

## Managing Cancer in the Workplace

This policy is meant as a guide to support staff and managers and has been brought together using the Macmillan 'managing cancer in the workplace' guide.

The Macmillan web pages <https://www.macmillan.org.uk/> have a whole range of information for those living with cancer, those that care for those with cancer and employers who have staff affected by cancer.

As part of this provision Macmillan has developed a '[Work it Out: The Essential Questions to Ask About Work](#)' toolkit, aimed at helping individual employees find the information they need about work issues at every stage of their cancer journey e.g. dealing with absence from work, preparing to return to work etc, which affected employees may find helpful.

They have also developed a useful guide for employers entitled: '[Working Through Cancer](#)'. Managers may wish to consider this, as they seek to manage the impact of cancer on the employee, other colleagues and the Academy. It covers a number of issues including how to talk about cancer and strategies to support employees affected by cancer and their colleagues, whilst recognising that each case will be different. It also identifies other useful sources of support and information for both affected employees and the employer.

These documents are only one of many sources of support for individuals dealing with cancer, and both managers and staff are strongly encouraged to also seek support and guidance from the many sources within the Academy such as Human Resources, Occupational Health Services, Mindful Employer Plus - Counselling/ Staff Support Line.

### Managing cancer in the workplace

We recognise the importance of supporting employees who are diagnosed with cancer, employees caring for someone with cancer and employees who are affected by cancer.

The following guidance is provided to help to manage cancer in the workplace:

1. Be sensitive to your employee's needs.

Being sensitive and supportive of an employee who has been diagnosed with cancer is essential. It is also important to recognise that every person has a different cancer experience which will affect them in different ways, both physically and emotionally. You should therefore look for the best way for you to be able to meet their individual needs.

2. Listen.

Talking about cancer may not be easy, but being there for someone if they do want to talk is essential. It is important to listen to be able to understand how they feel and what you may be able to do to help to support them.

Further guidance on sensitive communications can be found in Section 2 of the Macmillan: Working Through Cancer booklet – see above link.

3. Support available.

Wellbeing & Attendance Procedure: <http://www.churchfields.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Wellbeing-and-Attendance-Procedure-Updated-Feb-14.pdf>

Absence Procedure: <http://www.churchfields.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Leave-of-Absence-Policy-paid-unpaid-leave-Oct-16.pdf>

Counselling & Support: Call 0300 555 6006 Employees or 0300 555 5002 for Managers

<http://www.mindfulemployer.net/employees>

<http://www.mindfulemployer.net/managers>

Macmillan support line: 0808 808 00 00

Trust HR Team: 01793 781485

#### 4. Be aware of legislation.

Cancer is legally defined as a disability under the Equality Act 2010, which may mean you need to make reasonable adjustments.

#### 5. Respect your employee's privacy.

It is important for you to agree with the employee whether or not they wish to share their diagnosis with others. If the employee does wish to share this information, you should agree who to communicate this to and how they would like this to be done.

If the employee is due to be away from the workplace, it may also be helpful to agree together how best to maintain appropriate contact. This communication should be handled carefully so your employee still feels valued but doesn't feel pressured in returning sooner than they are ready.

#### 6. Financial issues.

Being aware of workplace financial entitlements, such as sick pay, may help to ease any worries in relation to their finances. The employee may find it helpful to speak directly to HR about any particular financial issues.

Further information about financial issues can be found in Section 4 (Page 23) of the Macmillan: Working Through Cancer guidance available at the link above.

Other sources of advice:

Macmillan Financial Guidance: <http://www.macmillan.org.uk/information-and-support/organising/money-worries>

#### 7. Looking forward and returning to work.

It is important for you and the employee to work together to discuss and agree the best way forward and, at an appropriate time, to plan for a return to work. Together you should explore what support is needed prior to, during and following cancer treatment. It is also recommended that together you

consider suitable options for returning to work, such as flexible working, a phased return, or a handover of work on a gradual basis.

8. Don't forget the possible effect on the wider team.

As everyone is affected by cancer, where team members are advised of a colleague's diagnosis (when the employee has given consent for this information to be shared), it is also important to make team members aware of the support available to them:

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9. Keep in mind employees who care for people with cancer.

Those who care for people with cancer may also need similar support. Becoming a carer is often unexpected, and can be a very emotional and demanding role. The advice provided throughout this guidance may also be useful to support carers.

10. Macmillan Cancer Support.

Macmillan's Cancer Support line is available for everyone affected by cancer. You can call free on 0808 808 00 00 or visit the Macmillan website at [www.macmillan.org.uk](http://www.macmillan.org.uk) .