

Living With and Beyond Bowel Cancer

A cancer diagnosis can affect many aspects of your life. There are, however, systems and organisations that can help you and your family cope with the problems and issues that might arise day to day. Some of these are signposted below but if you have any questions please call our **Bowel Cancer Advisory Service on freephone 0800 8 40 35 40**.

Financial Support and Advice

Cancer can be costly and the financial impact on you and your family can be an added anxiety. However, you may be entitled to benefits, tax credits, loans and other assistance from the Government, your local authority and other sources – regardless of your current financial situation.

Benefits:

You may be entitled to:

- Disability Living Allowance
- Incapacity Benefit
- Attendance Allowance
- Income Support
- Pension Credit
- Carer's Allowance
- Housing and Council Tax benefits
- Tax credits
- Employment and Support Allowance
- Social Fund

Detailed information on financial assistance, eligibility and how to apply is available from:

- **Benefits Enquiry Line** – 0800 88 22 00. Textphone 0800 24 33 55
- **Department for Work and Pensions** – www.dwp.gov.uk
- **Job Centre Plus** – For people of working age (16-65 yrs old). Benefits line: 0800 055 6688. www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk
- **Pension Service** – For people of pension age. www.thepensionservice.gov.uk
- **Tax Credit Helpline** – 0845 300 3900 (GB). 0845 603 200 (NI). www.direct.gov.uk
- **HM Revenue and Customs** – National Insurance information: 0845 302 1479.
- **Citizens Advice Bureau** – For your local office visit www.citizensadvice.org.uk
- **Citizens Advice Scotland** – www.cas.org.uk
- **Help the Aged** – Welfare rights service for older people and their carers. Senior Line: 0808 800 65656. www.helptheaged.org.uk
- **Macmillan Cancer Support** – Macmillan provide one-off grants for adults, young people or children with cancer to cover a wide range of needs. Benefits Advice Line: 0808 801 0304. Macmillan CancerLine: 0808 808 2020. www.macmillan.org.uk
- **CancerHelpUK** – Part of Cancer Research UK. 0808 800 4040. www.cancerhelp.org.uk
- **Shelter** – 0808 800 4444. www.shelter.org.uk
- **National Debtline** – Free confidential, independent advice. 0808 808 4000. www.nationaldebtlines.co.uk
- **Consumer Credit Counselling Service** – 0800 138 1111. www.cccs.co.uk



Prescription Charges:

In England:

As of April 2009 cancer was added to the list of conditions that allow you exemption from paying prescription charges. You will need to apply for an exemption certificate which lasts for five years by asking your doctor – either your GP or your hospital doctor – for the relevant form (FP92A).

In Scotland:

Prescription charges are being phased out in Scotland over the next two years and will be abolished by 2011.

In Wales:

Prescriptions continue to be free to people who live in Wales.

In Northern Ireland:

Prescription charges will be free from April 2010.

The Healthcare Travel Costs Scheme (HTCS):

The HTCS allows eligible patients to claim the cost of travel for journeys made to receive non-primary care following referral by a GP or hospital consultant. To qualify for help with travel costs, patients must meet certain conditions but the scheme applies only to patients and not carers or visitors. For more information call the helpline number 0845 850 1166.

'Help with health costs':

This NHS booklet (Reference HC11) is a useful and detailed source of information available from Jobcentre Plus offices or NHS hospitals or you can order a copy by phoning 0845 610 1112.

Mortgages, Pensions, Travel and Insurance:

For comprehensive information visit www.cancerhelp.org.uk.

Employment Support and Advice

If you are employed, a cancer diagnosis will affect your working life. You have rights to protect you in work but if you are unable to work, your employer should pay you **Statutory Sick Pay (SSP)** for a maximum of 28 weeks. You may be able to get working tax credit during this period. If, after 28 weeks, you are still unable to work you may be able to claim **Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)**. Further information can be obtained from:

- **ACAS Helpline** – 08457 474747. www.acas.org.uk
- **Benefits Enquiry Line** – 0800 88 22 00. Textphone 0800 243355
- **Department for Work and Pensions** – www.dwp.gov.uk
- **Job Centre Plus** – For people of working age (16-65 yrs old). Benefits line: 0800 055 668. www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk
- **Macmillan Cancer Support** – Benefits Advice Line: 0808 801 0304. Macmillan CancerLine: 0808 808 2020. www.macmillan.org.uk
- **Citizens Advice Bureau** – For your local office visit www.citizensadvice.org.uk
- **Community Legal Advice** – Helpline: 0845 345 4345
- **The Disability Rights Commission's** – Website includes links to legislation, information and advice. www.drc.gb.org. For information on disability rights and available benefits visit www.disability.gov.uk

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For further information contact the Bowel Cancer Advisory Service on: (Freephone) 0800 8 40 35 40

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