

Declaration by CANWON

Declaration by the H2020 COST Action CANcer and WORk Network

It is necessary to develop a **European Guideline on Cancer and Work**. The European Guideline on Cancer and Work should aim at achieving, when compared with the current situation:

- Higher rates of return-to-work and sustainability of work in good health after cancer, with lower loss of income and lower sick leave relapse rate and duration
- Higher rates of continuation of working while being treated, if health permits
- Return-to-work and continuation of working life should be characterised by higher quality of working life
- Lower societal costs

What should be in the European Guideline on Cancer and Work?

- 1) Supporting labour participation during and after treatment for cancer requires multidisciplinary support, including medical, psychological, occupational and rehabilitational support.
- 2) Due to the multidisciplinary nature, different stakeholders are involved, such as the treating physician and direct supervisor. As the stakeholders differ between countries, the different tasks that have to be performed have to be defined in the guideline alongside proposed professionals who should be involved.
- 3) Supporting labour participation during and after treatment for cancer comprises:
 - a. Balancing workplace and worker. To do so, workplace visits, partial capacity schemes, adapted working conditions or workplace adjustments are necessary.
 - b. Balancing employer and employee needs. This relates to productivity requirements and costs on the one hand and the need for workplace adaptations on the other hand.
 - c. Balancing the worker's work and private life.
- 4) It is important to encourage the worker's motivation from the start of the support trajectory. Anxiety regarding health issues can decrease motivation, and should be handled.

- 5) Return-to-work should start in an early stage of the treatment with mental preparation, be stepwise and be planned. This planning should be flexible and be adapted during the trajectory if necessary.
- 6) Communication issues that need to be addressed in the guideline:
 - a. Patient/worker: in which situations should disclosure be recommended or not?
 - b. Employer: how should the employer communicate with the worker with cancer and with his/her colleagues?
 - c. How to deal with medical confidentiality?
- 7) Information for the employer on the different types of cancer and the associated treatments should be offered in order to reduce insecurity and stigma.
- 8) The basic elements of the social security context, although different per country, should be explained to worker and employer.
- 9) Information on what can be expected regarding physical, emotional and social aspects of life during and after treatment for cancer should be included. For workers and employers it is important to know what to expect, so they can mentally prepare.
- 10) The role of the family needs to be addressed in order to:
 - a. Encourage family support
 - b. Consider family involvement during treatment
 - c. Consider what fits with the local culture regarding family support and involvement

How should the European Guideline on Cancer and Work be developed?

- Sensible use of existing guidelines
- One mother guideline with summaries for the different stakeholder groups

How should the European guideline on Cancer and Work be implemented?

- Role for legislation
- Role for collective agreements made by social partners (employer organisations and trade unions)
- Role for quality assurance systems and audits
- Role for labour inspectorate

CANWON Joint Working Groups Meeting on Guideline Development

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