

Fidelity Workplace Consulting

International Health Care and Wellness Newsletter

# Don't Miss the Opportunity to Promote World Cancer Day: Feb. 4th

January 2020

Fidelity's International Health Care and Wellness newsletter focuses on the key issues surrounding employer-sponsored health and wellness issues globally.

In the legislative realm, the Irish Old-Age Pension system is currently under reform; and in India, proposed legislation would allow for members with equity in the Employees' Pension Scheme (EPS) to transfer that position to the National Pension Scheme (NPS).

This newsletter was originally scheduled to cover retirement topics, but in light of World Cancer Day coming up on February 4th, this month's feature article highlights the upcoming awareness day and also includes practical next steps for employers to raise awareness and educate their workforce.

[Watch video.](#)

## What's Inside

- ⌵ Legislative and Regulatory Update
- ⌵ World Cancer Day: February 4th of 2020

## Legislative Updates



### United States

On December 20, 2019, legislation was passed that directly impacts US retirement legislation through the "SECURE" Act and repeals three affordable care act taxes.

#### Repeal of ACA Taxes:

1. The 40% excise tax on high-cost health care coverage (commonly known as the "Cadillac Tax" which was set to become effective 2022).
2. The Health Insurer Fee (HIF) starting in 2021.
3. The medical devices tax, which has been suspended since 2016.

#### The SECURE Act

In what may be the most significant retirement savings reform legislation since the Pension Protection Act of 2006 impacts defined contribution (DC), defined benefit (DB), individual retirement accounts (IRAs) and 529 accounts.

A summary of all the provisions included in the SECURE Act can be found [here](#).

#### Action Required

Take Action – implement the SECURE Act and/or the implications of the repeal of the ACA taxes on your health plans as well as any retiree medical plans you may sponsor. Take advantage of all available opportunities.



### India

In India, the social security system is based on two programs:

1. the defined contribution, Employee's Provident Fund (EPF), and
2. the Employees' Pension Scheme (EPS), a defined benefit program for workers with monthly earnings up to INR 15,000 (approximately \$210 in U.S. dollars)

The government has proposed legislation that would allow for the transfer of an individual's equity position from the EPS to the National Pension Scheme (NPS), a defined contribution plan originally established for government workers in 2004 that was subsequently opened to the general population in 2009.

This would provide a new option for supplemental retirement benefits for employees that also participate in the mandatory EPF system. The NPS allows for up to a 60% tax-free lump sum at retirement, while the remaining balance becomes converted to a taxable annuity.

#### Action Required

Monitor – if approved, the favorable tax treatment of the NPS may benefit a wide range of employees.



### Ireland

Ireland's government is currently in the process of reforming the Irish Old-Age Pension System. Late last year, key elements of a new mandatory auto-enrollment, defined contribution retirement savings plan were announced.

The plan will cover employees between ages 23 – 60, given earnings of at least €20,000 (approximately \$22,000 in U.S. dollars) annually and not participating in an approved supplemental pension plan. Both employees and employers will be subject to a minimum contribution rate of 1.5% for the first three years of the plan's existence. Contribution increases will be phased in every three years in 1.5% increments until both parties are contributing 6%, each with a cap on the maximum earnings of €75,000. Employees will be able to opt-out, but will automatically be re-enrolled after 3 years.

Participants will be able to choose the administrator of their account from a selected pool of plan providers. Plan providers will be selected and overseen by a government agency. The investment options will be regulated to a set of standard investment options, including default funds and administrative fees will be capped at 0.5% of assets under management.

These plans are expected to be fully designed by 2022.

#### Action Required

Monitor – for organizations with existing supplemental plans, now may be the time to proactively revisit provisions.

## World Cancer Day: February 4th of 2020

February 4th of 2020 marks the 20th anniversary for World Cancer Day, an international awareness day led by the Union for International Cancer Control (UICC) with the intent of improving education and catalyzing action around cancer awareness and early intervention. With over 9.5 million cancer-related deaths each year<sup>1</sup>, cancer either directly or indirectly touches many of our lives. Companies have the unique ability to bring awareness and education to their employees by actively encouraging healthy lifestyles and early detections through cancer screenings and self-checking procedures. World Cancer Day is just one opportunity for organizations to put an event on their well-being calendars that could directly impact their employees, families, and communities.

In late 2019, Unum published a study<sup>2</sup> on 300 employees diagnosed with cancer in the workplace. The results of the study showed that:



**40%**  
were not familiar with the cancer resources available from their employer.



**84%**  
agreed that their loyalty to their employer was directly correlated to the support they received.



**52%**  
agreed that they may have been able to return to work sooner if they had received better support.

Making sure employees are aware of the programs available to them (such as employee assistance programs, private medical insurance provision, or charitable support groups specializing in cancer) is one simple way for employers to ensure they are receiving a return on their investment while at the same time playing their part in the fight against cancer. Promoting events on their well-being calendars or general employee promotions, such as World Cancer Day, is just one way for employers to communicate the resources available to employees and create opportunities for engagement.

### Early Detection & Cancer Screenings

While many existing well-being programs target the known behavioral and dietary habits that may increase the risk of cancer (such as smoking, lifestyle, and nutrition), fewer focus on early detection and accessibility of care which may have a larger impact on the success rate of defeating cancer. Early detection focusses on reducing the number of individuals who are diagnosed at a late stage, with the ultimate aim of ensuring cancer is spotted and treated as soon as possible. Better outcomes from cancer are proven to be achieved by early detection and intervention.

Figures and research from the Surveillance, Epidemiology, and End Result ("SEER") database examine cancer survival rates across borders to shed light on the detection and treatment of cancer.



Out of 18 million new cancer cases in 2018, 5 million cases of breast, cervical, colorectal and oral cancers could have been detected earlier<sup>3</sup>.



A woman in the United States would have a 93% chance of surviving for at least 5 years if diagnosed with cervical cancer in the early stages; which drops to just 15% if detected in advanced stages<sup>4</sup>. In India, the chances of survival are more marked at 78% and 9% respectively<sup>5</sup>.



A study carried out across sub-Saharan Africa and South-East Asia found that interventions such as smear tests, mammograms, and colonoscopies are cost effective ways to detect and treat certain cancers<sup>6</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.worldcancerday.org/why-cancer>

<sup>2</sup> <https://cdn2.hubspot.net/hubfs/234061/Cancer%20in%20the%20workplace%20infographic.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> <http://gco.iarc.fr/today/data/factsheets/cancers/39-All-cancers-fact-sheet.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.cancer.org/cancer/cervical-cancer/detection-diagnosis-staging/survival.html>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.jcgo.org/index.php/jcgo/article/view/367/208>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.bmj.com/content/344/bmj.e614>

Many countries have cancer screenings available to certain parts of the population; however, for various reasons (e.g. fear of diagnosis) many people often fail to adhere to periodic cancer screening activities. To help overcome this obstacle, organizations may choose to offer cancer screenings to employees via health check-ups or onsite visits. Periodic health check-ups may even include mammograms and prostate exams. Having the screenings as part of the corporate well-being initiative may encourage individuals to be more proactive about screening - some US employers even offer incentives for participation.

When deciding if a corporation should consider sponsoring cancer screenings across countries, it is imperative to consider the appropriateness of the screenings, the type of screenings and the employee demographics.

- The World Health Organization recommends that the screening tests are carefully selected so that as few as possible pass through undetected and as few as possible without the disease do not receive a positive test result<sup>7</sup>.
- Developed countries may conduct targeted screenings, such as for breast and cervical cancers, whereas screening in less developed countries may be more general. It is important to avoid trying to impose "high-technology" in countries that lack the infrastructure and/or resources to use the technology appropriately.
- Cancers that are being screened for should be relatively common, with treatments available for the majority.
- Cultural normalities should be observed and adhered to. For example, in the Middle East many women would be deterred from receiving screenings if the screenings were to be administered by a male health care professional.

### ***What's Next for Multinationals***

While World Cancer Day on February 4th is quickly approaching this is just one event to try and focus attention on an area where greater focus can have beneficial results. However, this should not be seen as the only opportunity for employers to promote the subject of cancer with their employees. Organizations should actively promote existing support available to their employees periodically through established communication channels or well-being platforms, in addition to making information available through self-service channels.

An employee's total well-being spans across domains of health, money, work, and life - cancer also spans these same domains. The potential early detection of certain conditions could lead to early diagnoses and treatment which may hopefully lead to better outcomes for employees, their families and for the company.

### ***What Simple Steps can be Taken by Companies?***

A simple yet effective method to aid the early detection of cancer is to encourage employees to self-check. It is recommended by Cancer Research UK that individuals should periodically self-check for abnormalities which may indicate signs of cancer. Self-checking may lead to unnecessary anxiety; however, intermittent checks are suggested to ensure awareness of any abnormalities. Common parts of the body to self-check include breasts, testicles and skin. Some simple initiatives that employers could easily deploy to raise awareness are:



Posters/flyers in restrooms informing employees how to self-check



Running a World Cancer Day communication to raise awareness



Focusing a charitable effort in respect to cancer, something which is close to many individuals



Offering counseling and or physiological support to employees or their families effected by cancer



Creating a periodic calendar of events to reinforce good practice throughout the year

More information on World Cancer Day including toolkits, posters, infographics and more can be found at: <https://www.worldcancerday.org/materials>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.who.int/cancer/detection/variouscancer/en/>

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Global Benefits Governance	International DC Governance	International Retirement & Financial Wellbeing	International Health care & Wellness	International Miscellaneous
<p>Design/ implementation of a tailored global benefits governance structure</p> <p>International audit and compliance review of overseas plans</p> <p>Benchmarking and development of global policies and standards</p> <p>Independent ongoing support to global benefits committees</p> <p>Advice on global financing opportunities, including risk financing</p> <p>Training on best practices in international benefits management</p>	<p>Developing fiduciary and compliance oversight and policy for international DC plans</p> <p>Cross border implementation of best practice and group policy</p> <p>Development of preferred provider arrangements to drive operational and financial efficiency</p> <p>Support on enhancing employee experience through developing &amp; implementing communication best practice</p> <p>Ongoing support to global benefits committees</p>	<p><b>Financial Wellbeing</b></p> <p>Benchmarking/ implementation of global best practice</p> <p>Design/ implementation of programs to support financial well-being</p> <p>Vendor selection and oversight for globally consistent local implementation</p>	<p><b>International Health care</b></p> <p>Vendor selection for international health care policies</p> <p>Advice on strategies to improve employee behaviors and reduce health care costs</p> <p>Development of health care policies to improve financial/ operational efficiency</p>	<p>Development of global insurance programs to reduce costs/commissions and improve operational efficiency</p> <p>Advice on country benefits practice (both Mandatory and typical practice)</p> <p>Support for benefit aspects on mergers, acquisitions and divestitures/splits</p> <p>Independent second opinions on local advice</p> <p>Strategy to respond to legislative changes</p> <p>Facilitation of global stock plan advice</p> <p>On-site support and benefits leadership</p>
		<p><b>International Retirement</b></p> <p>Benchmarking/ setting of globally consistent financing assumptions</p> <p>Advice on opportunities for de-risking in respect of retirement plans</p> <p>Consolidation of financial reporting &amp; budgeting</p>	<p><b>Wellness</b></p> <p>Global wellness education strategies &amp; programs</p> <p>Benchmarking and deployment of global wellness programs</p> <p>Vendor selection for International providers</p>	

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