

**INQUIRY INTO OFF-PROTOCOL PRESCRIBING OF
CHEMOTHERAPY IN NSW**

Name: Name suppressed

Date received: 23 October 2016

Partially
Confidential

**** Inquiry into off-protocol prescribing of chemotherapy in NSW ****

Written Submission

In regards to the ongoing inquiries into Dr Kiran Phadke and the under dosing of chemotherapy, I would like to offer an insight into the treatment I received during 2013.

Dr Kiran Phadke was my first opinion, but he was not my last. As a 20 year old, from a generation who are big believers on information overload, I sought out two more opinions. One, a specialist from Prince of Wales and two, a child and adolescent oncologist from Sydney Children's Hospital.

Their opinions varied in regards to treatment. I was young enough that all three Doctors wanted to start treatment as quickly as possible to guarantee survival. I was told that I needed to have a high dosage of chemotherapy to ensure that I responded to treatment. Although the high dosage gave me a high risk of a secondary cancer and would severely damage my fertility it was a necessity. I was at an age where I was young enough to be treated at the Children's Hospital but old enough that the decision was not up to my parents.

After receiving three consultations I chose Kiran Phadke. He was the only Doctor that gave me options during the consult and that held value for my long-term future. By communicating with me rather than telling me, I understood the risks and the steps that would be taken if the lower dosage of chemotherapy didn't work. I chose the option that I believed I could live with, an option that meant the chemotherapy was not detrimental to my future.

Three years later, I am still cancer free. Not only did Dr Phadke save my life, he gave me a future. A future with my fertility still in tact, a future where my heart and lungs are not damaged from the chemotherapy, a future where nothing is holding me back. Whilst the other Doctors wanted me to survive they were looking at me short term. Kiran Phadke was looking at me 10.. 20 years down the track. He was fighting for my future when I didn't realise I needed too.

During my cancer treatment, the drug bleomycin continued to damage my lungs. Dr Phadke lessened the dose, however it continued to cause me further lung damage resulting in hospital stays. During the last two dosages of chemotherapy Dr Phadke changed the dosage to zero to prevent any further lung damage. This allowed my lungs to recover over the last 3 years and has put me close to a normal lung function range. If there were any changes big or small to my treatment or health it was discussed with me in detail.

However if electronic prescribing dosages were implemented I would not be in the position I am in today. My lungs would be more damaged because the process of communication in regards to results, would not occur. Nor would there be a chance of drugs being eliminated if strict treatment protocols are implemented.

The word 'cancer' is used at an alarming rate in today's society, which in turn means more people diagnosed with different types and sub-types of cancer. However what you are suggesting in regards to electronic prescribing and protocol prescribing chemotherapy baffles me. Yes, we live in a world with constant technological advances, but we also live in a world where you can't teach a machine experience. A machine or a protocol can not distinguish between results, it cannot base its decision on prior knowledge.

Implementing cookie cutter routines or dosages into a world where people are more diverse than ever seems absurd. Doctors are able to adjust and change their minds in order to help. They do not do it for professional or monetary gain. Doctors are able to save lives by giving each patient a

personalised, ever changing treatment plan. They are able to change treatments, withhold drugs or offer alternative medicine based on their patients wishes. Why are we trying to take communication out of treatment, when we should be praising Doctors for the different processes they deliver based on how an individual's body responds to the drugs they are given.

Yet you are trying to punish a Doctor that has more experience and life lessons than most. Dr Phadke makes decisions with his patients in mind, not only does he want to give his patients the best chance of survival but give them the best chance of recovery without compromising their future. He takes his time to treat each patient individually. This is a clear demonstration of his professionalism and approach to treatment. I have the utmost faith in his decisions because of the remarkable care and communication I received before, during and after treatment. Not only does Kiran Phadke have faith in his patients, he has faith in the treatment he prescribes. He is a doctor that believes in giving the best medicine, for the best outcome. Kiran Phadke is a kind, trusting and courageous doctor. I owe my life to him and if I had to do it all again, I would not change a thing. I would choose him and his judgment every day of the week.

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission