

My Journey Part 2 – Bulletin No 6 (20 May 2020)

Ringing the Bell

On Thursday 14 May at 7.10am I was able to ring the bell at Icon Cancer Centre to signify that I had completed my course of radiotherapy (30 sessions). Usually when you ring the bell you have to shout for the bar, however this time I only had to shout *Hooray*. Initially I was to have 25 sessions however five more sessions were added for good measure. It is a relief to finish the radiotherapy sessions as I will no longer have the daily trip to GCUH and I can get back to a regular home routine.

My second journey has been a lot easier than my first exposure to the neck cancer treatment program four years ago. No loss of taste buds, only partial loss of saliva, no radiation burns to neck. I still am quite lethargic and sleep 10 to 12 hours a day, as time goes on I will return to my normal sleep patterns. This time around I have only lost 2kgs, first time I lost 18kgs.

This is the second journey, Carole has been involved with and we have been able to anticipate what to expect. Carole has been a marvellous support and without it the journey would have much more difficult.

Alcohol is something I do not miss and I had my last drink of Australia Day and I will continue to refrain from alcohol until my results are known. There is no reason why I cannot drink it is just a commitment I make to myself in the belief that the best outcome will occur.

As I have mentioned previously the effect of radiation in my neck remains active for up to three months and the first two weeks the full effect of the radiotherapy is still present. After that it will slowly reduce in effectiveness, hence whilst it is still active no further medical examination will be made. I will undergo PET and CT scans on 19 August, after which all will be revealed. The success rate of radiotherapy is 80 – 90 % and as it brought positive results first time around there is no reason why the same cannot be repeated.

Life will now get back to normal for me and I am looking forward to enjoying my food more and even getting out to partake joys of club/restaurant meals.

There will be very little to report until the middle of August when the results are known and I certainly will let everyone know the outcome. During this time the last thought in my mind is the outcome. Just get on with life as though nothing has happened that way you don't get bogged down with what ifs and other negative thoughts the last thing you should put your body and mind through as it can only cloud the road to recovery.

Bye for now and hopefully the world will be a better place when I next report.

Always Look on the Bright Side of Life

Neil Reward

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