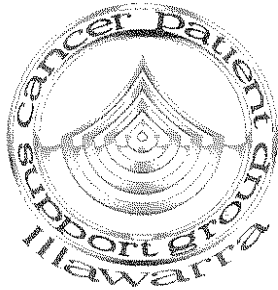


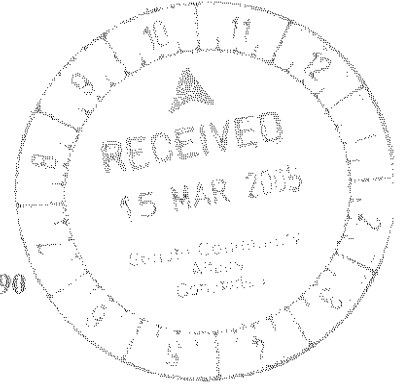
CANCER PATIENT SUPPORT GROUP

(Illawarra) Incorporated



Facilitator: Sr. Geraldine Burrows CNC – tel. 4229 2755
Secretary: Jean Barrett – tel. 4285 2692
Patrons: Dr Philip & Margaret Clingan
PLEASE ADDRESS MAIL TO:
Sr Geraldine Burrows CNC, Community Health Centre
Piccadilly Centre, 341 Crown Street, Wollongong 2500

ABN 47 482 724 029 CFN 10629 INC9880290



The Secretary
Senate Community Affairs Reference Committee
Suite S1 59
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

March 11, 2005

Dear Sir/Madam,

Following a letter from Sharon Bird MP of February 17, 2005, as a non-professional organisation we wish to respond to clauses (a) (iii) and (a) (v) in your Terms of Reference. Please refer to attached SUBMISSION ...

The Cancer Patient Support Group (Illawarra) has a membership of cancer patients, their families and carers, and survivors of all types of cancer, and is facilitated by a Clinical Nurse Consultant in Oncology (CNC Oncology). There are support groups for general cancer patients, bowel cancer patients, gynaecological cancer patients, with relaxation sessions, Art as Therapy classes, education and information seminars, courses and workshops, and social/respite activities. We work closely with the Illawarra Breast Cancer Support Group, which initiates many exercise and healthy lifestyle programmes, and also provides support for prostate cancer patients.

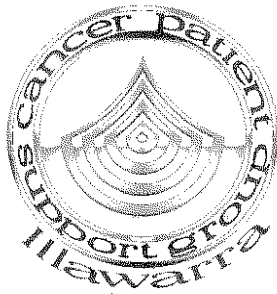
While fully-approved and encouraged by Illawarra Area Health and the Community Health Service, we receive no financial assistance from either body, and rely entirely upon community donations to continue these services to people living with cancer.

We hope our submission will receive favourable attention ...

Sincerely

Jean Barrett
Secretary

CANCER PATIENT SUPPORT GROUP (Illawarra) Incorporated



President: Dr. Dorothy Jones – tel. 4228 7823
Facilitator: Sr. Geraldine Burrows CNC – tel. 4229 2755
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SUBMISSION

to the Senate Community Affairs Reference Committee
for attention to the following items in your Terms of Reference

(a) (iii) *differing models and best practice in delivering psycho/social factors in patient care.*

Many research studies have found that failure to address people's psycho/social issues from the time of diagnosis may have major impact on the continuing wellbeing of the patient. Issues arise from the time of diagnosis, through the trauma and misery of treatment/surgery, and continue into remission/survival, or the need for palliative care. A diagnosis of cancer presents major concerns in family dynamics, marital relationships, sexuality, status in the workplace, social life, as well as creating financial and legal difficulties.

At the moment Area Health can only offer outpatients limited time, and this after a long waiting period, with a small group of rotated, generally-trained Social Workers and limited access to Clinical Psychologists.

Cancer patients would benefit greatly with more Social Workers and Clinical Psychologists, who are trained and dedicated to cancer and related issues.

(a) (v) *current barriers to the implementation of best practises*

A barrier that affects this and other Support Groups from delivering efficient services to people living with cancer is lack of suitable premises. At present, support resources are scattered in a variety of venues. Our dream would be the provision of a safe, caring and accessible place to initiate and coordinate activities under one roof. We see this initially as a building that could be converted to space for group meetings, the existing Resource and Information Library, therapeutic arts and craft activities, counselling and 'quiet' room, information and education courses, workshops and mini-seminars, and, eventually, much more. We realise the enormous commitment involved, with administration, maintenance/cleaning, ongoing costs etc., but stress that volunteers could be recruited where practical.

Cancer patients would benefit greatly from community premises dedicated to the specific and multiple needs of people living with cancer

We do hope that these suggestions will be seriously considered by the Senate Community Affairs References Committee during the inquiry and report of June 23, 2005.

Jean Barrett, Secretary
Cancer Patient Support Group (Illawarra)
March 11, 2005