

25 February 2015

I wish to be included in the Therapeutic Goods Association discussion regarding the "Regulation of Autologous Stem Cell Therapies".

My interest in this issue arises from my personal experience as a patient, with a chronic medical condition, who has undergone Stem Cell Therapy.

In November, 2012 I had fat extracted from my body via Liposuction. Stem cells from this fat were then put back into my body via IV. During this procedure I experienced no adverse effects, nor did I at the time of later infusions.

I heard of the Autologous Stem Cell procedure through a friend with the same medical condition as myself. I then did some research and booked a consultation. At the lengthy consultation I was informed that there were no guarantees the procedure would help my particular condition. It was suggested that were I to go ahead it would be helpful to other patients if I kept regular records of my progress or lack thereof.

Following the Autologous Stem Cell Therapy I kept two years of daily records, which I then transferred fortnightly onto a Symptom Severity and Frequently questionnaire. This record keeping enabled me to accurately gage the efficacy of the treatment. My quality of life has improved steadily and some symptoms have resolved completely. I have not experienced any adverse side effects nor encountered any safety issues from the treatment.

I would contend that the issue of, "large sums of money being charged" for Stem Cell Therapies is relative to the patient and their medical condition. As the cost of the procedure may be weighed up against the ongoing cost of care, medications and equipment, the procedure may in fact be cost effective. There is also the reduced ongoing cost to the Public Health System to consider.

I believe that as a patient who lives with the day to day outcomes of my medical condition, I have the right to access treatments involving Autologous Stem Cells here in Australia.

I highly value the current medical system which allows me to be the author of the decisions regarding my own health. I would be distressed to think that in the future patients would be denied the ready availability of such treatment and may even have to travel overseas to access it.