

Senate Cancer Inquiry

[this is in point form due to the shortage of time, I am happy to prepare a more detailed doc or give more info on any points]

Personal experience:

- ✓ Stage II breast cancer diag June 2002
- ✓ Surgery *2, chemo, radiation under specialist medical supervision/advice
- ✓ PLUS used complementary integrated medicine + evidence based medicine (ref Gawler Foundation Vic, Petrea King Bundanoon NSW)
- ✓ Participant in Reavely N et al research [The effect of meditation, positive thinking, diet and psychosocial support on psychological and physical wellbeing in cancer patients]
- ✓ Ongoing Tamoxifen, 'Gawler' diet and lifestyle features (eg meditation, exercise, group therapy (Border breast cancer groups and activities), remedial massage, yoga)

Issues

- Rural - difficulty accessing continued support for integrated and evidence based medical practitioners (rural cancer patients still have less favourable outcomes than city patients in all facets - quality of life, support, morbidity)
- Medicare etc - cost of 'supporting' patients using complementary/integrated approach less than that of the expensive pharmacy-based treatments, less hospital admissions
- Many inconveniences Eg - to maintain the integrated approach and shop and prepare foods needs effort (as compared to buying processed foods) - impossible to get home help for housework (I live alone, and was reasonably fit ie I *could* walk and cook, so didn't pass the assessment); choosing meditation means other tasks must be ignored - no support (either from medical practitioners or even friends who didn't understand why I didn't take 'a pill' rather than spend time meditating, exercising, juicing)