



CANCER IN THE WORKPLACE MODULE 8

Communication An employee's guide

During your absence, try to keep in touch with work. Your employer will be really pleased to hear from you and will only be able to help you in your return if you tell them what your concerns are. So keep talking – it makes sense.

Whether you have been in touch or not, as your return to work gets closer, it would be good to speak to or, even better, meet up with your manager or someone from HR.

This will give you a chance to chat through your ideas and plans for returning.

Think about what would make your return more manageable and discuss this with your employer – they will most likely be relying on you to come up with some ideas.

This way, both you and your employer will know if you may have any temporary restrictions to take into account. You may wish to discuss working from home for a short while but this may depend on the type of work you do. An alternative is flexible hours, allowing you to travel outside of rush hour, when there are less germs flying around to pick up. Or see if your employer can locate you in a quieter area with fewer colleagues.

If you have any concerns about your health, particularly around fatigue or infection control, do chat to your GP.

If you need to attend outpatient appointments or continue with treatment, let your employer know in advance so they can build your return to work plan around them.

Arranging appointments at the beginning or end of the day can help. If you plan to work fewer days, perhaps they can fall on your off work days.

Help your employer by letting them chat to your colleagues about your return, as it is likely you will be doing shorter hours or reduced duties for a while as you build back your stamina and confidence.

As you start on your return, plan weekly catch-ups with your manager so you can share ideas and suggestions and keep up-to-date on progress.

This gives everyone the opportunity to review and/or change anything that is not working.

Above all, remember to keep talking. If your manager is aware of your progress and how you're feeling, they are in a much better position to support you and help you get back to work when you're ready.



Maggie's cancer centres – Provides free, practical, emotional support for people with cancer and their families and friends