

## Legal Issues

You should consider any potential legal ramifications of your diagnosis and consider doing the following:

### Naming a power of attorney

A power of attorney will make decisions about your treatment if you are not able to decide for yourself, for example, if you are in a coma.

### Preparing a living will or an advanced care directive

This will state whether you wish to be kept alive by artificial means or resuscitated if you stop breathing. Make sure to give a copy to your treatment team.

### Writing a will

A will outlines who receives your possessions and property. It can also contain:

- How any children you have under 18 years of age will be cared for.
- Funeral instructions and burial arrangements.

## Financial Issues

The associated costs of cancer treatment and recovery, along with loss of income can be stressful and concerning. Many services can provide you with support such as:

- Financial assistance, through benefits and pensions (such as Medicare and Centrelink), can help pay for the cost of prescription medicines through the issue of a health care card.
- For people living in rural or regional areas, financial assistance may be available for travel to and from medical appointments.

Ask to speak to a social worker who will be able to provide you with more information about the services available to you. They can also help with practical issues like accommodation, transport and accessing community and government support.

## Work and Cancer

### Working during treatment

Some people need to carry on working as much as possible for financial reasons. This is possible, but will require consultation with your treatment team, employer and loved ones.

Before treatment begins, it's often difficult to know exactly how it may affect you. Tell your employer this, so that they are aware you may need to change your work plans at short notice.

You also may be unable or unwilling to return after treatment, which is completely normal.

If your employer knows that you have cancer they can help you by providing support and information about your rights. You can talk directly to your employer, your human resources manager, occupational health department, your trade union, or all four.

### Returning to work

Returning to work after treatment is possible, but you'll need to be patient. Some suggestions:

- Go back for short periods of time and build up as you feel better.
- Try to pace yourself so you don't get too tired.
- Talk to your employer about working part time, job sharing or working from home.

Your relationships with your colleagues may change. Tell them that your recovery is ongoing, and that you might need some time to adjust.

Your Chris O'Brien Lifehouse care team can help you to navigate this transition back to work, and your hospital social worker can discuss rehabilitation and retraining programs if you are unable to return to your previous role.