

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

**Name:** Ms Ann Schiller

**Date received:** 15 March 2017

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

NAME : ANN SCHILLER  
DATE: 8 March 2017

Legislative Council  
Select Committee on off-protocol prescribing of chemotherapy in NSW

Inquiry into off-protocol prescribing of chemotherapy in NSW

Submission by Ann Schiller BN, MCN.

I am a Registered Nurse with in excess of 40 years experience. I have worked in Oncology for over 30 years and held senior positions as Clinical Nurse Specialist, Clinical Nurse Consultant, and Senior Nurse Manager in major metropolitan Australian hospitals.

I first worked with Dr Kiran Phadke in 1994 at St George Hospital Sydney and worked in the Cancer Network of St George / Sutherland Hospitals until 2008 where I held each of the above positions.

During this time I worked closely with Dr Phadke and can acknowledge that he is a highly regarded cancer specialist to both health professionals and patients alike. He has demonstrated throughout these years qualities which not only prove his superior medical knowledge and judgement but also his compassion and dedication to Cancer Services, particularly in the Sutherland Shire.

### **Professional Knowledge and Judgement:**

Dr Kiran Phadke is a medical practitioner with sound clinical judgement. I have been honoured to have learnt from his ability to train, instruct and guide resident doctors and registrars in cancer management. Many of whom have since become cancer specialist clinicians.

In my capacity as Clinical Nurse Consultant and Nurse Manager I worked with a number of Medical Oncologists and members of the Multidisciplinary Teams including physiotherapists, dieticians, psychologists and other health professionals. Dr Phadke has always been recognised for his medical knowledge and considerable experience.

In prescribing chemotherapy for patients it is always necessary to have protocols and clinical guidelines as a recommended dose. It is, however, vital to implement these treatments with clinical judgement and in consultation with the patients receiving these treatments. There are many factors which cannot be integrated into protocols but require consideration and these include:

- current health status of the patient and their capacity to tolerate the dose of chemotherapy prescribed. If this is not taken into account the patient may suffer catastrophic outcomes.
- the goal of the chemotherapy treatment. Chemotherapy can be given for curative intent or palliative intent. The dose will vary based on these circumstances.
- the wishes of the patient. A competent and compassionate clinician will provide a patient with realistic information and guidance to empower patients to make their decisions as to what treatment is best for them.

A doctor uses his expertise and experience when prescribing these highly potent drugs and the decision as to what dose is given should not be determined by hospital administrators or bureaucrats.

### **Cancer Services development in Southern Sydney**

Dr Phadke has been instrumental in establishing multidisciplinary cancer services in the Sutherland Shire and has worked tirelessly to improve the efficiency of cancer treatments and improvement in patient access through fundraising which enabled the establishment of vital specialist cancer services in the Sutherland Shire.