



spotlight on health

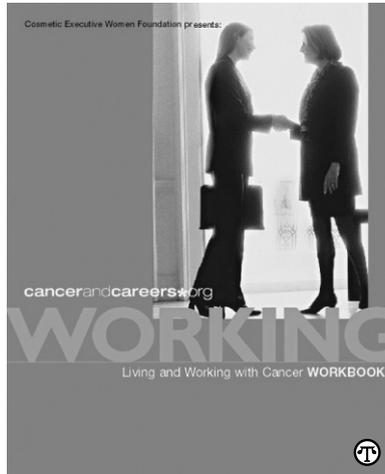
A Balancing Act: Working Women With Cancer Find Support And Resources From Leading Beauty Organization

(NAPSA)—Like many women today, Linda Barca, 52, has worked hard to achieve success in her life and career. The mother of two daughters, Barca is an administrative assistant for the corporate office of a supermarket chain in Springfield, N.J. When Barca was diagnosed with breast cancer in July 2004, she immediately worried about the effect her illness and treatment would have on her job.

“I started thinking about all the ways my cancer would disrupt my work,” said Barca. “I was afraid of how I’d look without my hair after chemotherapy, afraid of what people would say to me, worried about being too tired to do my job. But I really wanted to keep working.”

For many women diagnosed with breast and other cancers, continuing to work while battling cancer is vital for their emotional and financial well-being. Most cancer survivors, both men and women, feel their jobs help to maintain emotional stability during their battle with cancer. Working after a cancer diagnosis can boost self-esteem, maintain a sense of normalcy and provide a temporary escape from focusing on the illness.

Cancer survivors who continue to work are as productive on the job as other employees, but working with cancer can still pose many challenges. For many, the most difficult issue to cope with on the job is treatment- or disease-related fatigue. Furthermore, depending on the job, it also can be difficult for employers to allow a patient to take time off work to accommodate necessary trips to the clinic for treatment. Fortunately, there are treatment options, such as oral chemotherapy, that may be more convenient for women with cancer as they continue working.



The “Living and Working with Cancer Workbook” is a resource to assist women who are balancing cancer treatment and recovery with their careers.

“Oral chemotherapies, such as Xeloda, are attractive alternatives for my working patients. In fact, a recent study shows that patients treated with Xeloda required up to 22 fewer clinic visits over the course of six months than patients treated with the traditional IV treatment,” said Dr. Bonni Gearhart, Director of Oncology Education and a staff physician at Overlook Hospital in Summit, N.J. and a clinical associate at the Cancer Institute of New Jersey. “Additionally, oral chemotherapies are associated with fewer severe side effects than IV, such as less hair loss, that interfere with a cancer patient’s ability or decision to continue working.”

Another valuable resource for working women with cancer, like Barca, is support offered by one New York-based organization: Cosmetic Executive Women, Inc. (CEW).

“We saw a dire need to support

women who are juggling work with cancer treatment and decided to expand our resources to better serve this community,” said Carlotta Jacobson, president of CEW, a leading trade organization in the beauty industry that helps develop career contacts, knowledge and skills of its members, so that they may advance in their professional and personal lives. “Our ‘Cancer and Careers’ program was created to guide these women and their employers as they navigate a difficult road, helping to make their journey as smooth as possible.”

Through the “Cancer and Careers” initiative, CEW offers resources to assist women who are balancing cancer treatment and recovery with their careers. The program provides crucial services, including information from cancer and employment experts and hands-on charts and checklists to help career women manage their battle with cancer as effectively as they manage the rest of their lives.

The “Living and Working with Cancer Workbook” is a free 66-page guide, diary and informational log that is distributed to cancer patients via cancer centers, support groups and the program’s Web site, cancerandcareers.org. The success of the workbook in the U.S. has led to the recent expansion of the program to the U.K. Other information available on “Cancer and Careers” includes the “Managing Through Cancer” program, which advises managers and human resource professionals on issues related to employees diagnosed with cancer, including tactics for day-to-day support of employees who have cancer.

For more information on CEW’s Cancer and Careers, visit www.cancerandcareers.org.