

SUPPORT AND REHABILITATION

- a brief review

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An Essential Element

- ❖ Support and rehabilitation are key factors in helping patients and their families
- ❖ However the amount of help available and access to that help varies throughout the country



Current Resources

- ❖ Available from variety of governmental, non-governmental and community institutions
- ❖ However families are the primary providers



What Happens in Christchurch?

- ❖ Support services are provided as an adjunct to treatment programmes
- ❖ Specialised staff are available

Aim being to facilitate the patient's own sense of control

Is there a case for blanket assessment of need?

- ❖ Given the limitations of our own resources such a concept remains a remote possibility
- ❖ Restricted, finite resources mean we are obliged to target the help we wish to offer
- ❖ Rely upon self-declaration by patients of their need for help as well as assessment of health professionals

Access to Resources

- ❖ Historically some groups are less likely to have access to necessary and appropriate resources



- ❖ Adolescents/Young Adults
- ❖ Socially disadvantaged
- ❖ Those living in remote areas
- ❖ Older people

When Treatment is Offered Away from the Home Environment

- ❖ Treatments may require long periods away from supports and comforts of a familiar environment
- ❖ The system that is supposed to help actually causes distress



Finances and Income



- ❖ Families often need two incomes to maintain a basic standard of living
- ❖ Any interruption to regular full income will clearly adversely affect families
- ❖ Primary concern is to ensure access to appropriate accommodation and income maintenance is in place

Emotional and Psychological Needs

- ❖ Adjustment to changed circumstances in ones health
- ❖ Role changes (family, vocation and social)
- ❖ Relationship stresses
- ❖ Need to adjust to new uncertainties
- ❖ Likelihood of reduced income for an uncertain period
- ❖ Increasing dependence on others
- ❖ Depression
- ❖ Change of status and altered sense of identity

Equity of Access

Institutions and families **ALL** play a part in providing positive and effective aid to those of our patients in need of assistance

BUT WHAT WE NEED IS

Equity of access to those supports and resources

Need to establish a **coordinated system** to ensure ALL patients and families are informed, and subsequently get access to the help that is available

‘Late Effects’

- ❖ Cancer survivors are increasingly faced with problems relating to
 - ❖ Vocational matters
 - ❖ Economic matters
 - ❖ Social matters
 - ❖ Emotional matters
- ❖ The same issues that face patients and families at the time of initial diagnosis and treatment may arise in subsequent years

In Conclusion

While there is never enough, resources do exist to help patients and their families adjust to and cope with cancer and treatment



The mix of institutions which provide that help is a rich one and represents much that is positive in our society. It is important that those institutions maintain open dialogue with a view to enhancing service provision



Equity of access to resources should be reviewed to ensure that all who need help get that help when and where it is most appropriate



Future planning
must include
consideration of
and attention to
the needs of
survivors of
cancer

