

Cancer Voices Australia NEWS UPDATE

COSA edition Nov 2013

Clinical Practice Standards

Cancer Voices is advocating for the adoption of Clinical Practice Standards for both radiation oncology and medical oncology, at national and state levels and in public and private sectors. We agree that this would offer both clinicians and patients assurance that treatment offered and provided is best practice. We support the adoption of *Radiation Oncology Practice Standards* (2011), presently only mandated in Queensland. We have raised the concept with relevant Ministers, the Medical Oncology Group of Australia and the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care.

Cyclophosphamide – Security of continuous supply

Imports by Pfizer of this commonly used cancer drug were due to cease on 1 October. Alternative supplies in tablet form are being investigated but may only be available at considerable cost above the PBS co-payment. Cancer Voices continues to inquire into how a threat to supply of any necessary cancer drug can be allowed to arise and how to ensure it does not do so again. Industry newsletter, *Pharma in Focus*, has carried our concerns twice – in 11 Sep and 30 Oct issues. CVA recommends that the broader policy issue be added to the agenda for discussion by government and industry, with health consumer input.

Review of pharmacy funding arrangements for chemotherapy services

Cancer Voices members participated in the consumer consultations held by Consumers Health Forum of Australia (CHF) during August in Adelaide and Sydney, and electronically. CHF's report was an integral part of the DOHA Chemotherapy Funding Review provided to the new Minister for Health in early October. CVA has also made a submission to the Australian National Audit Office investigation of the Administration of the Fifth Community Pharmacy Agreement.

Federal election issues

CVA wrote to the three major political parties, seeking their views on the principal issues for people affected by cancer. Their responses were posted on our Facebook page www.facebook.com/CancerVoicesAustralia. Cancer Voices has welcomed the new Minister for Health, the Hon Peter Dutton MP, and looks forward to working with the new Government.

Say NO to Human Gene Patents campaign

CVA will continue to press for legislative change to address this issue with the new Government. We plan to build on the bipartisan support expressed to us during the year. Cancer Voices attended the first day's hearing of the five-judge Federal Court in Sydney (7-8 Aug).

Clinical Oncology Group of Australia (COSA) ASM, Adelaide Nov 2013

Cancer Voices will be represented by Cancer Voices SA which has assisted COSA with the Consumer Forum, has had an Abstract accepted and has nominated informed consumers to participate in ASM panel discussions. An informational flyer about CVA has been prepared for attendees.

Our upgraded [website www.cancervoicesaustralia.org](http://www.cancervoicesaustralia.org) is open for business. News Updates and all submissions are posted. It also includes electronic forms for:

- Stakeholders wishing to request informed Consumer Representatives
- Consumers wishing to be nominated for committees and projects
- Cancer consumer organisations interested in joining the Cancer Voices Alliance for input on mutual issues.

Cancer Voices Australia is the independent, volunteer voice of people affected by cancer - since 2000.

