

INQUIRY INTO OFF-PROTOCOL PRESCRIBING OF CHEMOTHERAPY IN NSW

Name: Mrs Alice & Prof. Sever Sternhell

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Partially
Confidential

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Upper House Committee
Inquiry into off-protocol
Chemotherapy in NSW
Attention Ms Teresa McMichael

The case of Dr Peter Sternhell, MB, BS (Hons, Sydney)
FRACP, FRACGP

When Peter Sternhell, our eldest son, was diagnosed with Squamous cell carcinoma of the throat in April 2014 he chose without hesitation St Vincent's Hospital, where he had been employed as a staff specialist (psychiatry) for 14 years as the providers of treatment. He died of multiple organ failure on November 12, 2015 only 18 months later, an outcome heartbreaking for us and medically disappointing for an unusually active, fit and youthful man only 56 years old.

We are well aware of the complexity of oncology and hesitated to intervene as at best, only educated lay persons, but we had a strong impression that once the treatment went beyond the apparently encouraging phases of surgery and localised radiotherapy, it lacked "aggression". As Peter was also part of the group of patients treated by Dr Grygiel with serious under doses of carboplatin, it is difficult to avoid connecting the under dosage with the clinical result, whatever the statistical validity of anecdotal evidence.

Peter's death leaves a heartbroken partner,
, two teenage sons, two brothers, grieving relatives and friends and us old parents. The circumstances added to our grief.

Alice Sternhell, PhC

Emeritus Prof. Sever Sternhell
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