

# Return to Work:

## employee, employer and caregiver perspectives

Margaret Fitch, Cancer Journey Portfolio

### Methods

- Environmental scan of programs and resources to facilitate RTW for people with cancer and other chronic diseases
- Literature review and consultation about RTW concerns faced by people with cancer and caregivers
- Workplace support for people with cancer: perspectives of employers, insurers, unions

# Results

## Survivor perspectives (n=410)

- 60% reported a decrease in income
- 40% left work > 6 months
- 50% returned gradually
- More accommodation in large organizations
- Main issues: experiencing side effects at work and difficulty managing them
  - Fatigue 74%
  - Loss of energy 69%
  - Cognitive problems 45%

## Caregiver perspectives (n=60)

- 42% reported a decrease in income
- 90% missed some work time
- 15% left full-time work during diagnosis and treatment of family member
- 63% did not receive support or flexibility re work
- Main Issues: lack of concentration and productivity, stress, and lack of support from colleagues

# Results

## Web-based scan/interviews

- 90 resources/8350 sites
- Most implemented in last decade (prevalent for mental health)
- Variety of formats
- Most for individuals finished treatment and preparing to go back to work (not what happens after returning to work)
- Absence of resources for health care professionals

## Employer perspectives

- Many factors influence successful management regarding return to work after illness
- Incidence of known employees with cancer low
- Challenges do not change with size of organization - ability to respond does
- Low awareness of programs and services re RTW

