



Research into the experiences of  
men with cancer – Team discussions



**Information for participants**

**Background and aim.** This research follows on from the interviews about cancer – the same Massey University psychology researchers (details overleaf) and funder (the Cancer Society) are involved. We are inviting men who have been interviewed to be involved in team discussions to help analyse the results and make recommendations to the Cancer Society. Heather will facilitate the discussions which will consider: (1) the main themes that arise from the interviews to ensure a valid masculine interpretation, and (2) ways in which we can use these results to meet men's needs in dealing with cancer stress. The final objective is to produce an idea for a service that would appeal to men, and be effective for meeting their needs, which can be picked up by the Cancer Society. In particular, we want the proposal to be relevant to men who usually have less access to such services, because they live in less populated areas or have less financial means. We are particularly keen for these men to be part of this research.

**What is involved?** We want to recruit 8-12 men with cancer from the Horowhenua/Otaki and from Whanganui/South Taranaki to form two discussion teams. The researcher will set up an initial meeting with each team, and then the team will discuss exactly what we are going to do, when and where etc. Although the two main tasks of the teams are already set, there will be a lot of scope for those participating to decide how we go about it, including how many meetings we have and how long they take as well as the content of the meetings. However, it is likely that the discussions will require 3 – 5 meetings of a couple of hours each.

**What will participants get out of it?** Participants will be contributing more time to this phase of the research, and will be making a significant contribution towards the improvement of the quality of life of male cancer patients in future – particularly those in more difficult financial circumstances and those who live at a distance from the services offered in big centres. The main benefit is therefore the satisfaction and pleasure of working in a team of men with similar experience to do something important and constructive, drawing on the expertise of your life knowledge. You may also find that you build some valuable relationships with other team members, that you carry on after the project is finished. We will offer participants a summary of the ultimate findings of the research, and will also offer petrol vouchers to reimburse travel costs.

**What are the risks to participants?** Once again, talking about cancer can bring up some distressing issues. However, talking about them with a group of others who know what it is like and can meet you 'where you're at' can be helpful. We hope that the discussions will be more thought provoking and interesting and fun rather than distressing. However, in the unlikely event that you are uncomfortable with some aspect of discussions, you retain the right to decline to discuss anything or withdraw for a time or from the research completely. And, again, we have the backup of professional cancer counselling services available, free of charge.

**Do I have to meet any special criteria?** If you qualified for the interviews, then you qualify for this. The only reservation is that you think you will be physically strong enough to commit to attending the meetings, which may be spread over 18 months or so.

**How do I learn more?** Contact the researcher, Heather Heron-Speirs, by filling out the reply slip and posting it to her in the **post-paid envelope**. If you are interested, Heather will include you when she arranges the first team meeting in your district.

## **Participants' safety and rights**

The same rights and safety provisions apply to this research as to the interviews, namely:

**Professional cancer counselling services provided free of charge to participants.** If you feel distressed and would like to use these services the contact details are:

- For participants from the Horowhenua/Otaki: The Psycho-Oncology Service run jointly by the MidCentral DHB and Massey University (phone 06 350-5180).
- For participants from Whanganui/South Taranaki, phone your local Cancer Society and ask to be referred to the counselling service arranged for this study (Whanganui phone 06 348-7402; Taranaki phone 06 757-3006).

**Confidentiality.** You can be assured that your contribution to team discussions will not be personally identified beyond the research team and the men in your team. Team members will be required to enter into a confidentiality agreement regarding who is in their team and any personal matters that come up in discussion. Specifically, *no personally identifiable information* will be passed to any member of a health care team or published.

**Withdrawal.** You are entitled to withdraw from team discussions at any time without the need to give a reason. Simply tell the researcher or phone her or the Principal Investigator (contact details below). Be assured that *withdrawal from participation will not affect cancer treatment or use of support services in any way*.

**Code of rights.** The Code of Health and Disability Services Consumers Rights 1996 applies to this research. For details see [http://www.hdc.org.nz/the-act--code/the-code-of-rights/the-code-\(summary\)](http://www.hdc.org.nz/the-act--code/the-code-of-rights/the-code-(summary)).

**Complaints.** You can complain or make further enquiry about your rights directly to the researcher or the Principal Investigator, or by contacting the Head of the School of Psychology, Massey University, Palmerston North, or an Advocate working with the Health and Disability Commission (see <http://advocacy.hdc.org.nz>), or the Central Region Health and Disability Ethics Committee (phone 04 8162405 or see <http://www.ethicscommittees.health.govt.nz/moh.nsf/indexcm/ethics-about-central#contact>).

**Your right to research results.** You will be offered an abbreviated or full copy of findings, free of charge.

## **Research team contact details**

**Researcher:** Heather Heron-Speirs (contact via Principal Investigator, Dr Stephens).

**Principal Investigator:** Dr Christine Stephens, Associate Professor, School of Psychology, Massey University, Private Bag 11 222, Palmerston North, phone (06) 350 5799 ext.2081, email [C.V.Stephens@massey.ac.nz](mailto:C.V.Stephens@massey.ac.nz)

*Thanks!*