

**WE ARE
MACMILLAN.
CANCER SUPPORT**

Campaigning for change fact sheet

Short version

Macmillan campaigns for a better deal for people affected by cancer. We want everyone with cancer to receive the right level of treatment and support, regardless of who they are and where they live.

Medium version

Macmillan campaigns for a better deal for people affected by cancer. We want everyone with cancer to receive the right level of treatment and support, regardless of who they are and where they live. We work to raise awareness of cancer issues and campaign to bring about changes in opinion, policy and practice at both a local and national level, right across the UK.

Long version

Macmillan campaigns for a better deal for people affected by cancer. We want everyone with cancer to receive the right level of treatment and support, regardless of who they are and where they live. We work to raise awareness of cancer issues and campaign to bring about changes in opinion, policy and practice at both a local and national level, right across the UK.

We want the NHS and benefits system to consider the specific needs of people affected by cancer, so that they don't have to personally bear the costs of their treatment. We want the health and social care services to treat the person, not just the disease. And we want cancer treatment and care to remain a priority for the government.

Whether they focus on raising public awareness, involve working with politicians, government officials or other decision makers, all our campaigns have one common goal: to make a positive and permanent change to the lives of people affected by cancer.

Campaigns

Prescription charges

We successfully campaigned to abolish prescription charges for people with cancer. This campaigning led to free prescriptions being introduced in Wales from April 2007 and in England from April 2009. Northern Ireland is set to follow suit from 2010 and Scotland will phase out charges by April 2011.

Hospital car parking

We are calling for hospitals in England to come into line with the rest of the UK by scrapping hospital car parking charges for people with cancer. In Scotland, free parking came into effect

from 31 December 2008, and in Northern Ireland, parking is now free for chemotherapy and radiotherapy patients. Wales began scrapping charges in April 2008, and this will be complete by 2011.

Our research shows that many people with cancer are not told that they may be eligible for free or reduced parking at their hospital. We are encouraging patients in England to ask their hospitals if they are eligible for any concessions on car parking charges.

Travel insurance

People affected by cancer can find it very difficult to get travel insurance, even if they've been free of cancer for a number of years. We're working with the financial industry to make it easier for people who have been affected by cancer to access travel insurance.

Our research has shown that nearly 40% of people affected by cancer are quoted higher travel insurance premiums and some people are refused travel insurance all together.

Working through cancer

We launched this campaign in 2007 to help people with cancer remain in their job or return to work after treatment. We provide information and support to help them do this. By remaining in or returning to employment, people feel more in control of their lives and have a better chance of not getting into financial difficulty.

Sex, relationships and cancer

Up to half of the people who undergo cancer treatment find it can have a lasting and distressing impact on their relationships. We launched a campaign in May 2009 to raise awareness of this issue and to get health professionals to speak openly about how cancer can affect sexual relationships. We also provide information on relationships and cancer and support people affected by this issue.

In a Macmillan survey, 70% of the people we spoke to said no health professional had spoken to them about how cancer could affect their sexual relationships.

Freeze out fuel poverty

Many people with cancer use more heating in their homes because they spend more time there and they feel the cold more because of their illness and treatment. This leads to higher fuel bills at a time when they are likely to also be coping with a reduced income. Our Freeze Out Fuel Poverty campaign aims to raise awareness of this issue and improve the support provided to people with cancer who are struggling to manage rising fuel bills and keep warm.

A recent Macmillan survey found that 1 in 5 people had to turn their heating off, despite being cold, because they were worried about paying their bills.

Cancer strategies

In England

Macmillan was instrumental in the publication of the Cancer Reform Strategy, which sets out the strategy for cancer services in England up until 2012. A part of the strategy is the National Cancer Survivorship Initiative, which is co-chaired by Macmillan and the Department of Health. It aims to improve the quality of life for people living with or beyond cancer.

In Northern Ireland

Macmillan has helped to draft some of the key parts of Northern Ireland's Cancer Services Framework, which will consider the ongoing development of cancer services over the coming years.

In Scotland

As a result of Macmillan's lobbying, the Scottish government's cancer action plan, *Better Cancer Care*, has a strong focus on supporting people living with and beyond cancer.

In Wales

Macmillan influenced the development of the Welsh assembly government's strategy, *Designed to Tackle Cancer in Wales*, to ensure it considers the needs of those living with and beyond cancer.

Fact sheet last updated August 2009