wellspring
Calgary

Legal and Employment Matters - Core and Educational Programs

Intended Audience

For members of the public and for members who require time off work for cancer treatment and recovery and who are planning to return to work during or after treatment.

Program Overview

Members often have a variety of concerns and questions when considering returning to work during or after cancer treatments. Facilitated by legal and human resources specialists, information is provided to help members assess the impact an absence from work can have on their employment relationship, understand the perspective of the employer, and clarify their legal rights to assist in planning a work absence and successful return to work.

Benefits and Impact

Members will gain an understanding of their rights and obligations as an employee, as well as the employer's rights and obligations with regard to time off and modified work arrangements to accommodate illness and treatment. While the primary objective is to build awareness of support mechanisms and clarify approaches to ensure the protection of rights, appropriate consideration and tactics are also offered to help maintain a positive relationship between employee, the employer and the insurance company.

Topics Covered

- Employee and employer expectations
- The employment contract (employer and employee obligations)
- Legal rights and available resources
- Culpable/non-culpable absences
- Use of sick leave/lengthy absence from work
- The right to "accommodation" in the workplace and accompanying responsibilities
- The right to modified duties, before, during and after treatment
- Benefit and disability plans and life insurance considerations
- Returning to work approaches
- Advocates and how to maintain positive work relationships
- Disclosure of cancer diagnosis when looking for new work

Participant comments

"Good to know I have rights and advocacy available."

"Employers have obligations and responsibilities."

"Learn awareness of avenues to navigate."

What the Research Says:

In a 2009 Canadian research study it was determined that "new cancers resulted in wage losses of up to $3.18 billion." (Hopkins, R.B., Goeree, R. and Longo, CJ., 2010. Estimating the National Wage Loss from Cancer in Canada. Current Oncology 17(2): 40-49.)

A high percentage of cancer patients return to work after treatment and workplace accommodation is pivotal in their successful return. The perceived willingness of the employer to accommodate a worker's illness and treatment needs is an important factor for returning to work (Bouknight et al., 2006).

"The impact of cancer on survivors and their working lives is complex and dependent on a large number of factors that provide challenges to individual survivors, their families, work organizations, and the social welfare provisions of societies around the world." (Feuerstein, 2009.)

Program Frequency:

2 hours per session
1 session per season
Winter, spring/summer, fall

Optimum Class Size: 30

Related Programs:

Money Matters
Resumes and Interviews
Returning to Work

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