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I CAN



ASK FOR SUPPORT

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I CAN ASK FOR SUPPORT



Maintaining social support networks and talking about cancer can be important strategies for coping with the social and emotional impact of cancer, both in the short and long term.

This is true for both the person living with cancer and their carer(s). Support can come from many sources – partners, friends, family, colleagues, healthcare professionals and counsellors – with some people choosing to join self-help or support groups. Support groups can provide a caring and supportive environment for people living with cancer to express their feelings and reduce anxiety and fear¹.

Sometimes the people at work make up another vital network of support. Talking about cancer with colleagues as well as keeping in touch with them during work absences can have a positive impact on recovery².

Cancer caregiving can also have an enormous influence on both physical and mental health. Carers – most commonly partners, family members or friends - receive little preparation, information or support to carry out their vital role³. Many carers put their own needs and feelings aside to focus on the person with cancer, and as a consequence may experience emotional distress and social isolation⁴. Recognising the challenges of looking after someone with cancer and seeking support can have wide-ranging benefits for coping and quality of life⁵.

People living with cancer and their caregivers can ask for support to help them cope with cancer.

This factsheet is aimed at



Patients
& Carers

1. Ussher J, Butow P, Wain G, et al. (2005). Research into the Relationship Between Type of Organisation and Effectiveness of Support Groups for People with Cancer and their Carers. <http://staging.cancerouncil.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2011/02/Executive-Summary-for-CSG-research-2005.pdf>.
2. Macmillan Cancer Support. Work and Cancer. <http://www.macmillan.org.uk/Cancerinformation/Livingwithandaftercancer/Workandcancer/Workandcancer.aspx>
3. Northouse LL, Katapodi M, Song L, et al. (2010). Interventions with family caregivers of cancer patients: meta-analysis of randomized trials. *CA Cancer J Clin*, 60, 317-339.
4. NBCF. (2013). So I Bit down on the Leather: Ending the Silence. Sydney: National Breast Cancer Foundation
5. Looking after someone with cancer. <http://be.macmillan.org.uk/be/s-330-information-for-carers.aspx>