

**Senator Peter Cook**  
Senator for Western Australia  
Australian Labor Party

May I begin by congratulating you on taking the initiative to conduct this cancer inquiry.

As someone who was diagnosed with inoperable cancer this is of particular interest to me. Following diagnosis I was administered palliative radiotherapy and chemotherapy. I was then told I could have further chemo but it was only likely to offer me an extra 3-6 months.

I chose not to follow this path. Life seemed to be in a holding pattern after this- feeling I should be out making the most of my remaining time but feeling as if (was "spinning my wheels" so to speak!

I then decided to attend the Gawler Foundation in the Yarra Valley in Victoria for one of their 10 day residential programs for people facing life-threatening illness and their carers.

This experience marked a turning point in my life. Here we were prepared for living our lives to the full as well as preparing for and facing our death. Physical, emotional and spiritual needs were addressed and the greatest gift of all was HOPE –hope that whatever lay ahead we would be able to deal with and that we only have the present moment.

My wish for outcomes of this inquiry is that

- Government support be given to centers such as the Gawler Foundation to enable more people to attend these life-giving programs.
- That funding be allocated to research into the field of integrative medicine. People with cancer are extremely vulnerable and there is little research to guide them through the plethora of options and the validity of these.
- Greater encouragement and support of health professionals in Integrated Medicine should also be a priority.

Having been diagnosed with stomach cancer with liver secondaries 18 months ago I feel truly blessed to be still alive and working today. I put this success down in no small part to the Gawler Foundation and recommend that similar programs be set up around the country. This would probably prove to be cost effective as more would continue to be productive in the workforce for a longer period.

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute and may this lead to greater benefits for all facing a cancer diagnosis.

Anna Keating.