

The Cancer Journey

Using journey mapping to support employees with cancer

AN EMPLOYER'S GUIDE






Contents

Introduction	1
How to journey map.....	2
Screening	3
Diagnosis.....	5
Treatment.....	7
Life after cancer treatment.....	10
Family & caregiver support.....	12

The Cancer Journey



Using journey mapping to support employees with cancer

Introduction

Cancer is a life-altering diagnosis for an employee. Its impact is physical, emotional, social, psychological, and financial. Cancer reaches beyond the individual patient, touching families, friends, and colleagues.

At Summus, we believe that every person facing a cancer journey deserves foundational support. And that support is comprised of empathy and information from the best doctors in the world.

A journey map is one tool employers can use to foster empathy. It can help an employer understand the challenges their employees face when managing a cancer diagnosis. It can identify gaps in benefits and coverage as well as other points of friction. It can also help generate communication materials that provide guidance and answer the questions your employees will have as they navigate the phases of their cancer experience.

How to journey map

In its simplest form, a journey map is a series of actions arranged in a timeline. It identifies your user (employee), the scenario (cancer diagnosis), the phases in their journey, and the actions your user needs to take at each phase. It also identifies mindsets and feelings your user has at each phase. With this, you can create a narrative that can be turned into a visualization of your employees' cancer journey.

The journey mapping process is often more important than the final output, because it is through the process of journey mapping that an employer discovers opportunities to improve the experience of their employees with cancer.

In this guide, we've outlined the phases of a cancer journey for an employee, the actions they need to take at each phase, and key questions for an employer to consider about their benefits, coverage, human resources policies, and communications.



Screening

Cancer screenings help doctors find cancers earlier, often before symptoms appear. For some cancers, early diagnosis improves outcomes. A primary care provider can help employees develop personalized screening plans based on family history and other risk factors. A primary care provider can also help employees understand when symptoms require additional testing or follow-up. Employee education, cost, and convenience are critical to improving cancer screening rates.

Employee actions

- ▶ Understand personal risk for cancer.
- ▶ Receive appropriate cancer screenings.
- ▶ Access care if symptoms appear.



Key questions for employers

<p>Benefits</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ What preventive screenings are covered? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Breast (screening mammography, diagnostic mammography, ultrasounds, MRI) – Colorectal (FOBT, colonoscopy) – Prostate – Skin (Is this only covered as part of an annual visit with PCP or does our policy include an annual screening with a specialist?) – Lung (low-dose CT) ▶ Is genetic testing covered to identify employees with high genetic risk for cancer? ▶ What are my screening rates? ▶ What do my employees say about screening benefits? ▶ Do employees regularly visit their primary care provider? ▶ Do employees have access to affordable care to ask about symptoms and next steps?
<p>Communications & Support</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ What information is available to inform my employees about screening benefits? ▶ Do search tools for facilities and providers help employees find convenient, low-cost, high-quality screenings?
<p>Other policies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Do we offer paid time off or flexible scheduling for cancer screenings?



Diagnosis

A cancer diagnosis typically happens through a biopsy (tissue sample) and imaging. Diagnosis is a multi-step process and can take days or weeks, causing significant stress and anxiety to the employee. Follow-up tests allow doctors to learn more information about the type of cancer, if it has spread, and what treatments will work best.

Employee actions

- ▶ Receive additional tests, including biopsies, imaging, and biomarker testing.
- ▶ Learn about my cancer type and treatment options.
- ▶ Tell family, friends, and employer about the diagnosis.

Key questions for employers

<p>Benefits</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ How are biopsies and pathology services covered under our plan? ▶ What is the variation in cost that an employee might pay for a biopsy and pathology report? ▶ Is genetic testing covered to identify employees with high genetic risk for cancer? ▶ Is tumor genetic testing (biomarker testing) covered? ▶ What type of prior authorization is required under our plan for imaging such as MRI, CT or PET scans? What is the cost-benefit of the prior authorization program for cancer patients?
<p>Communications & Support</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Do provider search tools help employees identify specialists who can perform biopsies and diagnose cancers, such as breast surgeons or urologists? ▶ What services are available to help employees understand pathology reports? ▶ Do we offer second opinions? How does an employee learn about a second opinion program? What are the costs? How long does it take? ▶ Does our health plan offer information on benign, non-cancer conditions such as cysts or benign prostate hyperplasia?
<p>Other policies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ How are HR professionals and managers trained in policies relevant to team members with cancer? How are managers trained to communicate with team members sharing a cancer diagnosis? ▶ Do we have ERGs or other informal employee networks that can be leveraged to support colleagues with cancer?

Treatment

Most common cancer treatments include surgery(ies), radiation, chemotherapy, immunotherapy, or precision medicine. Depending on the cancer, treatment can consist of a simple outpatient procedure, or last months or even years. Treatment can take a toll on employees physically, mentally, and emotionally, and the impact extends to family and loved ones. Supportive employers streamline access to benefits and simplify policies to allow their employees to focus on their wellbeing, instead of navigating plan coverage.

Employee actions

- ▶ Decide on a treatment plan and start treatment.
- ▶ Decide how to finance treatments.
- ▶ Make arrangements for absence from work.



- ▶ Make arrangements for childcare, petcare, cleaning, meals, travel, and physical support at home during and after surgery or treatment.
- ▶ Maintain mental and emotional wellbeing.

Key questions for employers

<p>Benefits</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Does our health plan help employees find Centers of Excellence? ▶ Does our health plan have value-based arrangements with oncology practices? ▶ How are specialty drugs covered under our plan? Does our plan encourage biosimilars? ▶ What are the out-of-pocket pharmacy costs for employees with cancer? ▶ Are clinical trials covered under our plan? ▶ What type of prior authorization is required under our plan for imaging such as MRI, CT or PET scans? What type of prior authorization is required under our plan for chemotherapy drugs? What is the cost-benefit of the prior authorization program for cancer patients? ▶ What complementary treatments (e.g., acupuncture, massage) are covered under our plan? ▶ What behavioral health benefits are covered? Are employees able to find therapists? ▶ Are wigs covered? What is the benefit? Is the employee required to use an in-network wig provider? ▶ Are cold caps covered? Are cold caps covered when billed separately from chemotherapy? ▶ Does our plan cover travel expenses for medical care?
------------------------	---

<p>Communications & Support</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ What additional services (e.g., clinical trials, meal delivery, transportation, childcare, petcare, house cleaning) are needed by my employees? ▶ How do employees access information about additional community-based services available to them when undergoing cancer treatment? ▶ How do employees access financial support to pay for treatment? ▶ Does our health plan offer nurse care managers or advocates to every employee with cancer or only some? How do employees access these services?
<p>Other policies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ What is the process for short-term or long-term disability? How do employees submit documentation and access benefits? ▶ What supplemental benefits do we offer that may help with cancer care costs? ▶ Do we offer flexible schedules to accommodate treatment appointments or treatment side effects?



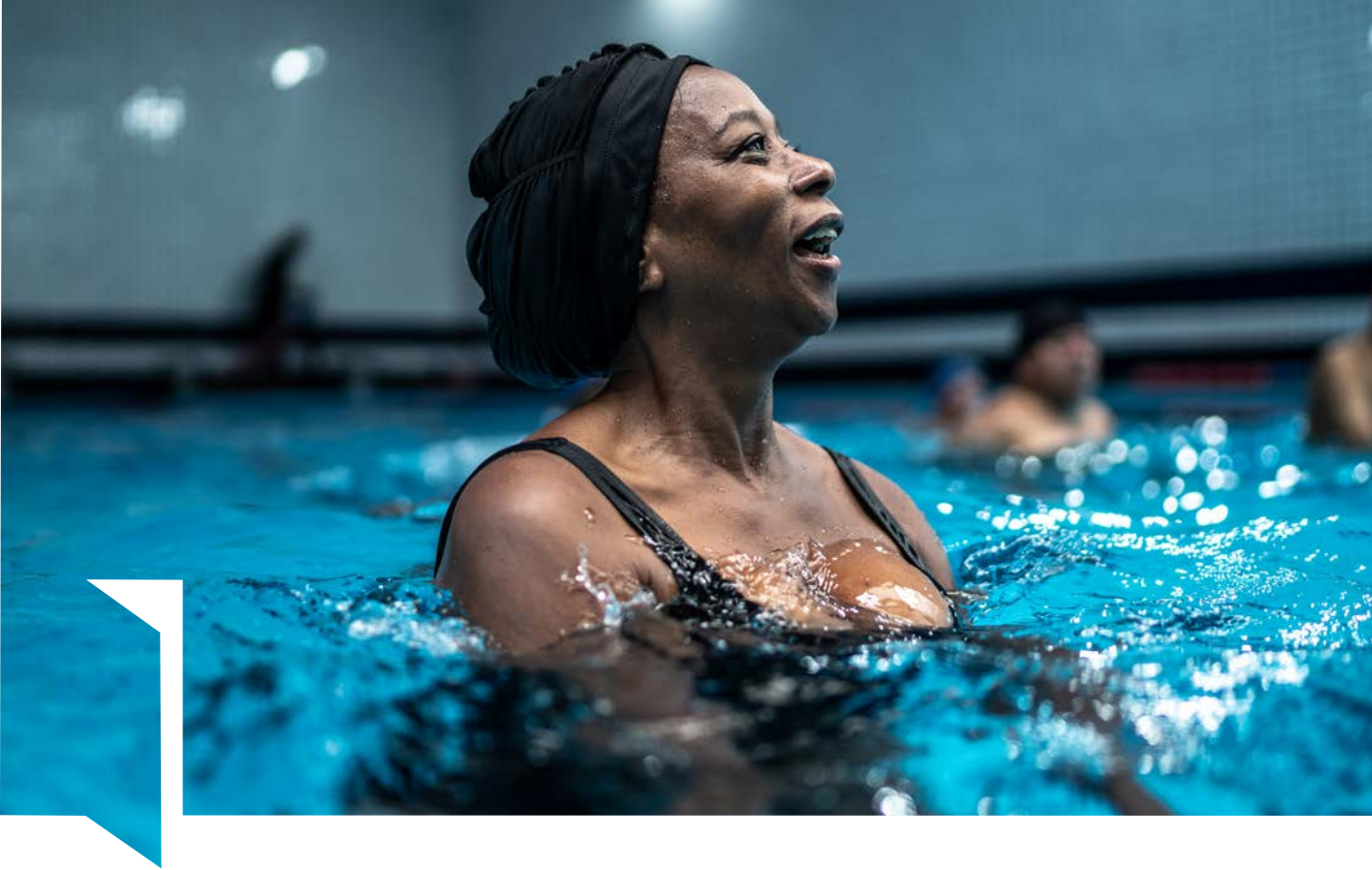


Life after cancer treatment

While the grind of treatment may be over, employees need significant support to recover and transition back to work and life. Many have experienced significant changes to their bodies, relationships, and sense of self. While some may not have missed a day and most want to “return to normal”, many will need time to process what has happened and rebuild physically and emotionally.

Employee actions

- ▶ Receive ongoing screening, imaging or blood tests.
- ▶ Recover physically and emotionally from treatments.
- ▶ Access therapy services.
- ▶ Transition back to work.



Key questions for employers

Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ How are future cancer screenings covered for cancer survivors? Will they be considered diagnostic or preventive? ▶ What physical therapy and nutrition benefits are available under our plan? ▶ What behavioral health benefits are covered? Are employees able to find therapists? ▶ What additional wellness or wellbeing programs are available (e.g., gym memberships)?
Communications & Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ What community support services are available in my area for cancer survivors? How do employees learn about these services? ▶ How are managers trained in transitioning employees back to work?
Other policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Do we offer flexible schedules to accommodate extra medical or behavioral health appointments?

Family & caregiver support

When an employee has someone else in their life with a cancer diagnosis—spouse, child or parent—they will experience a host of changes. Some may transition into a caregiver role and need additional support as they navigate cancer with their loved one. It's important to consider the resources available to these employees.

Employee actions

- ▶ Attend appointments with family member and take notes.
- ▶ Access information and educate themselves on treatments and side effects.
- ▶ Provide physical support during and after treatment.
- ▶ Make additional arrangements for childcare, petcare, cleaning, and meals.
- ▶ Maintain mental and emotional wellbeing.



Key questions for employers

<p>Benefits</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ What coverage is available to spouses and dependents? ▶ Does my second opinion, medical advice or navigator program apply to spouses and dependents?
<p>Communications & Support</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ How do employees access information about additional community-based services available to them when undergoing cancer treatment? ▶ What behavioral health benefits are covered? Are employees able to find therapists?
<p>Other policies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Do we offer flexible schedules to accommodate medical or behavioral health appointments?



About Summus

Summus is the leading virtual health company, founded with a mission to restore human connection in healthcare. Our proprietary marketplace model empowers patients, families, caregivers, and physicians to share and access high quality specialty expertise—across all health questions, at any point in the journey. With a curated network of more than 5,100 renowned specialists from top academic medical centers, and more than 2.1 million members around the world, Summus serves as the clinical front door to access trusted, high quality, healthcare expertise, and to support people in the moments that matter most.

Better access.

Better decisions.

Better outcomes. Across the continuum of care.

To learn more about how Summus provides support throughout a cancer journey, visit <https://gosummus.info/cancer>.





in @summus-inc

🐦 @summusglobal