at work you can call the Macmillan Support Line.

If you want to change your job, the National Careers Service can help you update your CV and offer tips about interviews and finding work. Early retirement may also be an option if you’re on an occupational pension scheme. You might want to talk to an independent financial adviser or Macmillan’s financial guidance team.

For a list of all the services mentioned in this section, see page 7. Please print and hand out the services list.
Do you know where to find further information and advice?

Have you and your employer agreed a return to work plan?

A return to work plan can help you and your employer agree the best way forward when you do go back to work. It might include a phased return, flexible working hours or adjustments to your workplace or role. For advice and support, talk to your human resources or occupational health team, or look at the resources on Macmillan’s website for further information.

If cancer affects your ability to do your job, the government Access to Work scheme can offer guidance and funding for things such as equipment and transport. You can also talk to the Disability Employment Adviser (DEA) at your local Jobcentre Plus, a trade union representative or a Macmillan Support Line adviser.

For a list of all the services mentioned in this section, see page 7. Please print and hand out the services list.
Out of work
Here we look at how you can help someone with cancer planning to get back into work.

Are you ready to start looking for work?

YES

NO

Are you worried about going back to work?

YES

NO

Would you like to know more about financial support and benefits that you may be entitled to?

YES

For help returning to work, contact your local Jobcentre Plus. You’ll be introduced to a personal adviser who’ll help you look for jobs, fill in applications and prepare for interviews, as well as claim Jobseeker’s Allowance. And you might want to register with a few recruitment agencies – there are plenty on the high street and online.

If you want to change career, the National Careers Service can help you update your CV and offer tips about interviews and finding work. Volunteering may also be a way of learning new and relevant skills.

Self-management courses such as Macmillan’s HOPE programme can help you regain your confidence when recovering from treatment. This can be completed online or face-to-face. Counselling can also help – to find out more, visit a Macmillan information and support centre or speak to your doctor.

In Macmillan’s free Work and cancer booklet, there’s also information about the Equality Act 2010, and what this means for the rights of people with cancer. It covers fair treatment, the recruitment process and the terms, conditions and benefits of employment. You can also call the Macmillan Support Line.

You can speak to a Macmillan benefits adviser or Macmillan’s financial guidance team about the benefits, tax credits and other financial help you’re entitled to. And your local Jobcentre Plus can put together a programme to help you gradually come off benefits and get back to work. There’s also plenty of information about benefits on the government’s website.

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Self-employed
Living with cancer can be particularly challenging for the self-employed. They may worry about closing their business or having to start over again. Here we look at their options and the available support.

Do you want to stay self-employed?

YES

Juggling self-employment with the effects of treatment can be difficult. You may benefit from rehabilitation services such as occupational therapy or physiotherapy to help you manage the consequences of cancer and its treatment, such as fatigue. Macmillan’s booklet *Self-employment and cancer* also has lots of advice about managing your workload and finances.

NO

If you want to change career, the National Careers Service can help you update your CV and provide tips about interviews and job hunting.

Would you like advice on changing your career, volunteering or early retirement?

YES

For information about all aspects of volunteering and help finding available opportunities, contact the organisations Do-it or Voluntary Worker.

NO

And for advice about early retirement and what it means to you financially, contact Macmillan’s financial guidance team. You can also speak to an independent financial adviser.

Would you like to know more about financial support and benefits that you may be entitled to?

YES

You can speak to a Macmillan benefits adviser about the support you’re entitled to. And if cancer affects your ability to do your job, the government scheme, Access to Work, can give you support and funding.

NO

For information and advice about mortgages, loans and insurance, contact Macmillan’s financial guidance team. And if you have a personal insurance policy, contact your insurers about possibly making a claim to support yourself while you get back to work.

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USEFUL SERVICES

Macmillan’s support

Macmillan Support Line
0808 808 00 00 (Monday to Friday, 9am–8pm)
If you have questions about any of the support Macmillan provides, gives us a call and one of our expert advisers will happily help.

Benefits advisers
0808 808 00 00
(Mon to Fri, 9am–8pm)
www.macmillan.org.uk/benefitsadvisers
You can speak to a Macmillan benefits adviser on the phone or in person.

Free booklets and leaflets
be.macmillan.org.uk/work
Order a whole host of free resources about work and cancer, including Work and cancer, Self-employment and cancer and Work it out.

Financial guidance
0808 808 00 00
(Mon to Fri, 9am–8pm)
www.macmillan.org.uk/financialguidance
Provides information about everything from pensions to mortgages so that you can make informed decisions at a difficult time.

Self-management courses
www.learnzone.org.uk
Macmillan offers a host of free courses to help people affected by cancer manage day-to-day concerns.

Other services

Access to Work
www.gov.uk/access-to-work
A government programme which helps you if your health affects the way you do your job.

Benefits and financial support
www.gov.uk/browse/benefits
Tells you all about your eligibility to claim benefits and tax credits.

Jobcentre Plus
www.gov.uk/contact-jobcentre-plus
Provides information about finding and contacting your local Jobcentre Plus.

National Careers Service
nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk
0800 100 900
Provides tools and advice to help you with your next career step.

Volunteering
www.do-it.org.uk
www.voluntaryworker.co.uk
Provides information about volunteering and shows available opportunities.

Tip: Also keep a record of local services which can help

WE ARE MACMILLAN. CANCER SUPPORT
Cancer is the toughest fight most of us will ever face. But no one should go through it alone. The Macmillan team is there every step of the way.

We are the nurses and therapists helping people through treatment. The experts on the end of the phone. The advisers telling people which benefits they’re entitled to. The campaigners improving cancer care. The supporters who make it all possible.

Together, we are all Macmillan Cancer Support.

To find out more, please visit macmillan.org.uk