

MEDIA RELEASE

1 May 2009

Delay in Intravenous Chemotherapy Program welcomed by Cancer patients

Cancer Voices Australia (CVA) is pleased with the announcement by the Minister for Health, Nicola Roxon, to delay proposed changes to the Intravenous Chemotherapy Supply Program (ICSP) due for implementation on 1 July 2009. The minister has allowed further time for consultation.

This is a welcome decision, says John Stubbs, Executive Officer. "We appreciate Minister Roxon's willingness to discuss this matter further," Mr Stubbs said.

"We recognise the need for cost reduction and improved efficiencies in the health system, especially in the current fiscal environment, and would hope any savings made from this program go back into essential healthcare services.

"Our main concerns are about clarity around the potential impact the proposals might have on the costs of treatment borne by cancer patients, most of whom already face great financial stress.

"We also seek clarification about potential safety issues flagged by some of our members.

"Hopefully, this extended consultation will ensure that our concerns are discussed and we are assured that safety and quality are not compromised, nor cancer patients unduly burdened by any proposed cost-shifting."

Mr Stubbs said Cancer Voices Australia was unaware of any transitional arrangements between the current and proposed schemes and would promote its members' interests during any eventual transition.

Cancer Voices Australia is the national consumer organisation representing Australians affected by cancer. It aims to ensure the voices of people affected by cancer are heard at a national level.

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