

**SELECT COMMITTEE ON OFF-PROTOCOL PRESCRIBING OF  
CHEMOTHERAPY IN NSW**

**Inquiry into off-protocol prescribing of chemotherapy in New South Wales**

**HEARING: SYDNEY, MONDAY 31 OCTOBER 2016**

**Professor David Currow: Questions on Notice taken during the hearing**

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** You seem to be familiar with this area. Can you quantify how many cases we are talking about that you decided not to put in the report?

**Professor CURROW:** A handful of cases.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** A handful? Is that 12?

**Professor CURROW:** No. It is fewer than that. There were a handful of cases relating to temozolomide, Mr Secord. I do not have a number. I am happy to take that on notice.

**RESPONSE:**

The Inquiry became aware of 11 people treated at St Vincent's Hospital who were prescribed the oral chemotherapy temozolomide.

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**The CHAIR:** Recommendation 10 of the report says:

That St Vincent's Hospital ensure that Mortality and Morbidity meetings use data beyond individual patients to examine patterns of care and outcomes benchmarked with similar hospitals or health services or, at least, the most recent, relevant peer-reviewed literature.

My understanding is that it is reasonable for mortality and morbidity meetings to be held to discuss cases. How often would St Vincent's Hospital have those meetings?

**Professor CURROW:** There are two levels, one at a hospital-wide level and one at a unit level. I do not have information on the frequency with me today, but I am happy to take the question on notice and put it to St Vincent's.

**RESPONSE:**

The response from Associate Professor Schembri, Chief Executive Officer of St Vincent's Hospital, appears on page 36 of the transcript of the Committee's hearing of the same date.

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**JEREMY BUCKINGHAM:** The other part of finding 65 that peaked my interest states "Pharmacists dispensing the chemotherapy, nursing administering it and doctors who were working under the supervision of the specialist medical oncologist have either challenged the practice or sought an explanation." How many pharmacists, nurses or doctors did you identify as having challenged this practice?

**Professor CURROW:** We interviewed a number.

**Mr JEREMY BUCKINGHAM:** How many?

**Professor CURROW:** I do not have that number Mr Buckingham but I am happy to take it on notice.

**RESPONSE:**

I refer the Committee to my response to question 6 of the Supplementary Questions addressed to me, and to the evidence of Dr John Grygiel on pages 4 and 8 of the transcript of the Committee's hearing on Tuesday 1 November 2016.