CANCER – IT’S EVERYONE’S BUSINESS

So why is combating cancer an important priority for business?

Because cancer and other non-communicable diseases (NCDs) exact a huge cost for individuals, businesses and economies - not just in healthcare but also in productivity. Every year, the world’s 14 million new cases of cancer have a total economic cost of USD 1.16 trillion.

Employers have a critical role to play in the fight against cancer. People spend such a big proportion of their lives at work that supporting employees in the adaption of behaviours to improve their health is one of the most important investments a business can make. In turn, businesses will benefit through avoiding lost productivity, reducing medical costs and improving competitiveness. There are also immeasurable personal benefits for the health of their employees and their families.

So what support can UICC members give to businesses in prioritising cancer prevention and early detection?

Many UICC members worldwide are uniquely placed to help and can share resources that assist businesses to inform employees about the lifestyle changes that will reduce their risk of cancer, promote detecting cancer at its earliest stages and improve an individual’s quality of life. In turn, more businesses can be engaged to take on best practice solutions to support their employees to adopt healthy behaviours. All of which can together prevent at least one in three cancers.

With over 3 billion people in employment, if all businesses engaged their own employees in improving their health, the impact would be enormous. Reaching out to employers will have a ripple effect upon families and the wider community so that together businesses could act as a catalyst for positive, long-lasting change on the whole of society.

Cary Adams, Chief Executive Officer, UICC

Pfizer is committed to help address the global tobacco epidemic by supporting multi-faceted and comprehensive tobacco control measures to prevent the development of future generations of smokers, encouraging and enabling smokers to quit smoking, and helping ex-smokers remain smokefree. To that end, measures to limit smoking in the workplace along with programmes to support Pfizer employees in their smoking cessation efforts are implemented in Pfizer facilities around the globe.

More information about businesses’ efforts to create a tobacco-free workforce and guidance on a number of effective approaches to support employees quit smoking are available in the new publication, ‘Less Smoking, Better Business’, a practical guide produced by UICC in partnership with Bupa.
CANCER: IT’S EVERYONE’S BUSINESS

2012 CANCER CAUSED MILLION DEATHS

Around half of those who die from cancer are aged 30 to 69 – in the peak of their productive years

THE COST OF CANCER

The annual economic cost of cancer was approximately $1.16 TRILLION in 2010

GOOD HEALTH MAKES GOOD BUSINESS SENSE

Wellness programmes are associated with a 14% increase in employee satisfaction and a reduction in staff turnover

1 in 3 cancer cases is preventable

WHY WORKPLACE HEALTH IS A BUSINESS ISSUE

WHAT CAN EMPLOYERS DO?

Employers should:

- REDUCE cancer risk factors
- PROMOTE early detection and screening
- SUPPORT employees living with breast cancer

Employers can:

- ENCOURAGE take up of screening
- SUPPORT employees living with breast cancer

CANCER RISK FACTORS

Common cancer risk factors include tobacco, alcohol, lack of exercise, obesity, unhealthy diet, sun exposure, occupational carcinogens

BREAST CANCER

Breast cancer is the leading cancer killer among working age women aged 20 to 59 years

Employers can:

- REDUCE breast cancer risk factors
- PROMOTE awareness of signs and symptoms

A US study found that employers could save $2,035 per year per patient if breast cancer is diagnosed through early screenings rather than in an advanced stage of the disease

QUIT SMOKING PROGRAMMES: WHAT’S IN IT FOR EMPLOYERS?

Smokers are 33% more likely to miss work than non-smokers and are absent for longer

EXTRA DAYS ABSENT PER YEAR

33%

2.7
How is UICC working to support members in these efforts?

UICC is working with Bupa to connect the many efforts of cancer and other civil society organisations and businesses worldwide, and to inspire new, innovative partnerships between the public and private sectors. Together, our goal is to establish a broad commitment for collective action against cancer through the workplace and support businesses globally as catalysts for change.

Through the new Healthy Workplaces website, UICC and Bupa have launched a series of resources including the report, ‘Cancer – it’s everyone’s business’, that explores how businesses and cancer organisations can work together to take a positive and proactive approach to the fight against cancer. The reports provides a snapshot of the current global evidence base on the costs of cancer to business and their employees as well as the case for investment. Additionally, a series of practical resources including toolkits to help support employers set up breast cancer and quit smoking initiatives, are now available online.

For World Cancer Day 2015, as we joined forces to show that cancer is ‘Not Beyond Us’, understanding and responding to the need to create a supportive workplace for people living with cancer, is a pivotal way for employers to maximise the quality of life of their employees, their families and carers.

Supporting women with a breast cancer diagnosis to return to work is a key element of delivering a breast cancer workplace initiative. For many women living with breast cancer, ensuring a smooth transition back into the workplace can be a significant factor both from a personal and a practical standpoint. A job can restore normality, routine, stability, social contact and income. Women living with breast cancer can be encouraged to know that when they return to work they are likely to find a workplace environment that is willing to help them adapt to the challenges they face from their illness.

More information on supporting employers to implement a breast cancer workplace initiative as part of a wider employee health programme is available in the new publication, ‘Tackling breast cancer in the workplace – a win for everyone’, a practical guide produced by UICC in partnership with Bupa.

bupa.com/cancer
uicc.org