

Case Study 8



Administrative assistant in a large higher education institute (office work)



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The employee was a 49-year-old female who had been diagnosed with Diffused Large B Cell Lymphoma. She had been absent from work for ten months before returning.

Following treatment, she also reported a number of health-related problems, including concern about infection risk, hot flushes, loss of appetite, pain, personal stress, poorer memory and concentration, reduced energy, reduced physical ability and sleep problems.

Returning-to-work process

Contact was maintained with the employee, mainly between the line manager and the employee. A plan for returning to work was developed which also involved the occupational physician. The discussions were all documented and the employee visited the workplace before returning to work.

The good practice identified in this case study included:

- maintaining contact between the workplace and the employee
- visiting the workplace before starting a phased return to work
- having a formal plan in place
- regular meetings with the line manager during the return to work process and after
- HR giving support to the line manager
- an end to the return to work process identified.

After return to work

- Return to work may be a long-term process
- Some problems may persist for months or years after treatment e.g. fatigue may persist
- There may be permanent disabilities e.g. lymphoedema
- Continuous assessment of ability to work and any workplace hazards.