

BALANCING WORK & CANCER: HOW EMPLOYERS CAN HELP

Christine Brennan
Associate Director of Programs
Cancer and Careers

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CANCER FACTS & FIGURES

- 1.68 million new cancer cases estimated to be diagnosed this year in the United States
- As of January 2014, there are more than 14.5 million cancer survivors in the U.S.; that number is estimated to reach 19 million by 2024
- Men have slightly less than a 1 in 2 lifetime risk of developing cancer; for women, the risk is a little more than 1 in 3

Source: ACS Cancer Facts & Figures 2016

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CANCER AND CAREERS

Cancer and Careers empowers and educates people with cancer to thrive in their work environment, by providing expert advice, interactive tools and educational events.

- CancerAndCareers.org
- Publications in English and Spanish
- Manager's Kit
- Professional Development Micro-Grants
- Accredited Programs for Healthcare Professionals
- CancerAndCareers.org/es
- Community Events
- National and Regional Conferences
- Balancing Work & Cancer Webinars
- Resume Review Service

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RESEARCH: WORK & CANCER

- In 2014, 44% of people newly diagnosed were of "working age" (American Cancer Society 2015)
- Cancer survivors are more likely to be unemployed (*JAMA 2009; 301(7):753-762*)
- 20% of cancer survivors still report work limitations affected by cancer-related problems 1–5 years after diagnosis (*Work & Cancer Survivors*)
- In 2015, EEOC received 922 cancer discrimination claims (www.eeoc.gov/eeoc/statistics/enforcement/ada-receipts.cfm)

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RESEARCH: BREAST CANCER IN THE WORKPLACE

A Story Half Told Initiative: Pfizer/Cancer and Careers/Harris Survey

OBJECTIVES

- Understand attitudes and beliefs of working women with breast cancer
- Understand barriers women with both early and metastatic breast cancer face at work or as they return to work
- Gain broad understanding from 3 perspectives:
 - Patient
 - Physician
 - Employer
- Raise awareness of the needs of women with breast cancer in the workforce

PARTNERS

- Multi-Disciplinary Steering Committee:**
- Cancer and Careers
 - National Business Group on Health
 - Triage Center
 - Johns Hopkins
 - Avon Foundation
 - CancerCare
 - Sharsharef
 - Young Survivors Coalition

INITIATIVE

- Commissioned Harris Poll to conduct the Supporting Workplace Conversations survey with:*
- 1,002 women with breast cancer who have worked or looked for work since diagnosis; of these, 189 had metastatic disease
 - 200 healthcare providers
 - 102 employers, represented by human resources personnel

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RESEARCH: BREAST CANCER IN THE WORKPLACE

- 70% of women with breast cancer who work want to do so even during treatment
 - 77% felt that working aids their recovery, including 7 in 10 metastatic patients (70%), a view endorsed by virtually all oncologists (96%) and employers (90%)
 - 87% of oncologists and 92% of other healthcare professionals agree that they need more tools and resources to help women with cancer navigate their work environment
 - While most employers (91%) reported that their organization is supportive of employees with serious health conditions such as breast cancer, there is a disparity between the supportive measures and benefits employers report they provide and what women with breast cancer report are available
- (Pfizer/Cancer and Careers/Harris Interactive Survey 2014)

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NEWLY DIAGNOSED PATIENTS

Key Issues:

- Decisions about whether to work, including the role work plays in a person's sense of self and identity
- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) discrimination protection
 - State Fair Employment Laws
- Disclosure requirements
- Online brand and social media use

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INFORMATION NEEDS

Medical and Treatment Info

- Treatment options
- Timeline
- Potential side effects
- Mitigation strategies

Work Info

- Insurance support
- Company policies
- Workplace flexibilities
- Job demands

Legal Info

- Federal & state laws
- Medical leave
- Disability insurance
- Health insurance

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WORKING THROUGH TREATMENT

Key Issues:

- Disclosure in the workplace
- ADA, including reasonable accommodations
- Managing treatment side effects at work
- Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) as intermittent leave

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TAKING TIME OFF WORK

Key Issues:

- FMLA
- Medical certification
- Disability insurance
- Staying connected to work

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RESEARCH: WORKING THROUGH TREATMENT

- Top three reasons to continue working after a diagnosis:
 - Financial reasons (69%)
 - Felt well enough (53%)
 - Want to keep things as normal as possible (44%)
- 73% of employed survivors surveyed reported that working during treatment helped them cope
- 69% of surveyed cancer patients and survivors said that cancer recovery is aided by the routine nature of work

(Cancer and Careers/Harris Interactive Survey 2015)

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RESEARCH: TAKING TIME OFF WORK

FMLA:

- About 60% of workers are protected by FMLA
- 50% of those covered are not aware if the FMLA applies to them
- 50% of workers taking leave for a serious illness (their own or a family member's) take leave for 10 days or less
- 78% of those who need FMLA leave, don't take leave because they can't afford it
- 98% of people taking FMLA leave return to the same employer

Sources: National Partnership for Women & Families; U.S. Department of Labor

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RETURNING TO WORK

Key Issues:

- Easing back into the routine
- Recasting themselves in the workplace
- FMLA and ADA return-to-work requirements
- Job search (resumes, interviews, networking, LinkedIn)

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WHAT SHOULD I KNOW?

- Information on company policy
 - Medical leave policy
 - Short-term and long-term disability
 - Health insurance
 - Flexible work policy (if applicable)
 - PTO, leave banks (if applicable)
 - Telecommuting (if applicable)
- Applicable laws
 - Federal (ADA, FMLA, HIPPA)
 - State Fair Employment and Leave
- How situations like this have been handled in the past

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RESEARCH: JOB SEARCH

- Top three reasons unemployed cancer patients and survivors want to work:
 - Financial (78%)
 - Feel well enough (43%)
 - Want to keep things as normal as possible (37%)
- Among cancer patients and survivors looking for work:
 - 58% feel prospective employers would treat them differently if they disclosed their cancer
 - 61% fear disclosing would negatively affect their ability to get hired
 - 49% feel they are less likely to get hired than a healthy person

(Cancer and Careers/Harris Interactive Survey 2015)

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WHAT SHOULD I SAY TO MY EMPLOYEE?

- “I am sorry this is happening to you.”
- “I don’t know what to say or how to say it, but I do want you to know I am here for you.”
- “I am thinking of you.”
- “How are you feeling today?”
- “May I email you?”
- “Wasn’t that a productive meeting?”

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WHAT SHOULDN'T I SAY TO MY EMPLOYEE?

- "I know how you feel."
- "My brother had this kind of cancer and he was in the hospital for months."
- "I know this will turn out OK."
- "The same thing happened to my neighbor, and it worked out fine."
- "Did you drink?" or "Do you smoke?" or "Do you tan?"

Remember: Don't let talk about the cancer dominate every conversation.

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WHAT INFORMATION CAN I PROVIDE TO HELP MY EMPLOYEE?

- Information on company policy
 - Medical leave policy
 - Short-term and long-term disability
 - Health Insurance
 - Flexible work policy (if applicable)
 - PTO, leave banks (if applicable)
- Introductions to EAPs/insurance providers
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WHAT ARE SOME GOOD COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES?

- Identify a point person
- Create a written plan
- Have regular email wrap-ups or phone calls
- Use online document-sharing programs
- Keep employee visible

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WHAT ARE SOME COMMON SIDE EFFECTS MY EMPLOYEE MIGHT BE STRUGGLING WITH?

- Pain
- Hair loss
- "Chemo brain"
- Fatigue
- Weight changes
- Skin changes

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WHAT CAN I SUGGEST WHEN MY EMPLOYEE IS HAVING TROUBLE FOCUSING?

- Do one thing at a time
- Clear away clutter
- Make a list and prioritize it
- Turn off phone and email
- Take a walk around the block

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WHAT ARE REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS UNDER THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT?

"Any change in the work environment or in the way things are customarily done that enables an individual with a disability to enjoy equal employment opportunities."

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REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS: SPACE MODIFICATIONS

- Manipulate Work Space
 - Phone, printers, files within easy reach
 - Switching desks/offices
 - Special furniture requests

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REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS: SCHEDULE MODIFICATIONS

- Telecommuting
- Flextime
- Part-time
- Scheduled breaks

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REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS: OTHER MODIFICATIONS

- Use of Technology
 - e.g., speak/type software
- Change in Policy
 - e.g., supermarket clerk having a stool
- Shift Job Responsibilities
 - e.g., recess duty
- Change Job
 - i.e., move to an open position

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RESEARCH: ACCOMMODATIONS

- Workplace Accommodations: Low Cost, High Impact
 - Cost of accommodations:
 - 58% cost \$0
 - 37% one-time cost, typically \$500
 - 83% of employers who called JAN for info or help were doing so to retain or promote a current employee
 - Accommodation benefits for employers include:
 - Retaining a valued employee (90%)
 - Increasing the employee's productivity (72%)
 - Avoiding the costs of training a new employee (60%)
 - Increased the employee's attendance (55%)

Source: Job Accommodation Network Study, updated 9/1/15

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REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS: ADDRESSING QUESTIONS

Why is Phillip getting to... work from home? Work different hours? Move to an office? Have a printer at his desk?

- Possible Manager's Response
 - *"I realize that it may seem like Phillip is getting special treatment, but please know that we treat each employee as an individual and sometimes need to make accommodations to best support that person. We also highly value each person's privacy. Now, I have been meaning to talk to you about that presentation that is coming up. . ."*
- Possible Employee's Response
 - *"Our manager thought this might be a good way for me to deal with some personal matters as well as benefit the company. I appreciate your concern! And since I have you, I would love to talk about the new territory I have been assigned; do you have any suggestions?"*

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HOW COWORKERS CAN HELP

If you are inclined to help, be specific with your offers:

- "I would like to bring you lunch each day next week; is that ok?"
 - Be sure to ask what kinds of food he/she is able to eat.
- "I have heard some people in the office talk about setting up a fundraiser for you. Before we proceed, I want to know if you are comfortable with that?"
 - Be sure to confirm whether your colleague would want his/her name tied to it, especially if it's going to be done online.
- "I saw that next week you are supposed to organize the staff meeting, I'd be happy to take care of that for you. Is there anything I need to know to make it a success?"
 - The idea is to identify work-related projects or tasks that you can pitch in with while still respecting your coworker's ability to do his/her job.

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WORKPLACE TRANSITIONS: FILLING A GAP

Unique group of organizations joined to forces:

Anthem, Cancer and Careers, Pfizer, SEDL (an affiliate of American Institutes for Research) and the U.S. Business Leadership Network

Created *free* e-Toolkit to support workplaces of all sizes:

- Complements existing company policies and procedures
- Helps managers better manage cancer in workplace so people touched by cancer can continue working
- Provides frontline managers with guidance on managing return-to-work from a practical, psychosocial and legal perspective

Piloted by Ernst & Young, Merck, North American Mission Board, Northrop Grumman, Verizon and Anthem

- 93% (n=43) of managers reported finding this resource helpful, especially in helping them provide employees emotional support
- 86% (n=44) of managers reported finding this resource easy to access and use

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A screenshot of the "FOR MANAGERS" section of the Workplace Transitions e-Toolkit. The page has a dark blue header with navigation links: PREPARE, ACT, SUPPORT, EMPLOYER ADOPTION, RESOURCES, ABOUT, and FOR EMPLOYEES. Below the header, the text "FOR MANAGERS: Get help managing cancer in the workplace" is displayed, along with a "GET STARTED" button. At the bottom, there are four icons with labels: UNDERSTAND YOUR ROLE, KNOW THE LAW, ADJUST ACCOMMODATIONS, and MAKE A PLAN. Navigation arrows are located at the bottom left and right.

WORKPLACETRANSITIONS.ORG

Online toolkit includes:

- ✓ Useful information for frontline managers
- ✓ Important facts on privacy, disability and medical leave
- ✓ Downloadable tool for creating transition plan with employee
- ✓ Brochure for diagnosed employees and their caregivers
- ✓ Practical ideas for workplace accommodations
- ✓ Suggestions for managing challenges with sensitivity

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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES & CONTACT INFORMATION

- Balancing Work & Cancer Webinars
www.cancerandcareers.org/en/webinars
- Accredited Educational Series for Healthcare Professionals
www.cancerandcareers.org/en/edseries
- National Conference on Work & Cancer (June 23, 2017, NYC)
www.cancerandcareers.org/conference
- Newsfeed www.cancerandcareers.org/newsfeed
- Publications library www.cancerandcareers.org/publication_orders/new

Contact: Chrissy Brennan, cbrennan@cew.org, 646-929-8030

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THANK YOU

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