

When Cancer Comes to Work



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2016 - Gilda's Club becomes Cancer Pathways

- **SAME MISSION**
- **NEW NAME**

Impact Since 2001

- **13,348** people have joined our **Family Cancer Support Program**
 - **29,447** individuals become member & take part in **Support Groups**
 - **20,486** community members participate in **Healthy Living Classes**
 - **1,950** kids have attended **Camp Sparkle**
 - **6,621** people have attended **Educational Lectures** to learn more
 - **1,857** essays submitted to our **Cancer Unwrapped Teen Writing Contest**
 - **94,083** people engaged through health fairs, outreach, & **Community Events**
 - **66,000** students learn cancer prevention via **Cancer Education for Teens**
- 233,792** connections statewide, so that no one has to face cancer alone

Statistics

Cancer Facts

In 2016, 1.7 million people were diagnosed with cancer

Who receives this diagnosis?

- 1 out of 2 men
- 1 out of 3 women

In Washington State, there will be over **37,500** new cancer diagnoses this year

(CDC Data and Facts)

Cancer Survivors

- The Good News:
- Rates of cancer survivorship are increasing!
- In 2014 there were **14.5 million survivors**
 - From that, **9.5 Million** will return to work
- By 2022 we will see an increase to over **18 million survivors**
 - Those returning to work will increase to over **11.8 Million**

THESE NUMBERS MAKE THIS A
BUSINESS ISSUE

Returning to Work

- Of the **1.7 Million** diagnosed annually, over **744,000 cancer survivors** will return to work each year
- Typical absence from work: **151 days**

Returning to Work

- RTW decreases if:
 - Work environment is non-supportive
 - Manual labor
 - Lingering health issues

Why go back to work?

- Financial compensation
 - Health insurance
 - Social support
 - Sense of purpose and well being
- Financial pressures determine the time and manner of the return to work
 - The kind of cancer you have and the treatment received will determine when employees can go back to work
 - Returning to paid work following cancer treatment is a **crucial component** of returning to “normality”

Bankruptcy

Medical issues are the
#1 cause of bankruptcy



Cancer in the Workplace

- Managing employees' cancer related needs more complex than those associated with any other disease
- Range and depth of intense emotions drive this complexity
- Diagnosis is most critical issue for employers
- Ineffective management elevates cost
- Cancer is one of the primary causes of short term and long term disability, both leading to losses in productivity

The Bottom Line

- Cancer inevitably becomes a core business issue
- Honest effective communication from the first day is imperative
- Dealing effectively with issues saves money and promotes employee morale
- You can improve outcomes for your business and for your employees
- Cancer Workplace Navigator

Economics

- Cancer is costly physically, emotionally, and financially for both the **employee** and the **employer**
- Disability, absenteeism and reduced productivity may increase

- Overall cost of cancer in the U.S. is **\$226.8 Billion**
 - **\$103.8 Billion** direct medical
 - **\$123.0 Billion** loss of productivity (*from death*)
 - Does not include absenteeism among survivors, which likely exceed the costs above
- Washington State Specifics
 - **178.5 Million** cost of cancer related absenteeism, annually
 - **719,538** workdays missed due to cancer, annually

Business Issues

- Wages paid to absent employees
- High cost of replacement workers
- Overtime pay for other employees helping out
- Reduced productivity
- Poor quality of work resulting from overtime and understaffing
- Excess manager time dealing with all of it
- Poor morale among employees

Caregivers

- Studies show that over 60% of cancer survivors have unmet needs
 - ...and just as many caregivers are affected too
- While every caregivers needs are different, there are common problems encountered
- According to a “Caregiving in the U.S.” survey, it was reported that one in five caregivers provide more than **40 hours of care a week** and that may be in addition to working a full time job
- 57% of caregivers had to go in late, leave early or take time off to perform their care-giving duties

Caregivers

As a result some needed to

- Take a leave of absence
- Switch from full time to part time
- Turn down promotions
- Opt for early retirement
- Quit

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Cancer & Workplace Discrimination

- **What does that look like?**

- Being demoted without clear reason
- Having an earned job promotion withheld
- Being overlooked for a new position
- Finding a lack of flexibility when requesting time off for medical appointments

Workplace Protections & Legislation



- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
- Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)
- Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPPA)
- Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA)
- Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (signed into law March 2010)

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

- Protects against all kinds of discrimination based on:
 - Actual disability
 - A perceived history of a disability
 - A misperception of current disability
 - History of disability
- ADA applies to all phases of employment
(with employees of 15 or more)

ADA **25** **1990-2015**
AMERICANS WITH
DISABILITIES ACT

ADA & Cancer

- Protects eligible cancer survivors from discrimination in the workplace
- Requires eligible employers to make “reasonable accommodations” to allow employees to function properly on the job
- Ensures that employers must treat all employees equally

Reasonable Accommodations



- Employer has to provide as long as not undue hardship
 - Examples: Light duty, flexible hours, reassignment to a vacant position
- Employee generally has to initiate request for a reasonable accommodation
- All requests are kept confidential
- Employer may request medical documentation

Family & Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

- Guarantees that eligible employees can take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave
 - Can be used all at once or in increments as short as a few hours at a time
- Guarantees that eligible employees maintain their health insurance benefits while out on leave
- Guarantees that an employee who returns to work will be given his or her previous position or an equivalent job with the same salary, benefits, and other conditions of employment

FMLA Requirements

- Employee must have worked for his employer
 - at least 12 months
 - with at least 1,250 documented hours
 - during the most recent 12 months
- Law applies to workers in:
 - Government agencies
 - Schools nationwide
 - Private companies with 50 or more employees within 75 miles



Challenges: Three Main Arenas

- **Logistics** – How will work be managed
- **Benefits and Finances** - Understanding and managing their health care, disability and other employee benefits, and the impact of cancer on their finances
- **Emotional and Social Issues** - in the workplace, at home and in their communities

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Questions About Work...

- Will there be any flexibility in my work?
- Will I have employer support?
- Am I still capable to do my job?
- Will I be a burden to my co-worker
- Can I do the same job?
- Will I be accepted?
- Will my identity change?
- Is my appearance different?
- Is there any privacy left for me?



Employer Concerns

- Cost
- Value
- Quality
- Productivity
- Absenteeism
- Support
- Workforce re-entry

Employer – Employee Communications

- The discussion needs to take place on day one
- The dialogue needs to continue frequently
- Honesty and openness need to be the way forward
- There is not always an answer but there is always a discussion
- Use mediation early and often
- Two separate agendas: Employer & Employee
- Always evolving, therefore must manage expectations

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Human Resources

Questions for your **Cancer Workplace Navigator**

- What can I do for my employees with cancer?
- How do I best respect their wishes when I am getting so many questions?
- How much can I or should I really tell other employees/colleagues?
- What do I say to someone with cancer?
- How do I handle changes in appearance?
- How do I minimize the shock of co-workers?
- What if someone gets sick at work?
- What if it is the boss?

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How to Help

– Tips for Colleagues –

- Not knowing what to say is normal
- Your relationship with the employee before cancer is a predictor of your support involvement after cancer
- Ask the person with cancer IF they want to discuss their cancer- if they want to be asked how they are doing.

Note that some people come to work to get a break from their illness



- Send a card
- Offer specific, practical help
 - Run errands or cook a meal
- Keep the office relationship as “normal” as possible
- TIP from a cancer survivor:
 - *“Don’t hesitate to talk about office happenings and gossip, it provides a great distraction from one’s own illness. And frankly, one of the best defenses you have when you’re ill is distraction.”*

Cancer Pathways Navigators

- We can come in from the very beginning and train employers and employees
- We can work with the employers and employees to help them navigate from DAY ONE
- We can advise and support patients and caregivers
- We are a neutral party which looks for a win-win for both sides
- We can open the lines of communication - the key to success

Cancer Pathways Education



- We can provide educational luncheons
- We can meet with employers and employees
- We can provide support groups and classes on site



Contact Us

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