1 Corrections to errors in the article by Jelinek and Gawler

Errors and omissions in the article

- December 1975: widespread bony and pulmonary metastases were diagnosed.

- September 1976: “[the patient] underwent three cycles of palliative chemotherapy with vincristine, Adriamycin, cyclophosphamide and dacarbazine, as well as brief palliative radiation therapy”.

- September 1976: “He elected to discontinue these therapies as his condition deteriorated further.”

- “The patient then consulted prominent psychiatrist and hypnotherapist Dr Ainslie Meares ...”.

- Dates of photographs shown in the article: “When Meares first saw the patient, he had visible bony tumours protruding from his ribs, sternum (Figure B) and iliac crest, and was coughing up blood containing small spicules of bone (Figure C).”

- Vegan diet: “[the patient] adhered faithfully to a vegan diet”.

- First appearance of tuberculosis: “Presumably related to immunosuppression from chemotherapy, he developed pulmonary tuberculosis in June 1978, and was treated for this condition for 12 months.”

Facts, corrections and inclusions

- December 1975: an isolated metastasis in an inguinal node was diagnosed. The patient undertook the Gerson dietary regimen, immunotherapy with BCG vaccine, and the Meares intensive meditation program.

- September–October 1976: growth of tumours on the sternum increased, and metastases were detected in the left lung. Coughing and haemoptysis were present. Experimental chemotherapy (with Adriamycin, vincristine and methotrexate) was ceased at 10 weeks after December 1976. No radiation therapy was given at this time.

- Palliative radiotherapy was administered in February 1976, not September 1976.


- The 10-month discrepancy between December 1975 and Jelinek and Gawler’s stated date of September 1976 (actual date, October 1976) alters the patient’s medical timeline, implying that it was only after other treatments had failed that meditation began and played a key role in his recovery.

- The article by Jelinek and Gawler implies that the photographs in their Figures B and C were taken around the time when the patient first contacted Meares. The photograph in Figure B was actually taken on 7 July 1977, 19 months after his first contact with Meares. Tumours were not protruding from the sternum when Meares first saw the patient to begin meditation in December 1975, and there were no visible metastases. The coughing up of blood containing bone spicules (Figure C) began in mid 1977, not in the period between December 1975 and February 1976.

- The patient never followed a vegan diet. Veganism involves exclusion of all animal products. The Gerson regimen includes dairy foods and calf liver juices. For the following 22 years, the patient’s diet included seafood, dairy products and eggs.

- In 1978, an oncologist diagnosed advanced tuberculosis (TB) dating back to early 1976. (Previous x-rays were examined, showing evidence that TB had been present and undiagnosed for at least 2 years. The patient had very advanced TB by June 1978.) The suspected cause was BCG vaccine treatments administered in December 1975, possibly exacerbated by chemotherapy and associated immunosuppression in late 1976.