8 April 2013

Mr. Ian Holland
Secretary
Standing Committee of Community Affairs
The Senate
PO Box 6100
Parliament House Canberra ACT 2600

Inquiry into the supply of chemotherapy drugs such as Docetaxel

Thank you for the opportunity to address the Committee on Thursday 28th March 2103. I have been asked to provide further details to the Committee.

At our Board Teleconference held on 7th November 2012, it was agreed that CanSpeak would collaborate with relevant organisations to address this important matter in relation to the cost and supply of Chemotherapy infusions to people affected by cancer. This message was relayed to our members via our representatives in each state.

Toowoomba Matter

In mid-November I received an email from a number of concerned persons in and around the Toowoomba area who believed that they may be affected by the current situation as the hospital there indicated that they may not be able to continue to provide Chemotherapy at the hospital.

We advised our constituents that we are working with the Government through a collaborative process to ensure that patients would not be affected.
We have maintained our contact with the group via regular updates.

The evidence given at the hearing regarding the supply in the Toowoomba area continues to be an issue and is being monitored closely.

The Role of the Tasmanian Government

I was advised by a contact in Tasmania on the Wednesday prior to the Senate hearing that the Tasmanian Government may be stepping in to pick up any shortfall in the pricing

of chemotherapy. Through our member organisation in that state we have not been able to establish any further information as to the Tasmanian Government's next steps.

Should we receive any information in relation to the issue we will contact the Inquiry Secretariat immediately.

Our Organisation

CanSpeak promotes the issues of people affected by cancer at a local and national level by working collaboratively with health service organisations, government, non-government and charitable organisations for better outcomes and improved health services.
We are a national network of consumers and consumer organisations representing the views and perspectives of a broad range of people and the community affected by cancer. This network of peak member organisations provides greater capacity to work independently, and together, to influence policy, research and health services to improve outcomes for people affected by cancer.

Yours sincerely

John Stubbs