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Links, tips and resources shared in the chat during our 28th March 2023 webinar:

“Cancer and the workplace: Opening the conversation around prevention and support”

Links & resources shared:

Qured's 'Cancer at work' resource is a helpful quick intro to cancer in the workplace and Qured services: https://prismic-io.s3.amazonaws.com/quredv3/9ab928c6-cca5-41eb-afe0-f957f6323efc_sales_resources_cancer.pdf

The Working with Cancer page: <https://workingwithcancer.co.uk/> and the Working With Cancer pledge: <https://www.workingwithcancerpledge.com/>

<https://www.macmillan.org.uk/documents/getinvolved/campaigns/workingthroughcancer/workingthroughcancer2010/workingthroughcancer2010.pdf>

Macmillan also have a team that can support the employer with advice and we've had our local engagement champion come and talk at team days.

Maggies is a good resource for the individual as they provide support to not only the individual but also to friends and families too. They offer a safe space to talk as well as numerous wellbeing activities which are tailored for cancer treatments e.g. yoga, Nordic walking, acupuncture

Cancer UK website: <https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer/>

The Charity Young Lives vs Cancer has some good resources:
https://www.younglivesvscancer.org.uk/life-with-cancer/life-with-cancer-my-employee-has-cancer/?gclid=CjwKCAjwolqhBhAGEiwArXT7K1O5T4-joBZcuBl34f2hYKZcg7LVBu6Of9eAJyhH5ay9GOK-eZjF7BoC8VYQAvD_BwE

Here's a link to more information and registration for the free Make a Difference Event – The Watercooler - <https://www.watercoolerevent.com/>

About stigma

I just wanted to add to the chat that the stigma in the workplace depends on the type of cancer.

Definitely depends on the type of cancer

I think it really depends on the workplace/team. There's a lot of encouragement to talk more which is great, but from my experience lots of people don't wish to be associated with something that could make them seem vulnerable. That's especially true of those who are ambitious and want to climb the ladder.

I think one of the best ways to break down stigma is with education. We often fear what we don't understand and that's where stigma seems to thrive.

Very good point about education.

About flexibility & caring for people with cancer

When my mother had cancer and needed help during/after her treatments, I wanted to be more flexible to be able to help her. My employer wasn't very supportive and so I resigned that job.

My dad died of brain cancer and my employer was very supportive during his last couple of months and flexible with my working hours and also after when I came back to work - this made such a big difference for me.

I believe that there is also the care for people with cancer to be discussed, as that also has a big impact on the workplace.

I think it is more difficult to discuss when/for people who do not have a formal diagnosis yet although this does not have to be the case... also the fear of being treated differently so people don't disclose the severity or how it may really affect them especially when it gets to conversations around possible sickness absences / workplace adjustments etc

When you have a diagnosis of cancer, there are so many appointments or treatment etc, that you CAN'T hide it.

AS an HR Manager I encourage my team and the colleagues who work for us to discuss the issues they are having so that we are able to support where we can. We do find that colleagues for whatever reasons do not want to discuss health issues of them or their families unless they really have to and we then find it hard to provide the correct support.

Many jobs simply cannot be done when you are having treatments, so people need to know

Everyone is different and allowances for performance and working times can be used to help with the continuation of work around the bad and then the good days.

I didn't want to work from home, I needed normal human contact when I was well enough

On supporting carers / family members

When it comes to mental health, I think one challenge that is not well addressed is including family members / care-givers in the employer well-being offering. As a CEO of a mental health company, I was diagnosed with a Stage 4 cancer last year, and in every provider interaction I am asked how I am doing (well) but no one has ever asked how my spouse, accompanying me and in the same room, is doing.

I've noticed that colleagues cannot engage a conversation on it... everyone avoids it and drive away when the cancer is brought up.

It is impossible to know how treatments are going to affect you - so can't make plans!!

Yes, that's exactly how it went for me in the end and it actually had a positive impact in the workplace.

What carers want is time off - my husband has to take annual leave to go to appointments!

Exactly @Anne-Marie. Carers need the same flexibility as those being sick and going through those treatments.

Not about conversations!!! Those happen - time off is needed!

In Germany you have a right to go part-time or take longer time off work when caring for a family member. It is part of our labour laws.

UK Law does not allow time off - compassionate leave - for carers - it is up to the company.

I can only speak for what I have seen, but I think quite a few companies do offer that level of support for flexibility with their employees when they / a family member they are supporting are managing their cancer. I am sorry if you haven't had that experience, as I am sure it is making a really awful circumstance so much more stressful.

Thank yous

Great session, thank you

A very informative session. Thank you to panellists and everyone who contributed. Lots of good points to think about. My company will do all we can to support where we can. We might not have the best sick pay to offer but if colleagues talk to us we will try to work with them. Thank you

Thank you for this very informative and helpful session

Thank you!

Great session. Thank you.

Thank you all

Thank you, it was a benefit both personally and workwise

Thank you very much

Thank you all

Thank you for this session, lot of information that will help us!

Thank you all, has been really useful!

Thanks for sharing all your expert advice

Thank you. Great session

Thank you everyone for a really interesting session

Thanks all this is such a valuable discussion. Look forward to catching the recording

Most interesting session - thank you all for your very encouraging experiences