

**Liz O’Riordan joins Working With Cancer to promote benefits
of work during cancer treatment**

*Inspirational author and blogger to work as an Ambassador for the organisation
which supports people affected by cancer to return to work*

Working With Cancer, the social enterprise which helps people to keep working during and after cancer treatment, has announced that Liz O’Riordan will be joining the team as an Ambassador. The author, blogger and TEDx speaker who worked as a consultant breast surgeon before, during and after her own treatment for breast cancer, will be promoting Working with Cancer at events and online in a bid to help cancer patients and their carers manage work and treatment on a practical and emotional level.

“Having Liz on board will help us to reach even more of the UK’s 900,000 people of working age who are currently living with cancer, as well as their employers” said Barbara Wilson, founder and director of Working With Cancer. “For cancer patients and their carers work can be a vital lifeline back to some kind of normality, which is hugely important both emotionally and financially. Liz’s own inspiring story attests to this and we’re delighted to have her on the team.”

Working With Cancer provides coaching, training and consultancy for employers to help them offer the best support to employees undergoing cancer treatment. Alongside this, the organisation offers one-to-one coaching and advice to cancer patients, their partners and carers on how to manage work and cancer, as well as returning to work and finding employment after treatment.

“I know from my own experience just how important it is to keep working and retain something approaching normal life after a cancer diagnosis. Working With Cancer were key to getting me back to work. They do such important work in this area and I want to help their team spread the word so more people can access their excellent services for employers and patients,” said Liz O’Riordan.

According to Macmillan, although 80% of people who were working when diagnosed with cancer thought it important to continue working, 47% had to give up work or change their roles as a result of their diagnosis. Employees with cancer and their carers are also protected by law.

Working With Cancer helps employers ensure they can work within the law and best support colleagues during and after treatment. 30% of employee absence results from long-term illness, so it is also in the best interests of the business that employees are given as much help as possible to keep working. “It was my own experience working as a senior HR professional when I was diagnosed with breast cancer which led me to establish Working With Cancer,” Barbara Wilson continued. “So many people who experience cancer at a working age just want to keep working, and Liz’s support with our cause will ultimately help more people to achieve just that.”

485 words

Notes to editors

www.workingwithcancer.co.uk

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Liz O’Riordan (@Liz_ORiordan)

Liz was a 40-year-old consultant breast surgeon when she was diagnosed with Stage 3 breast cancer in July 2015. She suddenly realised that she had no idea what it was like to be a patient, despite spending her working life treating the disease. She started an award-winning blog to help doctors and patients see what having breast cancer is really like, in a friendly, informative way (liz.oriordan.co.uk) and now speaks all over the world about her experiences, including a TEDx talk (Jar of Joy), focusing on digital healthcare, self-care, and how to improve the patient experience. She has also co-authored a best-selling book with Prof Trish Greenhalgh, a GP with breast cancer, called - The Complete Guide to Breast Cancer: How to Feel Empowered and Take Control (Penguin Random House), again to help patients learn from other patients about how to cope with everything cancer throws at them. Liz was diagnosed with a local recurrence in May 2018, and side effects of treatment have meant that she has had to retire as a surgeon.

https://www.amazon.co.uk/Complete-Guide-Breast-Cancer-Empowered/dp/1785041878/ref=tmm_pap_swatch_0?encoding=UTF8&qid=&sr=