

**From:**  
**To:** [Community Affairs Committee \(SEN\)](#)  
**Subject:** Possible cancer cluster on the Bellarine Peninsula, Victoria, Australia.  
**Date:** Sunday, 16 February 2020 6:16:09 PM

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## Terms of Reference

Investigations into a possible cancer cluster on the Bellarine Peninsula, Victoria, with particular reference to:  
the health concerns of local residents;  
the incidence of cancer cases in the area, and any possible environmental or other contributing factors;  
the evidence, approach and outcomes concerning the Victorian Chief Health Officer's investigation of cancer rates on the Bellarine Peninsula; and  
Any other related matter.

My name is [REDACTED], I am a mother, a grandmother, a wife, a friend and I am also a Community Palliative care nurse. I have worked in the Bellarine and Barwon region in this capacity for many years. I moved to [REDACTED] Barwon Heads in 1998 as a single parent with 3 children. My children's names are [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. At this time they were 8, 5 and 3 years old respectively. When we moved to this beautiful seaside village I thought that I was giving my children the best possible lifestyle, which involved fresh air, freedom to explore nature and of course the wonderful beach and the sea to swim in.

When we were at home, my children and I would spend most of our time outside and when we were inside, we always had the windows open to let in the fresh air. They played outside close to the mangroves and rode bikes, played cricket and tennis, in our very safe court with only a few houses. We went to the Pirate park, the nature reserve, walks along the river and of course we were at the beach every day in the summer.

What we didn't know that whilst we were sleeping we were constantly being poisoned by multiple chemicals such as Temphos, Malathion and others. There was also aerial/helicopter spread of pellets dropped during the day. We were never asked or informed that this spraying was going on all around us and all over the Barwon Heads community, with the aim to prevent the breeding of mosquitos.

After several years we moved to Ocean Grove, [REDACTED], which also had a beautiful lack at the end of the street where the spraying was also occurring. Again we knew nothing about the products that were being used.

In August, 2010 my son [REDACTED] was diagnosed with Ulcerative Colitis (IBDU-Pancolitis), he was 15 and had been very sick for 9 months or more prior to diagnosis. [REDACTED] was gravely ill and required an admission and hospital treatment to control his symptoms. He had constant diarrhoea, blood in his stools, he could not absorb any nutrients, had extreme weight loss, nausea, abdominal pain and fatigue. Ulcerative Colitis is an autoimmune disease whereby the body attacks itself and causes ulceration to the bowel along with the other symptoms that I have mentioned. It took a long time for [REDACTED]'s health to improve and he has to manage his condition with daily oral medications, corticosteroids with flare ups and an immunosuppressant which also lists cancer as a side effect.

Shortly after [REDACTED] diagnosis in September 2010, [REDACTED] was diagnosed with Chrons disease (CD- A2L3pB1\*) she was 19. [REDACTED] came out of hospital and [REDACTED] went straight in. Not only did [REDACTED] have these hideous symptoms, bleeding, abdominal pain, diarrhoea, nausea, vomiting, [REDACTED] had a very large access, the size of an orange which was attached to the lower bowel and had to be excised and drained. [REDACTED] spent months having to have this wound dressed and cared for daily. The wound never really healed and turned into a fistula. This has caused [REDACTED] great discomfort and has impacted her quality of life, self esteem and ability to work at times. [REDACTED] continued to have to have further surgeries to manage the Fistula that just would not heal.

■■■■ works in childcare and has been lucky to have wonderful employers who have supported her when she was sick and or hospitalised due to this insidious autoimmune disease, which causes the disease to attack not only the bowel, but the outside of the bowel and the entire GI tract.

■■■■ has been on immune suppressant and biological therapy, delivered intravenously every 8 weeks, for the whole of the last 10 years, with the inclusion of corticosteroids frequently to contain the disease.

On December 1st, 2018 ■■■■ gave birth to a beautiful baby girl, ■■■■ at 33 weeks. The pregnancy was a roller coaster with the baby taking all of the nutrition that ■■■■ had in her body, there were frequent hospital admission with bowel flare ups and the intravenous therapy continued to keep mother and baby alive. Due to the fistula ■■■■ also had to have a caesarean to protect her lower rectal and perianal area, which caused more complications for my poor daughter. Eleven months after ■■■■ birth ■■■■ was once again hospitalised as the Chrons had got out of control and run rampant through her entire abdomen. ■■■■ had to have further surgery to remove 30 centimetres of her bowel, form an ileostomy for bowel movements to exit from, excise several large abscesses and release a massive amount of abdominal adhesions that had attached to her internal organs and bowel.

Once again my poor daughter had to endure the pain involved in surgery and miss out on normal life and motherhood with her partner and baby girl. ■■■■ will struggle this demon for the rest of her life.

Whilst I was visiting ■■■■ in hospital I ran into my old neighbour from Barwon heads Mrs F, we had a coffee and we both disclosed that we were both recovering from Breast cancer. My former neighbour was diagnosed in 2015 and I was diagnosed in January 2017. My neighbour went on to tell me how many other people in our court had cancer and autoimmune diseases and one person in our court had even died from cancer.

I was shocked, but when I started to put things together the pieces all fell into place. As a Community Palliative care nurse I had noticed that many young people in Barwon heads were my patients and they were dying. The most common types that I was seeing were breast, brain and blood cancers. I had heard in the community over the recent years people commenting on the strangeness of so many autoimmune diseases and cancers being present in such a small community?

As I started to research this phenomenon again I was shocked with the data that Ross Harrison had collected from people going into his shop and sharing their data about their diseases and their sad stories.

In January of 2017 I was diagnosed with Stage 1, Grade 3 Breast cancer, Oestrogen, Progesterone and Her 2 positive. I had a Lumpectomy (surgery), a Portacath inserted to my chest wall, Chemotherapy for 12 weeks, Herceptin every 3 weeks via injection for 12 months and radiation daily for 4 weeks, 5 days per week. I also have to take hormone suppressant medication Tamoxifen for 5 years. I have side effects from the treatment and the ongoing medication that I have to manage on a daily basis. I have to have frequent blood tests, mammograms, ultrasounds and MRI's to monitor for the possible return of the cancer, and I wake up every day wondering if it has come back?

What amazes me that despite the Chief medical officers report that there is nothing to see here, the government requested that a study be carried out within the Greater City of Geelong, Victoria area, between 2007-2008 investigating the extremely high incidence of Inflammatory bowel disease in this area. In conjunction with the Bennelong Foundation, The Gutsy Group, Dr Jarrad Wilson from the Department of Gastroenterology at St. Vincent's hospital, Melbourne discovered that indeed, "the inflammatory bowel disease incidence rate of 29.3 per 100, 00 is the second highest ever reported in the literature, and the Chron's disease incidence rate of 17.8 per 100,000 is the highest ever reported".

October, 5, 2015, The Gutsy Group (The PostOperative Chron's Endoscopic Recurrence (POCER) Study— In 2007 and 2008, in conjunction with the Bennelong Foundation, The Gutsy Group contributed \$70,000 to a study undertaken by research fellow, Dr Jarrad Wilson from the Department of Gastroenterology at St Vincent's Hospital, Melbourne The goal was to produce the first prospective population-based Australian incidence and study of inflammatory bowel disease

As a result of this research, Dr Jarrad Wilson was awarded the gold medal in 2008 by the Gastroenterological Society of Australia for the best clinical research for a junior investigator

The report is titled High Incidence of Inflammatory Bowel Disease in Australia: A Prospective Population-Based Australian Incidence Study and was published in 2010

The research was carried out in Greater Geelong, Victoria The risk population was 259,000, and all 274 general practitioners and specialists working in this

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area were contacted every twomonths to identify all new cases occurring in one year The results were:

- 75 new cases of inflammatory bowel disease, 46 Crohn's disease and 29 ulcerative colitis The peak incidence occurred between 20-24 years-of-age, with 42 females and 33 males
- The inflammatory bowel disease incidence rate of 29.3 per 100,000 is the second highest ever reported in the literature, and the Crohn's disease incidence rate of 17.8 per 100,000 is the highest ever reported

My family, people who still live there, people who had holiday houses or camped every year in the area, are one of many families affected by these terrible diseases, and I sincerely believe that the mosquito spraying chemicals caused these endocrine disrupters to infiltrate so many of our community. There are many research articles that validate our claims linking the chemical sprays that were used by the council (COGG), to cancer and autoimmune diseases. It just makes sense that if mosquitos are living beings and this kills them, well humans are also living beings so why wouldn't the chemicals infiltrate into our bodies?

I pray every day that a Royal Commission will come out of this inquiry and this will stop happening to others all over the world where these chemicals are still being used. I am happy to provide any further research papers and studies if required.

Regards,