

CT scan result

Despite my misgivings Tuesday's appointment with the oncologist went very well. As Dr S. was on annual leave I was aware that I was going to be meeting with a different oncologist. Fortunately it was someone I had seen once before and had felt comfortable with.

The CT scan I had two weeks ago revealed that there had been no visible change to the tumours or to the amount of ascites fluid in my abdomen since the CT scan I had in October last year. After discussing the side effects I had experienced on paclitaxel with the oncologist he told me he supported my decision to discontinue having any more chemotherapy with this drug. As there are no other chemotherapy drugs available for pancreatic cancer this means I have come to the end of the line as far as treatment – which was always palliative anyway – is concerned. It was time to say goodbye to the oncology clinic and the day stay unit and face the next phase. For me this appointment represented a very significant milestone as I was consciously and firmly closing the door on treatment options. I really appreciated the oncologist taking the time I needed to go over the issues (sometimes I needed to return to a particular issue more than once) I raised with him and to answer all my questions as well as those of my son and ex-husband.

So what exactly is the next phase? In answer to this question the oncologist said that hopefully I would experience a few months of feeling as good as I do now. Any ongoing care will be provided by my GP and the West Auckland hospice. And then? No, we didn't go there. And then the cancer takes over I thought to myself, and I become progressively sicker and weaker. I just hope that the final phase doesn't last too long..

So it's now time to put a few more things on my bucket list

and tick them off.