

**For Immediate Release**

## **Northeast Business Group on Health Releases Employer Guide to Cancer Survivorship**

### ***Guide identifies action steps for employers to address in six major categories***

NEW YORK, December 2, 2020 – Northeast Business Group on Health (NEBGH) has released “**Cancer Survivorship: Challenges and Opportunities for Employers**,” a new guide to help HR and benefits leaders fully understand the complex issues associated with cancer survivorship and to create a workplace that supports people living with cancer and is productive for everyone.

Cancer is a relatively common disease in the U.S. Nearly four in ten men and women will be diagnosed with cancer at some point during their lifetime, according to some estimates. Cancer is also on the rise among millennials, who make up the largest generation in the U.S. workforce. At the same time, the number of cancer survivors in the U.S. is increasing steadily. It is estimated that by 2040, the number of cancer survivors in the U.S. will reach 26.1 million, a more than 50% increase compared with 2019.

“With a growing number of cancer survivors in the workforce, employers need to better understand and be equipped to help support them, given the challenges these employees may face,” said Candice Sherman, CEO of NEBGH. “Some people are unable to work due to treatment or the effects of treatment, but many are able to continue to work or to return to work after some period. In fact, most cancer survivors are eager to work because it provides a coping mechanism, enables a sense of purpose and motivation, boosts self-confidence, fosters social support and aids in financial stability.”

The guide, “**Cancer Survivorship: Challenges and Opportunities for Employers**,” identifies six major categories of challenges that many cancer survivors face and how employers can best support them. These six categories include physical health, mental and social health, wellness and healthy lifestyle, family and friends, finances and work. For each category, the guide highlights the specific challenges survivors may face and provides action steps employers, and in some cases, physicians, can take to help address these challenges. The guide also includes a list of considerations for cancer survivor related issues in light of the current pandemic and other potential health crises in the future.

The guide notes that the benefits of cancer survivors continuing to work or returning to work don't accrue only to them. There are financial and productivity benefits for employers that include a decrease in turnover costs, which can be high. In addition, it can be costly to lose the expertise, contacts and customer relationships employees have built. Cancer survivors generally have higher annual medical costs than employees without cancer because of ongoing monitoring as well as the side effects of treatment or longer-term effects of the disease itself, but supporting survivors' work and well-being enhances the value of these healthcare expenditures.

The 48-page guide includes a comprehensive resource section for employers and survivors comprised of the following:

- Summary of the six categories of challenges.
- Pull-out section with questions and tips survivors can discuss with their oncology treatment team after treatment is completed.
- Descriptions of two dozen organizations that offer various cancer support, health care, social, legal and career services.

- List of employment laws and agencies, and types of leave and workplace accommodations related to cancer survivorship.
- Tip sheet for survivors on returning to work.
- Employer checklist with recommendations on how to support cancer survivors.

“There are encouraging statistics that show an increase in the number of people surviving with cancer but they often don’t reveal how survivors are faring physically, mentally, socially or economically. Employers can play a key role in this experience. With more survivors active in the workforce today and in the future, the challenges and opportunities posed by cancer survivorship are important to understand and support,” said Patricia Goldsmith, CEO of CancerCare, which contributed to the guide and is leading pilot projects associated with workplace survivorship.

The guide is available free of charge to all employers and the public at large, and can be accessed [here](#).

#### **About Northeast Business Group on Health**

NEBGH is an employer-led, multi-stakeholder coalition that empowers members to drive excellence in health and achieve the highest value in healthcare delivery and the consumer experience. NEBGH employer/purchaser members cover 6 million lives in the U.S. and 10 million globally.

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