

## **PE1552/D**

### **PE1552 Petition**

#### **Petitioner Response**

Thank you for forwarding the responses to petition PE1552

Based on the fact that Scotland is still well below the European average for the full range of cancer survival rates, we should be examining and copying those countries, not only in Europe, but around the world who are succeeding where we are failing.

Cancer treatment is divided up into specialist sub-sections depending on cancer type, but what seems to have been forgotten is that cancer affects the whole person and should be treated holistically. The holistic approach allows for “complementary and/or alternative” treatments to supplement the present surgery, radiation and chemotherapy approach. Bits of the body cannot be treated in isolation.

When the best of orthodox treatment is combined with the best of complementary therapies and alternative treatments, Scotland could well be on its way to building an effective holistic cancer therapy. This would not only benefit the individual patient and their families but also stop a drain on the NHS budget, a cost we can ill afford.

Based on the three responses we have the following questions and comments

#### **General Medical Council Scotland response**

While we accept the ethos behind the GMC response and their Good Medical Practice this in some cases does not seem to apply to some oncologists who do not like being questioned on other options apart from the course of treatment they advise. Some seem to disregard the guidance given in Para 31 & 48. Some cancer patients tell us that their oncologist would not even discuss complementary therapies.

Over recent years the Government have been spending advertising money on the benefits of a healthy diet to reduce not only cancer but a range of other diseases. Might this not be a good time to include nutrition and the benefits of food into medical training? After all was it not the father of medicine Hippocrates who said, “Let food be thy medicine and medicine be thy food” Given the present NHS and Government drive to get people involved in exercise it is also interesting that he said “Walking is the best medicine”

#### **Scottish Government/Scottish Cancer Taskforce response**

States that: “Through our work with the Scottish Cancer Taskforce and partnerships with third sector organisations we are working to ensure that cancer care in Scotland is second to none.”

If the aim is to be second to none, why are statistics showing Scotland so far down the survival rate tables? We are below the European average for all cancers. Why are the Taskforce not looking at other countries and clinics with a higher success rate?

### **Cancer Research UK Response**

1. “Chemotherapy, radiotherapy and surgery are all proven treatments that benefit cancer patients – surgery (50%) and radiotherapy (40%) still cure more patients than any other type of treatment.”

Can we assume from these figures that the other 50% non surgical patients and 60% non radiotherapy were all cured by chemotherapy as that is the only other conventional additional treatment on offer in Scotland.

2. “Medical equipment based on energy emissions does exist....But each of these devices has been rigorously tested for particular indications – and there is solid evidence from years of peer-reviewed medical research and clinical trials that they are effective tools.”

Some alternative cancer therapies (like Cyberknife, brachytherapy and Nanoknife) are being used within mainstream hospitals in the USA and the UK, without rigorous clinical trials supporting them. Other alternative cancer therapies (like HIFU for prostate cancer; or Optune TTF) have clinical trial research, but that doesn't get either widely 'accepted' by the medical profession. Even FDA approval is no guarantee to get a treatment off the 'alternative list'

The fact is Virotherapy, Dendritic Cell Therapy, most radiotherapy (including new hot subjects like the Cyberknife and Brachytherapy for breast cancer are being increasingly used in hospitals without rigorous Stage III clinical trials behind them.

3. “The Oasis of Hope Cancer Hospital is a centre offering alternative cancer treatments with no proven efficacy, with a particular focus on laetrile.”

It is interesting that CRUK only look at the laetrile aspect based on outdated information from 1976/7. Present figures cancer survival rates show that The Oasis of Hope survival rates are two or three times better than US survival rates depending on the cancer being treated. The hospital does not have a particular focus on laetrile, but offers this as part of their **metabolic therapy** where they uses ozone therapy (again to kill cancer cells with oxygen) and a combination of pancreatic enzymes, vitamin B 17 (b 17, or B-17) and Intravenous Vitamin C and, depending on the cancer being treated, in conjunction with some chemotherapy .

4. “Because we are a charity and not constrained by making profits for shareholders, we are also free to support research and clinical trials testing promising drugs that might not be expected to make money.”

As CRUK is not constrained by making profits it may be worth investing a share of their income to support research on a whole variety of natural products already in use around the world which will never get research money or clinical trials as there is no way of patenting the final product.

## **Summary**

With our present low levels of success compared to many other countries, in the treatment of cancer, Scotland need to look at what is working elsewhere and look to incorporate these practices into our own health system. The benefits would be, not only to the patient and family, but also to the Scottish economy by reducing the cost of our health bills.

We ask the committee to recommend to the Scottish Government and the Scottish Cancer Taskforce to be proactive in investigating successful treatments from other parts of the world and incorporating them into the choices available to the Scottish cancer patient.

Thank you for careful consideration of this petition

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