

## Hello again!

Hello again, and welcome to our Spring 2018 newsletter.

In this edition we include:

- Information about an open workshop for employers we are running in London in July at Schroders' offices
- A short article about working through cancer treatment by one of our associates, Mary McPhail.
- News about a key breast cancer initiative we are working on with European colleagues and two MEPs
- A profile of Maggie Newton who works with us as a coach and trainer
- The latest news about WWC

And if there is anything else you'd like us to cover, do please email

[admin@workingwithcancer.co.uk](mailto:admin@workingwithcancer.co.uk)



## One story of working through Cancer treatment

Talking about cancer in the workplace isn't always easy. First there's the shock and the disbelief. Then there's the realisation that life goes on, that there are decisions – big decisions – to be made about how you are going to live it.

When I got my breast cancer diagnosis in May 2012 I was in the middle of a big fundraising project for the large international charity that I ran.

I decided to go ahead with a planned trip to Philadelphia and surgery was scheduled for the week that I returned to London. The operation was a lumpectomy and, thankfully, no further surgery would be required. But I was looking at months of chemotherapy and radiotherapy, followed by another year of Herceptin treatment.

I did not know it then but that decision to continue with my fundraising commitment set the tone for how I would balance my commitment to work with my need to take care of myself and my family in the coming months. Download the full story [here](#).

*Written by Mary McPhail,  
an Associate of Working With Cancer*



## What's on?

### Employers Workshop

We are running a half day workshop for employers from **10am to 1pm on Wednesday 18th July** covering all you need to know about successfully managing cancer in the workplace, including the impact of cancer on working life, talking about cancer at work, and legal rights and responsibilities.

Book now to avoid disappointment as places are limited by contacting us at:

[admin@workingwithcancer.co.uk](mailto:admin@workingwithcancer.co.uk)



## Did you know.....

**About cancer** : The word 'cancer' comes from the Latin for 'crab' – just like the zodiac sign.

Early doctors, when describing certain tumours which had veins or extensions from the main body, called them crab-like, or 'cancerous'.

**About work and cancer** : There are now estimated to be 890,000 people in the UK of working age with a cancer diagnosis. However recent survey information shows that 53% of people with cancer who are in employment when diagnosed do not know their employer has a legal obligation to make reasonable adjustments to support their recovery and return to work.

**All cancer survivors are protected by the Equality Act from the point of diagnosis forever i.e. for the rest of their lives.**

## In the spotlight: Maggie Newton

I've been part of the Working with Cancer team for over 18 months. It's very rewarding to be able to make a difference by drawing on my own experiences of cancer to help someone return to work successfully. Work plays a very important role in recovery from cancer by providing focus and a return to some kind of normality. I was treated for breast cancer in 2014.



The fear of recurrence was slowly starting to fade when I had surgery last year for a thyroid lump which also turned out to be cancer. Despite having a strong support network of family and friends there were times when I felt very alone and being able to share my feelings with colleagues who'd also been through cancer was immensely beneficial.

I enjoy being able to use my coaching skills, and knowledge, to help clients rebuild their confidence and set realistic goals. I also deliver employer workshops as it is equally important for line managers, and HR professionals, to fully understand the impact cancer may have on their staff and how to handle communications sensitively. We should all be encouraging more open and honest conversations about cancer at work.

## WWC in the News

Our Founder Barbara Wilson is working with a number of European policy makers and organisations deeply committed to cancer care with the aim of improving breast cancer services in Europe. Today huge disparities in screening and care still persist in the EU with worrying discrepancies among and within countries. Breast cancer and advanced breast cancer remain a serious threat to women, families and European society. Together we are issuing **'A Call for Change'** to increase the understanding of the daily realities of living with breast cancer in Europe and ensure policymaking reflects both the individual and the societal disease burden. Read more in this [press release](#).



## About Working With Cancer

Working With Cancer is a social enterprise established in June 2014 to support cancer survivors, their carers, and their employers.

Our services comprise consultancy, training, and one-to-one coaching (with unlimited support for employers).

Our corporate work supports our pro bono work with charities, third sector organisations and individuals.

At least half our profits are ploughed into the company or the community.

## 3 TOP TIPS: Talking About Cancer

1. Don't say... 'nothing'. Silence isn't golden. Not talking to someone you know about their cancer just leaves an awkward and uncomfortable silence. So, unless they have told you not to mention their cancer, ask 'How are you?' and listen carefully and sensitively to the answer.
2. Let's please drop all military references to cancer e.g. 'fighting', 'battling' and so on. Why? Because if someone dies from cancer, it implies they didn't fight hard enough, whereas in reality they did their best. There's a short 2014 Guardian article [here](#) which is eloquent on the subject.
3. Respect confidentiality. If a person you know with cancer tells you they don't want others to know they have cancer or are caring for someone with cancer, you must respect their privacy. You should however, encourage them to let a few key people know, for example in a work context, their line manager, their HR advisor and their immediate team, as well of course their immediate family – so they can get the support they need.

